



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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Third Session

TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2011

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, MAY 10, 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 will begin the daily routine.

The topic for the late debate has been chosen and reads as:

Therefore be it resolved that this House recognize the Bell Park French Immersion School for its unique educational approach and importance to the local community.

It was submitted by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

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

Bill No. 30 - Land Registration Act.

Bill No. 33 - Court and Administrative Reform Act.

Bill No. 43 - Interior Designers Act.

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

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

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

Bill No. 15 - Electricity Act.

Bill No. 42 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, and Municipal Government Act.

Bill No. 47 - Summary Proceedings Act.

and the committee recommends these bills to the favourable consideration of the House, with certain amendments.

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

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1227

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

Whereas TeamSpace, a Nova Scotia-based software company, was specifically honoured as Nova Scotia's Exporter of the Year during the 27th Nova Scotia Export Achievement Awards held yesterday; and

Whereas TeamSpace was among wonderful company, being 1 of 10 Nova Scotia businesses recognized for excellence in exporting; and

Whereas the other regional winners celebrated yesterday were Amherst's Deanne Fitzpatrick Rug Hooking Studio, Mahone Bay's HEKA Electronics, Truro's Instrument Concepts, Louisbourg's Louisbourg Seafoods, Shelburne's Cooke Aquaculture, Digby's O'Neil Fisheries, Baddeck's Polytech Products, New Glasgow's Stark International, and Yarmouth's Tracy's Wood N Things;

Therefore be it resolved that this House congratulate the staff and management of all 10 of these Nova Scotia exporters whose work in global markets is strengthening the province's access to international markets and networks - exactly what we are encouraging under jobsHere.

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 Fisheries and Aquaculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 1228

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

Whereas Victoria Neville of Sydney was recognized with the Undergraduate Science Communication Award at the 21st Annual Atlantic Provinces Council of the

Sciences Aquaculture and Fisheries Conference, held in Halifax from March 11th to March 13th; and

Whereas APICS's Science Communications Award is presented to a student who is best able to communicate a science topic to the general public; and

Whereas Ms. Neville was successful following presentation of her research on snow crab in Bonne Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Victoria Neville of Sydney for earning the APICS's Undergraduate Science Communication Award, and recognize the many important skills needed to communicate scientific research to the general public.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1229

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

Whereas while in Opposition the Deputy Premier was quite proud of himself when he called government-motivated advertising "taxpayer funded tripe"; and

Whereas this government has spent over a quarter of a million taxpayer dollars on its Better Care Sooner and Fair Drug Price plan, and has spent, to date, close to another \$100,000 on its "Jobs There/Jobs Where/Jobs Anywhere-but-Here" campaign; and

Whereas to date, the end result of this advertising has been a loss of jobs and no change when it comes to better health care sooner;

Therefore be it resolved that this NDP Government explain to the people of Nova Scotia why they have endured a 2 per cent HST increase, an increase in over 1,400 user fees, and close to a 6 per cent NSP rate increase under their mandate only to fund government advertising that has yielded no results.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 1230

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

Whereas the Minister of Health has recognized and stated in this House of Assembly that a review of kidney dialysis satellite offices is being undertaken, and that she understands there are regions of this province where people are driving hundreds of miles to receive a life-saving treatment; and

Whereas one area lacking a kidney dialysis satellite office is Shelburne and, as a result, Alice and Bill Stewart, both in their 80s, make a 200-kilometre round trip three times a week and over the past four years have travelled 150,000 kilometres to ensure that Bill can benefit from dialysis; and

Whereas there is a growing list of individuals who require regular kidney dialysis and these individuals have the support of all municipal government leaders in the Municipality of Shelburne, Town of Shelburne, Municipality of Barrington, and the Towns of Lockeport and Clark's Harbour;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly encourage the Minister of Health to begin understanding the important needs of kidney dialysis patients and act to better support these Nova Scotians.

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 Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 1231

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 William Bate is an extraordinary young man who is learning calculus, physics, and is reading at a 5th grade level, despite the fact that he is six years old; and

Whereas Will recently won first place in his age group in Canada for participating in an on-line spelling competition, and he ranked 46th in the world on the same test; and

Whereas Will's parents knew he was gifted from a young age, and have chosen to home school him to help challenge and develop his academic talents;

Therefore be it resolved that all of the House of Assembly congratulate William Bate on his success, and wish him all the best in future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

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. 1232

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 2006 provincial budget included a promise to index personal income tax brackets, a promise which was made at the urging of the then Opposition, including the NDP; and

Whereas the current Finance Minister, while in Opposition, said by not indexing income tax brackets “government is making a tax grab just as surely as if the Minister of Finance reached into your pocket and plucked the money out of your wallet or your purse”; and

Whereas after making a promise to index personal income tax brackets in this budget year, the Dexter NDP has done an about-face and neglected to end bracket creep;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly condemn the Dexter NDP for going back on their word and failing to end bracket creep for yet another broken NDP promise.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 1233

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

Whereas Ski Cape Smokey in Ingonish has endured many challenges to offer skiing to both area residents and visitors over the past few years; and

Whereas due to the tireless efforts of volunteers and the co-operation of Mother Nature, Ski Cape Smokey has once again provided the opportunity for ski lovers to take to the hill; and

Whereas skiers from across the province have expressed their pleasure and appreciation on having the hill open again and providing them with the opportunity to participate in all Ski Cape Smokey has to offer;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the dedication and tenacity of Ski Cape Smokey Society Chair Larry Dauphinee, lift mechanic and grooming machine operator Tyrone Mickey, and the many volunteers who ensure that Ski Cape Smokey remains a viable facility in Ingonish and the surrounding area.

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 Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

RESOLUTION NO. 1234

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

Whereas on that date, May 10, 1970, legendary Boston Bruins defenceman Robert Gordon Orr scored “the goal” capturing the Stanley Cup that unforgettable NHL season; and

Whereas Bobby Orr revolutionized the game of hockey during his too-short professional hockey career; and

Whereas loyal Bruins fans cling to that great memory of “the goal” with hopes of future glory;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Bobby Orr’s Cup-winning goal on May 10, 1970, with wishes of good luck to the Bruins fans in their team’s quest for this year’s Stanley Cup.

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 Preston.

RESOLUTION NO. 1235

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

Whereas the province signed an MOU on November 8, 2007, in part due to the urging of the Opposition, including the NDP; and

Whereas the Dexter NDP has decided that a promise is only a promise when it benefits the Dexter NDP and have taken the easy route by downloading province-wide responsibilities to municipalities; and

Whereas the Dexter NDP has ensured that property taxes will go up by breaking this promise to the municipalities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly condemn the Dexter NDP for not living up to their agreement and delivering Nova Scotians yet another broken NDP promise.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is tabled.

The honourable member for Hants West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1236

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

Whereas the safety and well-being of our young people should be uppermost in the minds of all Nova Scotians; and

Whereas thousands of Nova Scotia youth travel back and forth to school each day on school buses; and

Whereas we have recently seen an unfortunate accident in my area involving a school bus, with children aboard, at a bus stop;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly call on the government to undertake a long overdue review of the province's school bus policy to help ensure Nova Scotia youth travelling on our school buses and the travelling public remain safe.

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 Health and Wellness.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I'd like to make an introduction before I do my resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, and members of the Assembly, I'd like to draw attention to the east gallery where we're joined today by the executive director of Nova Scotia's College of Registered Nurses, Donna Denney. I'd ask Ms. Denney to stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. It's National Nursing Week. (Applause)

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

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1237

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

Whereas nurses from one corner of our province to the other are hard-working and dedicated to patient care and our health care system, and this year, May 9th to May 15th, marks National Nursing Week with the theme, Nursing - The Health of Our Nation; and

Whereas on April 27th, six individuals from across the province received the highest honours for their contributions to the nursing profession and the health of Nova Scotians from the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia - five of them receiving the Excellence in Nursing Awards and one who was inducted as an honorary life member; and

Whereas these six recipients are Evelyn Schaller, Patricia Bilski, Sohani Welcher, Heidi Carr, Patricia Hawley and Corrine McIssac;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in recognizing National Nursing Week, our recipients, and the valuable work and contribution that the more than 10,000 nurses and 3,560 licenced practical nurses across Nova Scotia provide each and every day to the people of this 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 Leader of the Official Opposition.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I'd like to do an introduction before I read the resolution. I'd like to draw the attention of the House to the west gallery where we have Doug Bacon who is here. Doug was downstairs with the Federation of Agriculture and producers across this province who came to Province House to remind us how important agriculture is to the economy of this province. Of course, Doug is no stranger. His father sat in this House and was Premier of our province, and Doug continues in the footsteps of his father in making sure that the proud tradition of rural Nova Scotia is alive and well and heard by all members of this House. Doug, I'd ask you to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1238

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

Whereas in April 2009, the unemployment rate in Nova Scotia was at 5 per cent; and

Whereas since that time, the Dexter NDP have taken power and released their “Jobs There/Jobs Where/Jobs Anywhere-but-Here” plan; and

Whereas in April of this year, the province lost 11,000 full-time jobs and Nova Scotians continue to suffer with an unemployment rate today of 9.2 per cent, a rate which has been consistently too high since the Dexter NDP have taken power, hovering between 9 per cent and 10 per cent on most occasions;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly condemn the Dexter NDP for creating jobs in every other province but Nova Scotia, with their failed economic policies of endless tax hikes and broken NDP promises.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 1239

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to extend our welcome to Mr. Bacon and through him to his father who, of course, was a former Progressive Conservative Premier of the province and we’re very proud of him.

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

Whereas this government says one thing and does another when it comes to supporting the small-business sector in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas this government, since coming to office, has introduced measure after measure that has made life harder for the small-business sector and cost many jobs; and

Whereas the small-business sector is the backbone of the Nova Scotia economy and the largest generator of jobs in our struggling economy;

Therefore be it resolved that this government provide a proper economic analysis of the effects of its high-tax, high-regulation policies on job creation and the health of the small-business sector.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable Minister of Education.

RESOLUTION NO. 1240

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 Annapolis Valley Regional Science Fair Awards ceremony was held at King's-Edgehill School in Windsor on Tuesday, April 5, 2011; and

Whereas awards were presented in life sciences, physical sciences, engineering sciences, earth and space sciences, and math and computer sciences; and

Whereas Ellen Song, a student at Horton District High School located in Greenwich, Nova Scotia, won a total of 10 awards including Best Life Sciences Project at the fair, and scholarships to both Dalhousie and Mount Allison Universities;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Ellen Song on her accomplishments at the Annapolis Valley Regional Science Fair, and wish her every success with her academic 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 Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1241

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

Whereas the NDP Government has slashed public education funding in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the future of Nova Scotia's economy depends on providing the best education possible for our young people; and

Whereas this short-sighted and ill-advised decision by the Dexter NDP has put the future of Nova Scotia in jeopardy;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly urge the NDP Government to reconsider their deep cuts to public education in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, today we have with us in our west gallery some constituents from the area of Inverness County. We have with us - and I would ask them to stand - students from the Cape Breton Highlands Academy. Along with them we have Mrs. Mary MacNeil and their teacher, John MacKinnon. I would ask that the members of the House give them a warm welcome with applause. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all our guests to the gallery, especially those ones from Cape Breton. I hope you enjoy today's proceedings.

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1242

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

Whereas Billy and Anna MacKinnon took their last drive together for Canada Post on December 31, 2010; and

Whereas the MacKinnons drove together every day from Whycocomagh to Lake Ainslie for 45 years, delivering mail, groceries and prescriptions; and

Whereas Anna and Billy will be missed but always remembered by the people they served;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge the contribution the MacKinnons have made to serve 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 Minister of Agriculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 1243

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

Whereas getting paid for what you love to do could be defined as the perfect job; and

Whereas Downey Thompson, the senior-most employee with Elmsdale Lumber, has a perfect attendance record dating back to 1946; and

Whereas on June 10, 2011, Downey Thompson will be honoured by Elmsdale Lumber for 65 years of continuous service;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Downey Thompson for his incredible work ethic and employment record, and wish him good cheer and health for every future day he goes to work and beyond.

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. 1244

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 Nova Scotia Recycles Contest encourages recycling and composting programs, and celebrates the ongoing role of Nova Scotia youth in making this province a recognized leader in waste reduction; and

Whereas the Student Awards Banquet for the 2010 Nova Scotia Recycles contest was held on April 27, 2011, at the Brightwood Golf Club; and

Whereas Lian Theriault, a student at École Grosvenor-Wentworth Park School, was the runner-up in the T-shirt design contest for students in Grades 4, 5 and 6;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Lian on her achievement and wish her well in her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

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. 1245

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

Whereas Bill Florian, an outstanding Nova Scotian and resident of Sydney who we lost earlier this winter due to illness, worked for Canadian National Railway's Freight Express Division for 35 years, while also serving as a member of the Cape Breton District School Board, and loved to spend his spare time duck hunting and fishing in Iona and on the Grand River; and

Whereas Bill remains sadly missed by his wife of 59 years, Betty, their seven children, 12 grandchildren and one great-grandchild; and

Whereas the Progressive Conservative Party also lost a great volunteer and loyal Party stalwart when Bill Florian passed away this winter as he served in executive capacities with local Progressive Conservative Associations for many years, and he and the late John Abbass were always available at election time with hammer and nails to begin putting up Progressive Conservative election signs wherever they were needed in industrial Cape Breton; and

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House acknowledge the life and contributions of one Bill Florian from Sydney, a great believer in the democratic process and who enjoyed life to its fullest.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

RESOLUTION NO. 1246

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

Whereas since 1995 Tri-Star has supplied ambulances and specialty vehicles to the province as currently the exclusive supplier of ambulances to Nova Scotia's high-performance EHS system; and

Whereas the Emergency Health Services system, which is operated by Emergency Medical Corporation, has received accreditation as a centre of excellence by the National Academy of Emergency Dispatch and has been rated in the top 10 in North America by an independent audit conducted by Fitch & Associates, confirming that EHSNS is one of the most effective pre-hospital EHS systems in North America; and

Whereas through the proven quality, reliability and performance of Tri-Star-built ambulances, Nova Scotia recently renewed its ambulance supply contract with Tri-Star for an extended period of eight years, to 2013;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tri-Star on their renewed contract, and for more than 15 years of dedication to the supply of superior ambulances and specialty vehicles.

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. 1247

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

Whereas the Finance Minister stated that under a New Democratic Government the Industrial Expansion Fund would be transformed; and

Whereas while in Opposition the Minister of Finance said that when it comes to the Industrial Expansion Fund, it seems like anything goes and that the government knows it's the only fund with virtually no controls and when they want to spend a lot of money quickly, it's the Industrial Expansion Fund they turn to; and

Whereas during two years of power the only way the Minister of Finance has transformed the IEF is by hiding documents from the Auditor General and blowing the roof off spending limits, while saying in Question Period that in order to get good questions he'd have to write them himself;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly condemn the Dexter NDPs for making the Industrial Expansion Fund even less transparent, putting more money into it, breaking another promise to Nova Scotians, and urge the Minister of Finance to immediately draft questions on behalf of his previous self on why he has done an about-face on his position with the IEF.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 1248

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

Attendu que le 10 avril 2011 à l'Église Ste. Anne, Ste. Anne du Ruisseau, Bruce Hubbard fit ses premiers pas pour devenir un diacre et maintenant comme lecteur il a le mandat de lire et d'expliquer le mot dans les Écritures; et

Attendu que Bruce Hubbard à commencé sa préparation à devenir un diacre il ya quatre ans en suivant des cours de Bible et assister à de nombreuses réunions pastorales et à reçu des conseils spirituels d'une famille de parrains; et

Attendu que Bruce Hubbard sera ordonné diacre par Mgr Anthony Mancini lors d'une cérémonie à l'Église Sainte-Anne le 5 Novembre 2011;

Par conséquent, qu'il soit résolu que tous les membres de cette Assemblée se joignent à moi pour féliciter Bruce Hubbard d'avoir franchi cette étape de son voyage au diaconat et le remercier pour son dévouement à son Eglise, sa famille et sa communauté.

M. le Président, je demande l'adoption de cette résolution sans préavis et sans débat.

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

Whereas on April 10, 2011 at Ste. Anne's Church, Ste. Anne du Ruisseau, Bruce Hubbard took his first steps toward becoming a deacon and now has the mandate to read and explain the words of the scriptures; and

Whereas Bruce Hubbard began his preparation to becoming a deacon over four years ago by following bible courses and attending many pastoral meetings and has received spiritual guidance from a family of sponsors; and

Whereas Bruce Hubbard will be ordained as deacon by Bishop Anthony Mancini in a ceremony at Ste. Anne's Church on November 5, 2011;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Bruce Hubbard on reaching this stage of his journey to the diaconate and thank him for his devotion to his church, family and community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Agriculture on an introduction.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce someone in the gallery opposite - a couple of my constituents from East Noel. The members might have paid attention to the brunch downstairs - Wanda Hamilton who works for the Federation of Agriculture was there and is here in the gallery, but also the young gentleman to her left is her son, Luke Ettinger. Luke is a very avid 4-H member, a racecar driver, and

I'm really pleased to have someone who could make it in from my constituency and observe the House. So I would like everyone to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Pictou East.

RESOLUTION NO. 1249

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

Whereas the official opening of the Glen Dhu wind farm, owned by Shear Wind Inc., of Dartmouth, was held on Monday, May 9th, on Browns Mountain, straddling the boundary between Pictou and Antigonish Counties; and

Whereas Shear Wind CEO Mike Magnus, operations manager Ian Tillard and site supervisor Grant Mason worked with the local residential and business communities to ensure that there was a high degree of local content in both employment and benefits to Nova Scotian contractors; and

Whereas the Glen Dhu project is now the largest single wind farm in Nova Scotia, providing enough power to service 18,000 homes, and helps to position the province toward achieving 40 per cent renewable energy by 2020;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate Shear Wind Incorporated, its CEO Mike Magnus, operations director Ian Tillard and site supervisor Grant Mason on a job well done.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 1250

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

Whereas during the 2009 election campaign, the NDP promised Nova Scotians they would keep emergency rooms open 24/7; and

Whereas since assuming power, countless communities have continued to experience closures with the last documented report released by government showing that emergency rooms across Nova Scotia were closed 19,116 hours; and

Whereas the NDP Government has dealt with this issue by changing the names and mandates of facilities and are in the process of reducing operating hours to correspond with this new mandate;

Therefore be it resolved that the NDP Government finally admit to Nova Scotians that they broke their promise to the people of Nova Scotia when it comes to their commitment to ensuring emergency rooms remain open 24/7.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 1251

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

Whereas on February 19, 2011, there was a celebration concert and silent auction at the Bras d'Or Hall to honour the contributions of the late George MacNeil to the 4-H program in Cape Breton; and

Whereas until his death in 2009, George was an active participant in the 4-H program for over 60 years, first as a member in the Bras d'Or Calf Club, then as a 4-H parent, leader, and then executive member both locally and provincially; and

Whereas in less than 18 months, a committee of leaders from across Cape Breton organized and raised funds to establish an endowed scholarship of more than \$50,000 in his memory;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this committee on their fundraising efforts to create and support the George MacNeil Memorial Scholarship.

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 Cumberland North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1252

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

Whereas the month of May is Motorcycle Awareness Month; and

Whereas Allan Blatch of the Gold Wing Road Riders Association has brought Motorcycle Awareness Month to the attention of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas at the request of Allan Blatch and the Gold Wing Road Riders Association, the Cobequid Pass overhead variable message sign will read "Watch for Motorcycles" throughout the month of May;

Therefore be it resolved that this House join me in thanking Allan Blatch and the Gold Wing Road Riders Association for bringing motorcycle safety awareness to the attention of all Nova Scotians.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Kings West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1253

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

Whereas in 2007, the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act was passed by unanimous consent of the House of Assembly; and

Whereas this legislation states that “the Province will adopt strategies to ensure the sustainability of the Province’s natural capital in the areas of forestry, mining, parks and biodiversity by the year 2010”; and

Whereas the NDP Government has failed to meet this legislation;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly urge the NDP Government to release its natural resources strategy before the end of this House session.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Hants West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1254

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

Whereas community volunteers work tirelessly on behalf of others for a particular cause without expectation of payment or recognition for their time and services; and

Whereas Kathy Benedict was recently nominated by the Belmont Community Hall to receive a volunteer award for the time she has spent volunteering at the monthly breakfasts over the last three years; and

Whereas Kathy is also an active volunteer with the Lydia and Sally Tearoom Cafe and museum in Avondale;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kathy on receiving a Municipality of West Hants 2011 Volunteer Award, and thank her for her dedication and commitment.

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. 1255

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 government side of the House is uneasy with the questions coming from the Official Opposition and from the loveseat of the Third Party; and

Whereas the Opposition's role is to question this government on their decisions that negatively impact Nova Scotians, and hold them accountable for their actions; and

Whereas the Minister of Finance feels that he should be preparing the Opposition's questions as he is clearly well equipped to poke holes in the government's policies;

Therefore be it resolved that the Premier and Cabinet set aside one hour per day for the Minister of Finance to formulate "good questions" that will properly show how ineffective and damaging the NDP's policies truly are.

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 Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1256

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

Whereas students from SAERC and the Nova Scotia Community College, Strait Campus, have been hard at work creating a Veterans Memorial Park in Port Hawkesbury; and

Whereas native trees, flowers and shrubs have been planted throughout the park with plaques mounted describing each tree, creating an environmentally friendly educational park in honour of war veterans; and

Whereas Belmont Shannon, a veteran of the Second World War and former president of the Port Hawkesbury Legion, envisioned this park and always had a dream to create it before he passed away in November 2010;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge Belmont Shannon and the community of Port Hawkesbury for their dedication to developing the park as a living memorial to the service veterans have made to our country.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

RESOLUTION NO. 1257

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

Whereas in 2009, mere days before the provincial election, the NDP opposed, in a letter to the Utility and Review Board, the implementation of a demand-side management charge on Nova Scotia Power bills; and

Whereas a few short months later, the NDP Government did an about-face and decided to burden ratepayers with a carbon tax on their energy bills; and

Whereas the NDP Government went back on its word to the people of Nova Scotia by saying one thing in the election and doing another once they became government;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly urge the NDP Government to freeze the electricity tax that they have burdened Nova Scotia ratepayers with when they enacted the efficiency tax they previously opposed.

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 Preston.

RESOLUTION NO. 1258

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

Whereas during the last provincial election, the Dexter NDP promised not to raise taxes; and

Whereas as soon as the Dexter NDP took power, they started to backtrack on as many promises made during the election as they could; and

Whereas last year, the Dexter NDP Government hiked the HST by two full percentage points, making life more expensive for Nova Scotia families and breaking one of their many promises;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly condemn the Dexter NDP for hiking the HST and yet another NDP broken promise.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 1259

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 NDP have been saying over and over again that they will only negotiate 1 per cent contracts; and

Whereas the NDP have to date negotiated contracts, which include settlements of 1.5 per cent and 2 per cent and more; and

Whereas the NDP have to date negotiated settlements, which come with increased costs such as increased benefits, increased cost-sharing by the employer and guaranteed employment;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly condemn the NDP for not telling Nova Scotians the true story when it comes to the public compensation.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Richmond.

RESOLUTION NO. 1260

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

Whereas during the last election, after they gained power, the Dexter NDP promised they would honour commitments made by the previous government; and

Whereas the Dexter NDP have proven to Nova Scotians that a promise is only a promise when it benefits the Dexter NDP and decided to break the promise to build a new jail in the Springhill area; and

Whereas the Dexter NDP took over a year and a half to decide to locate the new correctional facility in Pictou County, putting construction on hold for far too long and resulting in additional pressure on other correctional facilities in the province, including the Burnside jail;

Therefore be it resolved the members of this House of Assembly condemn the Dexter NDP for breaking their word on honouring commitments and delivering Nova Scotians yet another broken NDP promise.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 1261

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

Whereas it is projected that tobacco tax revenue this fiscal year will increase by \$14 million over what was collected in fiscal year 2009-10; and

Whereas in 2001, then NDP Health Critic, now Premier, commented on tobacco taxes to the ChronicleHerald by stating, “the commitment that I would look for from the Minister of Health is that it just won’t amount to a tax grab, that what they are going to do with the money is actually use it in smoking programs, that money shouldn’t be treated as a windfall”; and

Whereas the NDP Government recently introduced a brand new tobacco control strategy with not one new red cent being dedicated to smoking cessation programs;

Therefore be it resolved that the Premier lean across the aisle and remind the Minister of Health of his commitment made in Opposition to invest additional tobacco tax money into smoking cessation programs.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1262

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

Whereas on April 28, 2011, the Diabetes Care Program of Nova Scotia introduced the Excellence in Community Reach and Partnership Award, recognizing significant contributions of an individual in improving diabetes care at the local level; and

Whereas diabetes educator Janice Knapp is this year's recipient, recognized for her outstanding work in the Annapolis Valley; and

Whereas through her partnership with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board, Janice produced the Policy of Diabetes Management as well as guidelines for Diabetes Management and Emergency Plan of Care for students with Type 1 diabetes;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Janice Knapp on receiving this prestigious award and thank her for her commitment to the people of Annapolis Valley.

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 South.

RESOLUTION NO. 1263

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

Whereas the Premier, while he was in Opposition, argued that the practice of taxing the tax on gasoline was unfair; and

Whereas the Premier, while he was in Opposition, went as far as to say that this was an immoral tax; and

Whereas after two years in power, the Premier, who is now in a position to end what he called an immoral tax, yet has done nothing to provide Nova Scotians with any measure of relief at the pumps;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly condemn the Dexter NDP for going back on their word and failing to remove the tax on tax on gasoline and for yet another broken NDP promise.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Kings West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1264

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

Whereas in a letter dated February 10, 2010, the Minister of Health and Wellness, on behalf of herself and fellow Cabinet Ministers, responded to Kentville's Chief of Police about concerns expressed around the prescription drug problem in the Valley; and

Whereas in this letter, the Minister of Health and Wellness committed to convening a committee which would develop a series of recommendations on which government would act to address this very important issue; and

Whereas since the date of this letter, this committee met three times, produced no recommendations and since then there have been 11 deaths of young individuals due to prescription drug abuse in the Valley since the beginning of 2010;

Therefore be it resolved that this NDP Government admit it has failed the residents of the Valley by not acting on what they said they would do, developing and implementing a set of recommendations that would mitigate the problem and ensure adequate treatment options for those seeking to rid themselves of their prescription drug addiction.

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.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The time is now 1:00 p.m. and we will go until 2:00 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM.: JOB LOSSES - EXPLAIN

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. This time two years ago, the unemployment rate in Nova Scotia was at 5 per cent. Since that time, the unemployment rate in this province has consistently been between 9 and 10 per cent. Nova Scotians face some of the highest taxes in the country and this Premier has only made Nova Scotians pay more since taking office. My question to the Premier is, can the Premier explain to Nova Scotians how Nova Scotians lost 11,000 jobs last month?

THE PREMIER: I think the honourable member ought to get his research right. In fact, when we came to power, the unemployment rate in Nova Scotia was higher than it is today. In fact, no jobs were lost last month at all; 300 jobs were created in the province last month, Mr. Speaker, and (Interruption) No, that's not wrong; the actual number of jobs created was 300.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are consistently opposing the efforts of this government to create jobs in the province.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the Premier stands in this House and to every question he says, it's simply not true. Quite frankly Mr. Speaker, he can argue with the Opposition Parties but Statistics Canada says it's true and I call tell you that there are 11,000 Nova Scotians unemployed because of this government, who will tell you the truth. (Applause)

These 11,000 jobs were good jobs in this province and they are gone under this government. Mr. Speaker, the trend in Canada is for the economy to grow. Everywhere else in North America the economy has grown except in Nova Scotia because the NDP Government economic policy is taking us in the wrong direction.

My question to the Premier is, with our province clearly headed in the wrong direction, will the Premier direct his Minister of Finance to finally undertake a comprehensive tax review in our province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, last month the economy in Nova Scotia created 300 jobs in this province. The reality is that it is this government that brought down small business taxes in the province. It is this government that adopted and launched an economic development policy that will actually create jobs for this province. I would point out to the members opposite that the unemployment rate in Halifax is 6.6 per cent, lower than Toronto, lower than Windsor and lower than Vancouver.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker the unemployment rate in this city is despite this government, in every other corner of this province the unemployment rate is going up. (Interruption)

Mr. Speaker, this Premier has done nothing but hike taxes, hike user fees and he has been making it harder and harder on businesses to operate in this province. When is this government going to realize they cannot tax Nova Scotians into submission or tax Nova Scotia to prosperity?

Mr. Speaker, my question for the Premier is, with thousands of Nova Scotians losing jobs, small businesses being hit at every turn, a Premier who has misled Nova Scotians from the very beginning when he was said there would be balanced budgets and no tax hikes, will the Premier tell this House why Nova Scotians should believe in him now?

THE PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, we balanced the budget last year, we brought down small business taxes and you know what we didn't do? We didn't do what happened the last time there was a Liberal Government in this province when unemployment in this province, at one point, hit 15.7 per cent. (Applause)

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

NAT. RES.: CLEAR-CUTTING - TARGET

HON. JAMIE BAILLE: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Mr. Speaker, this is a government that regulates first and asks questions later. First the minister has set a target for clear-cutting in this province, we're still waiting for the definition of what a clear-cut is. Only after he set that target did he bother to study what the economic impact of his decisions would be.

Today we have that economic impact study and surprise, surprise - the consultant he hired tells us that the result of his decisions would be devastating for our forestry industry. My question to the minister through you, Mr. Speaker, is this, will he admit that his target was set without regard to its impact on jobs and the economy, particularly in rural Nova Scotia, and go back to the drawing board before any real damage is done?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: We do now have the economic impact analysis and that's the final step towards our Natural Resources strategy. The clear-cutting definition is being worked on in the department but we also want to make sure that all Nova Scotians are consulted on this. We have good information through our Forestry Technical Advisory Committee that will be advising us and very soon we'll have both the report and the clear-cut definition together.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the forestry industry is a major employer in this province, so if the government is determined to proceed without understanding the economic impact of their decisions, will they at least read the report because it provides three options for mitigation measures to try and mitigate the damage of that minister's decisions.

The first, in the Woodbridge report is a market-based solution, otherwise known as "hope for the best". The second is to undertake serious mitigation programs and the third is that the government should accept a level of industry downsizing.

My question to the minister is, will he agree that hoping for the best or accepting downsizing in such an important industry are not viable options and get on with the job of telling Nova Scotians what his plan is?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, we do have a plan and it has a lot of good mitigation measures in it. The key is re-engaging the small, private-woodlot owner. We are more than doubling the amount of money for silviculture for private lands, we're looking at good education programs, we're looking at good tracking of what is going on in our woodlots, training for small contractors, financing options. There's a lot of good measures there that will re-engage a small, private-woodlot owner so they can take pride in their woodlot, environmentally sustainable harvesting and that all, in turn, will help our industry considerably.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the minister's answer is a great example of what we mean by regulating first and looking at other things or asking other questions later. The fact of the matter is that the government has been promising a Natural Resources strategy since June 2009. In fact, when asked in this House where that strategy was on April 5th, the minister said, "We will very shortly have a better handle on what exactly is included in our Natural Resources strategy. So stay tuned . . ."

Well, Mr. Speaker, we're all staying tuned and so my question to the minister is, will he end the uncertainty that he himself has created in this important industry and tell us all when this strategy will be forthcoming and will he commit that it will be before this session of the House ends?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, this is a very big ship and to turn it around is going to take some time and that's exactly what we're working on. We have a plan for a healthy forest in our province, we have a plan for a healthy forest industry and the report will be out this Spring.

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

EDUC. - CUTS: CLASSROOMS - IMPACT

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education. The minister is making drastic education cuts across the province - math mentors, literacy mentors, Reading Recovery, teaching assistants, teachers and the list goes on. These cuts will hurt the students who will need extra support. Quite frankly, they will hurt every student in the Province of Nova Scotia.

My question for the minister is, does the minister believe that these cuts will have an impact on the classrooms?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I firmly believe that we will be able to improve practices in the classrooms of Nova Scotian children through the way that we are looking at the recommendations from Dr. Ben Levin. We're looking forward to having everyone across the province engage in the dialogue that we're bringing forward.

To answer the question, no, I know that school boards are doing the very best that they have always done, to make sure that the classroom is well-staffed and that education is going to be superb. Thank you.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, while the government hires a consultant from Ontario, this caucus contacted teachers across Nova Scotia and they couldn't disagree with the minister more. "What we need is more funding, not less. We need our EPAs, math and literacy coaches, Reading Recovery teachers and then some. We are not being greedy or

complaining how difficult our jobs are, these requests are not for us, they are for the students.”

Mr. Speaker, another teacher said, “Students are not products like tires or computers. They are human and make mistakes, need encouragement and support. This government is doing them a huge disservice.”

My question to the minister is, does the minister disagree with these front-line teachers?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, we are committed to providing the best possible education for every student in this province. (Interruption) Excuse me, Mr. Speaker, I just want to reiterate that we are going to be providing a superb education for every student in this province. Thank you.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, it’s interesting that government claims these education cuts will have no impact on the classroom. We sent letters out to teachers asking them to tell us whether they believe these cuts would impact on the classroom. Teachers are unequivocal in the response - the minister’s cuts will impact students. Clearly the minister is afraid of their responses. The deputy minister has sent a letter out to school boards and principals across this province telling them it is highly inappropriate for an elected member of this House to ask them for their input on the education cuts that they will have to deliver.

Mr. Speaker, it is highly unprofessional of her department to be sending a letter out questioning that but the good news is that teachers have ignored that directive and they continue to respond in a positive, proactive way.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. MCNEIL: My question to the minister is, why does she believe she needs to silence teachers?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, quite to the contrary, I encourage everyone - every teacher, every educational assistant, every citizen in the province - to make sure that their voice is heard. We have an on-line (Interruption)

Mr. Speaker, I would love to answer this question but I’m having difficulty.

MR. SPEAKER: Please do.

MS. JENNEX: We are encouraging - and I’ve said time and time again that we are encouraging dialogue. This is the time that we need to have appropriate dialogue. We’re asking, I have continued to ask to have an open line of communication so I don’t know

what the member opposite is speaking of. There is absolutely no silencing by this government. We want to hear every voice.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**EDUC. - CUTS: CONSULTATION
- DETAILS**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is through you to the Minister of Education and I will be expecting a response since that's what she would like to do. Working in consultation with all members of the school community to make informed decisions that are in the best interests of students, should be a priority for the Minister of Education. Unfortunately, the premature and reckless decisions regarding cuts to programs, budgets and services that have been made recently do not reflect the best interests of students in any of our public schools. So my question through you to the minister is, which members of the school community were consulted prior to the decisions to cut budgets, programs and services?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, we consulted with every board in this province.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, teachers are appalled at the lack of respect being shown to them, to their students and to the parents in the public education system of this province by the Minister of Education. In fact, the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, which represents over 10,000 teachers in this province, is so frustrated that they have made it clear the minister is not welcome at their annual meeting on May 20th. So my question through you to the minister is, what does the minister have to say to the members of her own profession who were looking to the minister for sound educational decisions designed to protect students, teaching and learning?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, we have the courage and political will to make sure that we are making improvements in our educational system.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the teachers are protecting the programs in the classrooms, the students to whom they are dedicated. In the May 7th edition of The ChronicleHerald, the NSTU president took a drastic move to have published an open letter to the Minister of Education. I will table that and in it, the NSTU president stated, "The Nova Scotia Teachers Union is extremely concerned about the disruption that the cuts to educational funding are causing and the impact this will have on students."

Teachers, parents and students are asking this minister to restore the balance of the funding for education in favour of students and teachers. My question is, when will the minister begin to respect the consultation process and start listening to the teachers in our schools who understand which programs and services are making a positive difference?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start the answer by saying I have nothing but the greatest respect for our educators in the system. I have to say that I am disappointed that my invitation to speak was retracted, but I would like to say that my door is still open to have positive and constructive dialogue with every member of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and every other educator in our province. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

**EDUC. - CLASSROOM TAs: IMPACT
- REVIEW**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, last Thursday at the release of Steps to Effective and Sustainable Public Education in Nova Scotia, Dr. Ben Levin said, "Some of the evidence says that TAs actually end up isolating kids from instruction." And that "There is quite a bit of money tied up without much evidence of efficacy."

My question through you to the minister is, will the department do a full review of research about the positive and/or negative impacts of TAs in the classroom prior to making any decision to downsizing the required number?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question. Dr. Levin's report actually is asking for a review to make sure that we're utilizing everybody in the system to make sure that our children are successful. This is in keeping with the teacher assistant guidelines published in 2009, that an educational assistant is there to support our students so that they reach their full potential. As part of the Ben Levin report, looking at the recommendations, yes, absolutely. That's what we're looking for and I'm going to also repeat, this is the time that we need to have open dialogue and we need to hear from everyone in the province that's interested in public education. Thank you.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, in May 2000 the member for Halifax Needham presented a resolution, "Whereas teacher assistants meet the special needs student at the start and end of their day, assist with interaction with their peers and prepare them for any changes in the normal routine;" The member went on to ask, if there's a reduction in teacher assistant positions, "... who will perform these tasks now?"

Dr. Levin's report called to reduce the number of teaching assistants in the province because there is hardly any evidence to whether special education placement actually helps reduce achievement gaps but he does not report on the social importance of a teacher's aide to the students. My question through you to the minister is, who will support these vulnerable students with their social needs if teaching assistants are cut?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate that every child in our school, education is going to be protected. Of course our most vulnerable students are going to

have their educational assistants. Dr. Ben Levin's report does not in any way encourage taking away educational assistants from students who need them. In keeping with the recommendations of Dr. Levin, we are going to be making sure that we have full consultation with people within the province and all stakeholders. Thank you.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her answer. My final supplementary is, other than asking the public for input through an on-line questionnaire, what research is the department doing to ensure that the recommendations in Dr. Levin's report are in the best interests of our students?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, again I would like to thank the member opposite for his very thoughtful question. The Ben Levin report is an evidence-based report. We are, as the member mentioned, having an on-line forum. That's the first step in this process. We need to have a very robust conversation with the stakeholders. We also have to do some further research. The on-line part that's available now is just the first part in this process. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

**NAT. RES. - STRATEGY: RELEASE
- TIME FRAME**

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the NDP Government is more than four months late now on the province's natural resources strategy, which by law is to be completed by December 31, 2010. On April 14th the Minister of Natural Resources said at a rally, "Our natural resources strategy is going to be out very shortly . . ." My question for the Minister of Natural Resources is, when will we see government's natural resources strategy?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Mr. Speaker, today we released the economic impact analysis that is the last stage in our natural resources strategy information that we required. We had good information from Phase I of the Voluntary Planning report on values that Nova Scotians thought were important; Phase II was the expert panels; and now Phase III, we have the final part of the puzzle in the economic impact analysis. So it will be put together very shortly and be at the printers this Spring.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the Ecology Action Centre recently had this to say about the NDP Government: Since coming to power, the NDP have significantly undermined the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act by missing, and in some cases delaying by years, some of the goals. There is no better example of this than the province's missing natural resources strategy, now almost four and a half months later. My question to the minister is, will the House of Assembly see the printing done before the end of the session?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, we are in the final stages of putting everything together. It's not just forestry, there are certainly minerals, parks and biodiversity, and now that we have the final leg of the report from Mr. Woodbridge, this all will be compiled and put together and you'll see it soon, very soon.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, volunteers spent hundreds of hours on the planning reports, receiving no compensation, offering advice to the NDP Government on what the public thinks should be done with respect to our natural resources and primarily through that wonderful process called Voluntary Planning. There are many questions about the strategy itself and the people of Nova Scotia deserve an answer. My question to the minister is, how will the strategy be implemented? Will it simply be a guideline or will there be legislation to set achievable goals for the future of the province's natural resources?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, you're right, we had many great volunteers who came forward in Phase II of the strategy, and we certainly commend and thank them for those many hours of effort that they put into gathering and giving us good information. Again, we're at the final stages. The report will be out very shortly, so hang in there and you'll soon see it coming forward.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

JUSTICE - VIOLENCE: ADDRESS - PLAN

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians endured yet another weekend of rampant gunfire. The Minister of Justice has continued to sit idle while the use of gunfire continues to rise in our province. In three separate incidents this weekend guns were used. In one incident a boy was shot in the leg, in another a shot was fired through a woman's apartment, and in a third a shot was fired through the front door of a residence. My question to the Minister of Justice is, how much longer will Nova Scotians have to endure gunfire in their communities before this minister is moved to come up with a plan to address the issue of escalating violence in our province?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, on the issue of idleness, I don't know what his timeline is or how he conceptualizes time, but yesterday I met with the chief of police, the Mayor of Halifax, the commanding officer for the RCMP, and other related support staff in policing. On the issue of gun violence - and we had discussions about that whole issue - it was interesting to find out that the number of arrests in the last number of months has been 30 per cent of the actual crime that has been committed, which statistically is not a bad outcome. I know that in the discussion, I'm very confident that a number of other arrests will be made shortly.

On the issue of whether or not violence is going to be continued or stopped, it's not like you can take the tap and turn the water off. Violence is part of our society. There are

many people who believe that's the way to do business and in the drug trade, in the evolution of how matters are settled, weapons are part of that. We have to be conscious of that and ensure that the laws reflect appropriate sanctions and that we're taking the appropriate actions. I'm very confident in the police. Unlike the Opposition Party that has no confidence in our police, I have confidence in them.

MR. SAMSON: Well, I can assist the minister in the timeline - as of Friday last week to Sunday, there were three shootings in the Halifax Regional Municipality, so hopefully that helps the minister understand the timeline. The message, when we talked about the NDP possibly being soft on crime, from the Minister of Justice seems to be that everything is okay. Guns are out there, knives are out there, and we're going to continue to see shootings and continue to see stabbings. Mr. Speaker, that's not the reassurance that Nova Scotians are looking for.

Ironically, the Minister of Justice tabled a letter to Mayor Peter Kelly last week in which he indicated, in light of the increasing amounts of violence, that he was prepared to offer resources. My question very simply is, will the Minister of Justice advise Nova Scotians today what additional resources he is prepared to offer to Halifax Regional Police, and all police forces, to deal with escalating violence in our province?

MR. LANDRY: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's typical of the Opposition Party, put more money, hire more bodies when, in fact, they're saying in one breath, how do you reduce government? These are all services that we provide.

An interesting statistic is that this province does not have a shortage of police officers; in fact, we're above the national average - it's a matter of how they're being applied. I was very encouraged by the meeting I had with the Mayor, the chief of police, and the commanding officer of the RCMP, and they have a number of teams and strategies in place and they are taking action in addressing crime.

Once again I'll remind my colleague across the floor that when a crime is committed, it takes police time - they cannot flip the switch and action is taken. It has to be a very sound, logical approach and action to be taken.

I'm very confident in the police action and the direction they're going in and the resources they have applied to these issues. I have absolute confidence in that process and it's a matter that the Opposition would rather put it in the terms of fear rather than showing support for the police and for the justice system.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, what we call it is reality over here, and the reality is that Nova Scotians are scared. The fact is Nova Scotians are looking for guidance.

Once again we hear the Minister of Justice in his response tell us that once a crime has been committed it takes time. Not once have we heard this Minister of Justice talk

about how we prevent crime from taking place; instead it's always once a crime has happened, police will kick in.

Nova Scotians are looking to find ways to avoid crime. This government made the decision that it should deal with crime by cutting \$5.3 million out of the Justice budget, it should cut almost \$0.5 million from anti-crime initiatives in this province.

Nova Scotians are looking for leadership. The minister himself said in a letter to the mayor that they were prepared to offer up more resources. I never said that was more money; he has come to that conclusion that that means more money. We're trying to find out - what does he mean by more resources?

Once again my question to the Minister of Justice is, how much more violence is it going to take before this government implements a solid anti-crime prevention policy for Nova Scotians?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, last week I sent a letter to the honourable member, who has just spoken, dealing with crime issues here. He alludes that we have taken money out of the system - the court funding has stayed the same.

I'm going to read a couple of paragraphs here of that letter:

"I am very happy to say that funding for crime prevention grants remains unchanged in the budget. The Lighthouse program will receive \$240,000 and one-time crime prevention grants will receive \$40,000 as they did in the previous fiscal year.

While we have achieved savings in these areas, it is important to note we have invested resources in other programs including \$200,000 towards the new civil forfeiture unit and \$1.2 million towards the creation of a domestic violence court in Sydney. We will also be funding the Serious Incident Response Team \$806,600, once fully operational.

I also want to point out that since 2009-10 the overall budget in areas relating to combating, reducing and preventing crime has increased by \$5.2 million."

I'd like to table that document.

Mr. Speaker, I just don't know how much money the Liberal Party believes that the taxpayers of Nova Scotia have in their pockets to fork out for every little suggestion they have. They need a reality check and my colleague across there really needs to focus on what is important to Nova Scotians and what we're actually doing.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**PSC: EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION SURVEYS
- DETAILS**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Public Service Commission. It's important for the members of this Legislature to know that people working in government are in an environment where they feel it is dynamic and where they feel valued for the good work that they do. According to the Public Service Commission surveys only six out of 10 employees feel they receive recognition for work well done and, although there have been some improvements, less than half of those working in government feel that government hires and promotes people based on merit.

Does the minister have any insight on why our employees feel such a low level of satisfaction about being recognized when they do a good job?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Well it's quite a simple answer - after 10 years of working for the Tory Government we're finally starting to build up morale; it will come, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MACMASTER: Well that's great, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister tell us about any management practice that his government plans to implement or input that he has received from the NSGEU for improving workplace quality of life or for recognizing staff for their achievements?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, we have many awards; we are constantly working with both the unionized sector and the non-unionized sector to make working for the public of Nova Scotia a place that can also be rewarding financially, and they should also be able to provide good salaries for their family. But also, when they come to work that they know they work in an environment that they have ways to grow and it's a safe environment to work in. All these are issues that this minister and this government are working on to move things forward after 10 reckless years.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, almost one in three working in the Nova Scotia Government are sick 12 days or more each year, and the public sector average in Canada is almost half of that - and I'm going to table that information for the benefit of the members of this House. It begs the question, are we getting sick more in Nova Scotia or are people not as happy at work, are they feeling stress in the workplace? We know that stress causes illness and perhaps they need more time away from work.

Now fixing this problem, if the minister takes it seriously, has a twofold benefit - there's less time away from work and that's a sign people are happier at work, but also if we bring our sick days in line with the public service sector across Canada we can save \$3 million a year, Mr. Speaker. And that is the amount of money that this government has

increased the user fees of Nova Scotians by - and I have no doubt if we can save that money maybe we could help put it towards the Reading Recovery program. I am going to table that information as well, and if I could indulge upon a Page perhaps they could hand one of those copies to the Minister of Finance because I know he has difficulties with fiscal resolve.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there a question?

MR. MACMASTER: My question to the minister is, will the minister commit to working with HR professionals throughout government to show that we value employees and that we aim to achieve a measured improvement in lost time due to sickness?

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Just say yes, Frank.

MR. CORBETT: I'm tempted to do as the member for Argyle has said, to just say yes. But, Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious question and this government and all members of the House should take it seriously because, as I mentioned in my previous answer, we need an environment for the people who work for this government that they not only feel that they're being compensated properly but that they feel respected in the workplace and that the workplaces are safe from all dangers, whether it's bullying, whether the building is a sick building, and the fact that when they come to work that they're fulfilled.

Mr. Speaker, we agree with the premise of the question and through you, I'll tell that member that whether its engaging our HR professionals right up to the ministry level we will make a place for people who want to come to work. They will say that the Nova Scotia Government is one of the greatest places in this province in which to work and there will be very few sick days.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: PHYSICIAN TRAINING SEATS - FUNDING INFO.

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. In 2003, and again in 2008, the government of the day provided support to the Dalhousie Medical School to increase the number of physician training seats. Up until this year funding for these commitments remained in the Health budget under a line item that was easy to find and not buried within other costs. In fact, in 2010-11 the budget line item was called Physician Training Seats - very easy to locate.

This line item no longer exists in the budget and as you will recall, this became a serious issue of contention during last year's budget debate. So my question to the minister is, will the Minister of Health and Wellness confirm for the record whether or not her department continues to provide funding for physician training seats?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question and, absolutely, the Department of Health and Wellness is the funder of medical seats at the Dalhousie Medical School.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, there's no question that the funding arrangements for the Dalhousie Medical School are complex. In 2008 the Department of Health committed to funding eight seats for first-year undergraduates from Nova Scotia and two international medical graduates who agreed to serve in underserved communities upon graduation.

Mr. Speaker, that's a commitment which our caucus fought for and we believe is very valuable in helping to ensure a supply of physicians to the underserved areas. According to the Dalhousie Medical School funding report prepared last year by Bill Hogg, there is an indication that funding was restored for these eight seats after last year's confusion around funding for the Dalhousie Medical School. What is not clear as we enter this, and subsequent fiscal years, is whether this funding is continuing. My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, does this NDP Government plan to continue funding these 10 physician training seats in return for service in Nova Scotian communities with doctor shortages - yes or no, please?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, we have a cost and funding working group on medical education. The cost of training a doctor is, as most members would recognize, very high and it is indeed very complicated. So the working group is continuing to gather information and work with the Dal Medical School to arrive at a reasonable and sound conclusion to the cost of training medical students.

Mr. Speaker, it is the case that the Department of Health and Wellness has issued a request for proposals to do a physician resource plan for the province. We will be looking forward to developing a 10-year plan for the needs of Nova Scotians with respect to physicians, both GPs and specialists, across the province.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, what we do know in this caucus is that funding provided by government for the training of physicians is far from adequate. The funding provided does not fund the actual costs incurred by Dalhousie and as a result administration is forced to make tough decisions, decisions like selling seats to other jurisdictions, jurisdictions that will pay the full cost. It forces the university to make tough decisions around tuition increases for medical students, which ultimately makes the program less accessible and it makes it very challenging for the university to deal with its accreditation issues that hopefully will be resolved later this year successfully.

My question is, what role has the minister played when it comes to ensuring that Dalhousie Medical School has sufficient resources this fiscal year to train physicians?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, we very much value the role that Dalhousie Medical School plays in the training of physicians in this province and indeed in

the Maritimes. We have a good working relationship with the dean and faculty at Dal Medical School. We will continue to support the medical school through various processes such as the accreditation process which we, in fact, have followed very carefully and have been very supportive of and, you know, we look forward to continuing the good relationship with Dalhousie Medical School.

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

**LBR. & ADV. EDUC.: MED. SCH. SEATS
- BUDGET FUNDING**

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, last Spring you may well recall there was a debacle around the funding for Dalhousie Medical School. In particular, it involved funding for medical school seat expansions agreed upon in 2003 and 2008. The issue was divisive, it boiled down to a “she said/he said” scenario with the government saying they were right and the medical school was wrong. Consultants were hired and, in fact, it turned out government was wrong and funding had to be restored - not all of the funding but most of the funding. Given that government blocked Labour and Advanced Education from coming to estimates this year, can the minister for these departments please indicate whether the full funding amount of \$2.5 million has been restored in her budget for this fiscal year?

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, as my colleague the Minister of Health and Wellness has mentioned earlier in Question Period, Dalhousie University receives funding for its medical school through a number of different funding streams. A committee has been set up to untangle those streams so that we have a clear understanding of what the actual cost of training a medical student is and to make sure that the appropriate amount is available through the appropriate department within government.

Those discussions and analysis and study continue. They have not been finalized and until that information is available, I’m not in a position to indicate what the member is looking for. Thank you.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, one of the outcomes from last year’s dust-up was the formation of a committee, which included officials from Health, Education and Dalhousie, to work out a more transparent arrangement for funding. While government has changed the structure of departments, I am assuming the Department of Labour and Advanced Education is now at the table. On April 20, 2010 the Minister of Health and Wellness indicated she expected the committee will come to a decision this summer. The “this summer” she spoke of was actually last summer. Given that the minister is responsible for Advanced Education, what decision, if any, has been reached when it comes to a transparent funding arrangement for Dalhousie Medical School that works for everyone?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the honourable member understands that a significant amount of money was paid out to Dalhousie to cover their costs for this year. There was a certain balance remaining; it seemed unclear as to why it was originally funded, which department should be funding it. It's that balancing amount that is being studied further and certainly, as that information is known, informed decision making will take place. Thank you.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, Dalhousie Medical School has been diligently working through the challenges associated with accreditation. It is the hope of all members in this caucus that the outcome from this process, expected later this Fall, will be favourable for the sake of the students and Dalhousie University. My final question to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education is, given that we have turned a page on a new fiscal year, what amount of money has been set aside in the minister's budget to ensure Dalhousie Medical School is properly funded?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, I believe the current funding is coming out of the budget of the Department of Health and Wellness, but I will certainly check into that matter. As for ongoing amounts, certainly they will be part of the upcoming memorandum of understanding that the government is having discussions about with all post-secondary university institutions. In addition to looking at sector-wide issues, we'll also be having discussions with each of the institutions.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: PHARMACISTS/GOV'T. MEETING
- CANCELLATION EXPLAIN**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Currently the government is supposed to be negotiating a new tariff agreement with the pharmacists of Nova Scotia for the dispensing of drugs. As many Nova Scotians know, the current agreement expires at the end of next month. Despite this tight timeline the government cancelled their negotiating session yesterday with our pharmacists, clearly an attempt to punish them for having the gall to stand up to this government here in the Legislature this week. My question to the minister is why did she cancel that meeting? Why is she punishing the pharmacists of Nova Scotia for speaking up against this government?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, we very much value the relationship that we have with the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia. We have attempted to work with them, to collaborate, to consult with them all through this process, which I recognize is a difficult process because it represents some change.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the tariff negotiations that are underway, those negotiations are underway, we will not negotiate the tariff here in this Legislature. We will

continue to work with PANS, the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia, to put in place a fair and balanced agreement, both for pharmacists and pharmacies and for the taxpayers of Nova Scotia.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, we're not asking the minister to negotiate the tariff agreement with us, we're asking her to get on with the job of negotiating it fairly with Nova Scotia's pharmacists. The fact of the matter is, the government is asking the pharmacists to swallow a pretty bitter pill with some of their other plans, in exchange for a tariff agreement that they may get to at some future date.

My question to the minister is this, why negotiate with our pharmacists in such a disrespectful manner, like cancelling the meetings? Why not get on with the job of concluding that agreement on the timeline that was originally proposed?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, we do very much value the relationship we have with PANS. We are in negotiation with respect to the amount of money that the Government of Nova Scotia pays to pharmacies for dispensing drugs on our public plans. I anticipate that those negotiations will result in a fair and very balanced tariff, both for pharmacies and pharmacists and for the people of this province.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, this is a government that regulates industry after industry, without regard to the effects of their decisions on jobs or on our economy. Small businesses like pharmacies are just the latest victim of their "regulate first and think about it later" approach.

My final question to the minister is, when will the government get back to the bargaining table and conclude a fair agreement with our pharmacists?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the reason we're negotiating the tariff now is that PANS, in fact, asked us to negotiate the tariff after they had seen the bill and the regulations, which we have provided. Now we are in negotiations on the tariff and as I've said, we are committed to reaching a fair and balanced tariff agreement that will work both for the pharmacies and the pharmacists in this province. But we are very committed to getting fair generic drug prices for the people of this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

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

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. After 18 months of suppressing the socio-economic gambling study which was done for the province, we now hear that it will be released at some point in the

future. Nova Scotians have paid for this report and they have been waiting far too long for this government to be open and accountable.

My question to the minister is, why is the minister waiting an extra month to release this report, when she should release it today?

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, as I have explained a number of times, the original reason for not distributing the draft document was because it was full of inaccuracies. It was problematic in terms of the methodology and it certainly was not in a state on anyone could draw conclusions or make informed decisions.

We have agreed to release it at the direction of the review officer but we feel we need to be responsible to the citizens of this province and make sure that it's in an annotated form and that we also list the concerns that we have so that there is a balanced approach to it in that when people read it, they understand what parts of it are significant and what parts of it cannot be trusted or the information is inaccurate. Thank you.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the review officer has stated that it doesn't matter if the minister agrees or disagrees with the information presented in this report. The minister should release this information so that Nova Scotians can decide for themselves. They don't want a sanitized product. This report should have been released when it was received almost 19 months ago. The fact that it wasn't points to a larger problem with this government.

Whenever this government doesn't agree with a report they try to hide it. They placed the Voluntary Planning Committee under the thumb of Treasury Board so government can control what it recommends. When the Minister of Finance is challenged, he lashes out at independent organizations like he did with the CFIB. This gambling report should be released to Nova Scotians today and it should be released in its entirety. My final question to the minister is, will the minister table today in this House the final draft report in its entirety?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, the document that is being referred to is not a final report. The phase it's in now is the result of a flawed process. An advisory committee gave advice to the contractor to correct information and to make sure that it was following the mandate that the researcher was given. None of this happened and you will see the end result of that disrupted process, as well as a list of the concerns that government has. Certainly the information will be there and people can draw their own conclusions. You cannot release material that is so inaccurate without an attempt to show where some of the areas of concern are.

This government is transparent. We do respect the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy officer, but certainly there are many incomplete draft reports sitting

on government shelves and, as I said, this is being done in order to protect the best interests of Nova Scotians, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

**JUSTICE - ARICHAT COURTHOUSE:
RETURN - UPDATE**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, since 2008, Richmond County has been the only county in Nova Scotia without its own courthouse. Over the years, court services have gradually been reduced. In 2008, the local judge refused to sit in the historic Arichat courthouse any longer due to a number of safety and structural concerns. My question to the Minister of Justice is, can the minister give the residents of Richmond County an update as to what the status is for a return of a functioning courthouse in Arichat?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: There are no immediate plans to build a courthouse in Richmond.

MR. SAMSON: Well, ironically, Mr. Speaker, I can advise the minister that there are ongoing discussions with his department to restore small claims court services in Richmond County, which have been underway with the representative of the municipality. So I'm a bit surprised that the minister was not able to provide an update on where the return of the small claims court proceedings might be. As I'm sure you're aware, Richmond County is home to a diverse population; the Acadian population, which is more and more seeking legal services in French, the Chapel Island First Nation community, and the fact that we are left without court services is extremely troubling. Would the minister, again, be so kind as to advise as to whether there are ongoing discussions to restore court services to Arichat?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, on the issue of the small claims court, there are some discussions to see if that service can be provided more locally. On the issue of the broader sense of court services overall for the overall court, it is presently being provided through the Port Hawkesbury area and we'll continue to do that until some other rationale or reasoning comes forward. It's been going on for quite some time, that that service is provided there, and it seems to be working quite well.

MR. SAMSON: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure some of the minister's colleagues who have been here a bit longer would recall, when the Port Hawkesbury Justice Centre was constructed, the minister of the day gave assurances that both the Arichat courthouse and the Port Hood courthouse would be protected and would not be put in any form of jeopardy. I'm sure the former Justice Critic for the NDP would recall those statements as well. But here we are now, going on over three years that court services have not been held in Richmond County.

I guess my final supplementary is, would the minister advise why he is not proceeding on restoring this lack of access to justice that exists within Richmond County?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to correct the member. There's not a lack of access to justice in the Richmond area, they have access to justice. What he just doesn't have is a courthouse in his backyard. Given the present situation and the cancellation of court in an aging facility, the province has come up with a solution at this time and we'll continue down that lane.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

**EDUC. - LEVIN REPT.: OUT-OF TOWN CONSULTANTS
- USAGE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ben Levin and the Department of Education released a report last Thursday, *Steps to Effective and Sustainable Public Education in Nova Scotia*. Now on Friday, the Cape Breton Post ran a poll asking, do you think Ben Levin's report was worth the money? Currently the poll shows - and I have a piece of paper here with it on it - that 77 per cent of the people believe that it's not worth the money.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the minister is, how does the minister plan to overcome the negative stigma that this government has created by using out-of-town consultants to develop this report, meanwhile scrapping the input from everyday Nova Scotians commissioned through Voluntary Planning?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, we have an evidence-based advice on how to improve our education system. What we are continuing to ask is to make sure that people have a chance to read the report. What we need is to ask for people to take the time to read the report before making their conclusions. Thank you.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: One of the recommendations that the Ben Levin report suggested was allowing more things to count as learning, for the purposes of earning school credentials. One program that will be lost in the closure of Holy Angels High was its highly successful Duke of Edinburgh Awards program. For 25 years Holy Angels offered high school credits for each level - bronze, silver, gold - that its students would achieve.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the Minister of Education is, has the minister or the department explored the opportunity of offering a similar type of creditable program at other schools across the province?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, actually this is a very exciting question because that is one of the recommendations in the report, that we need to be making sure we are

encouraging our children to take something outside the walls of a school, something that they are interested in, something that is going to motivate them.

We are actually exploring many opportunities through this report, for children to have the opportunity to either do some online work or work out in the community. At this time, this is an exciting time in education that we can be exploring many options. Mr. Speaker, with that I thank you.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her response to that. There are lots of programs that we should be able to develop in this program that will credit students for that.

Mr. Speaker, CBC News reported on February 10, 2010, that in 15 years the province will have 30 per cent fewer students and 70 per cent more senior citizens creating a shortage of taxpayer workers. This minister continues to . . .

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: 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. 59.

Bill No. 59 - Elections Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, it was very nice last night to get a couple of minutes in on this bill before we adjourned for the evening so it is my intention today to talk a little more at length on Bill No. 59, the Elections Act, to make sure that we in the Progressive Conservative seats have our say in what we feel are maybe good issues in this bill and of course what we find are maybe omissions to this Elections Bill.

Mr. Speaker, the right to vote in our estimation is a cornerstone of democracy as we know it. The right to vote is enshrined in the Canadian Constitution and although the constitution now guarantees the right to vote, we cannot take this right for granted. Each of us in this House has had the honour of putting our names on the ballot and letting the people decide under free vote who they want to represent their concerns and this is not something that I take lightly.

We just came though a pretty interesting federal election, one where we saw different kinds of voting - vote splitting in some cases - across the country and the results of them were very telling on how things are happening. For the life of us, many people are asking the question of, really, what happened to the Liberal Party in Quebec or more importantly where did those NDP folks come from in Quebec and how were they able to win ridings that they really didn't even show up to campaign at?

But we as politicians, as representatives, need to accept the results as they had come on that night and even though some of those people didn't do the work in order to get elected, they are now the representatives of those areas and will have the right to sit in the Parliament of Canada to take care of the communities that they were so lucky to be elected to.

The right to vote recognizes the fundamental equality of each person, regardless of other social elements that come to define a person. Everyone's vote is equal and this is the founding principle of democracy and the cornerstone of any successful democratic society.

A couple of years ago, Nova Scotia had the opportunity to celebrate 250 years of being the birthplace of parliamentary democracy, as the first responsible government of the British Empire happened right here in-between these walls. That's something that our province and our country can be proud of but things have definitely changed over the last 250 years. Voters today want election laws that are fair and are relevant and find a way to fit into their modern lives.

Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to see that the government has taken a number of our caucus' suggestions into account and included them in the bill - I'm talking about the bill that we did present, the Modernizing Government Bill. There are a number of good aspects that have found their way into this bill, and ultimately, because of all of us sitting in this Legislature and having the opportunity to represent people across this province, we do see on occasion that our ideas do come together in some cases.

The issue that we are fully supportive of is strengthening the Election Commission to provide for a greater role in the oversight of the chief elections officer. After all, transparency and accountability are key components to any modern political system. This particular change is welcome on that front.

Additionally, our caucus is encouraged by the fact that the bill anticipates changes in technology and also provides for the piloting of new technological initiatives. I can say our world is changing day by day; computers and the Internet are making it quicker and easier to do everything and wisely, the bill takes that into account.

It's quite interesting when we look at how many people vote, what is the average number of electors, how many people come out? It's very interesting to see that it continues to be, in my estimation, low. I can only go as far as looking into my own constituency and the people who I get to speak to and try to ask them the questions. I can say there are going to be people - it doesn't matter what you do, they are not going to vote. But there are a lot of people who are on that edge. With a little bit of coaxing, a little bit of opportunity, those individuals will come out.

I find it ironic too that you watch a show on TV like American Idol and they have millions of people who vote for those individuals who are singing on stage. I'm going to bet there are probably more people in Nova Scotia who vote for those people on Canadian Idol, when we had the opportunity for Canadian Idol. I'd like to look at the returns for that, of how many Nova Scotians voted for people from Nova Scotia who were on Canadian Idol. There were probably more people voting there than there were voting in an actual provincial election.

The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal says it well though - vote early, vote often - when it comes to a TV show like Canadian Idol because you do have the opportunity to vote a number of times, as long as you have the text number, as long as you have the e-mail; you can go in and you can vote as many times as you can. But it doesn't mean that we can't throw out something like that and say, if there were a verifiable process that you could do it electronically that we should do it.

That's why we like the idea of pilots, either in some by-elections or what have you, to try out some pieces of technology or even from a backhand standpoint, rather than having sheets and sheets of paper - I don't know if you've had the opportunity to visit a polling station, but there are stacks and stacks of papers of voter lists. It is very manual in the way that it works where you cross off, sign, cross off, number, rip off, tear off and do all that stuff in order to cast that vote so you know that person, as you check them along, resides in the constituency or the riding in which they're voting or within that polling district.

Why can't we have a computerized system at the polling station itself? Today, with the advent of iPads and PlayBooks and laptops and having 99 per cent of our province covered by high-speed Internet - why can't we just go on a computer, make a check mark, click it in and away you go? That would actually help out insofar as if I were travelling through the province during a general election and I was in Port Hawkesbury and I would like to vote in the constituency of Argyle - why couldn't the computer system be able to

allow me to vote in my own constituency? If we had a computerized system, that would allow us to do that. We're almost there.

The point is that the pilots we have here, the opportunity to do pilots, to be able to accept electronic voting systems in one way or another - I'm not saying we need to go crazy all at once, but to be able to try out some of these technologies will give more opportunity for individuals to vote in their constituencies.

Most people wouldn't know that they could vote anywhere when it comes to a general election nor would they have an opportunity to actually do that on election day unless they went and found out the returning office and did it. You could be going by a polling station and you go, oh my goodness, it's election day, I had completely forgotten. You're three and one-half hours away from home, it's 6:00 at night and you really don't have any opportunities. Why couldn't you just pop into any polling station and cast your ballot for your constituency? That's why I think the piloting is good; the electronic system is another good aspect that we, as the Progressive Conservative caucus, enjoy seeing in Bill No. 59.

Now, Mr. Speaker, of course, we don't feel that Bill No. 59 is perfect either. We feel the government has been responsive to our recommendations. Some of the serious flaws that are in it do need to be addressed and, of course, that's why we've been chatting up this issue for a little bit now, hoping that as the process within this House does move forward, insofar as making amendments or changes to the bill, to of course, strengthen it. That's the power of this House of Assembly that when everybody works together, we have the opportunity to amend a bill to make it stronger than what it was when it was first introduced.

Now, Mr. Speaker, of course, the glaring flaw that we do see in this bill is the government's failure to act on the issue of third party advertising. The government can't pretend that this isn't an issue. I was really happy to see the comments of the Minister of Justice on Friday and, of course, again the last day or so of wanting to bring in amendments in respect to third party advertising. I did find it a bit strange that the minister would sort of say, well, I hadn't really thought about it, I didn't really get to read the report until X amount of time. This is on Page 6 of the report so why wouldn't he have taken that into account when this bill was introduced? (Interruption)

Unless, yes, you do start reading from the back of a document, I know there are some people who read things in different ways. But Page 6, Madam Speaker, well, I can say that we must read a lot quicker than the minister because we read through it and were able to see the recommendation on third party advertising.

Madam Speaker, the issue is that when we brought in our bill to modernize government, it talks about third party advertising in it. The Liberal Party had talked about third party advertising before now. So why wasn't this included in this bill if it wasn't for

maybe the possibility of some pressure from media or some different pressure that was exerted upon government to make this happen? So we just find it strange, you know, it's kind of an odd way for government to go about creating legislation, to submit something one day and the next day say, whoops, I forgot to put that in, when we had been talking about it the whole time.

Madam Speaker, we do feel that a solution, and one that has been presented to us, one that has been presented to us by the government members, is that we might be able to adopt a federal law in the way that the federal government looks at third party advertising. We would support that kind of amendment, of course taking into consideration the sizes or the monetary amounts that would be held within it. Of course, the federal way to do it I think is like \$150,000 per organization. Well, that wouldn't make a whole lot of sense here in Nova Scotia, \$3,000 per constituency. So if there's a group within a constituency that does want to go and support a candidate or work against a candidate, depending on how that works, to go and spend \$3,000 worth of advertising. So there are some adjustments there that I think we, as the Progressive Conservative caucus, would accept. Maybe leave that piece to regulation, maybe the numbers can be agreed upon at a future date but let's get those clauses in this piece of legislation so that we are able to go forward. I can say that we're looking forward to seeing an early copy of that and having the opportunity to caucus it, to make sure that it is the amendments that we, as a Progressive Conservative caucus would look like and be able to accept.

I find it interesting, and a lot of time we as MLAs have to take a lot of criticism on behalf of our profession, and I think it's imperative that we get this bill right. This is something that probably doesn't excite people in our constituencies because a lot of times elections don't impact them until election time is here. Do they actually think about an Elections Act or how that process goes about it during the time?

I can say that every little bit we can make easier for people to vote and the more energy that we put in to putting people at the top of the political pyramid once again, I think is very important. We do need to set out a higher standard for MLAs and that, I think, will create more of a restoration of the public's trust in what we do.

The Legislature should demonstrate to Nova Scotians that their political system is relevant and, of course, in their control. This Legislature should reaffirm that the voter's voice is not silenced once the polls close but rather, this is a fine institution and, of course, will always be the people's House.

As we sit in this historic Chamber, we should never forget that the people have put their trust in us and that they are asking us to be the elected voice that brings their concerns in the process. We should not forget that although we are all but one voice, one of 52 in here, or 51 at this point, we speak in a collective voice of our constituents and that is, of course, a privilege that is not taken lightly.

We've seen, too often, that elected officials forget that the balance of power lies in the hands of the voters. As I mentioned before, parliamentary democracy is a 250-year-old practice here in our province and although voting is a precious right not to be tampered with, the ways in which we vote must expand and adapt to our ever-changing lives.

One of the things that we also found to be missing in this piece of legislation, one that we did talk about a number of times, is the issue of individuals with disability. We've asked, whenever our suggestion has been made, make sure that it is introduced to have a non-voting member, or even a voting member, in the Nova Scotia Election Commission, an individual representative of the disabled community. I don't know how often during elections - and it happened to me in two elections already - where constituents have come forward and said listen, I can't get into that polling station and you call the RO or what have you and ask, is it accessible? Well, the answer you get is yes, it has a ramp.

I don't know if you've spent any time with somebody who is in a wheelchair and understand that it takes a little more than a ramp to get somebody into a polling booth. Sometimes the doors aren't big enough. Sometimes there's a lip at the door that you can't really get the wheels of the wheelchair over. For an able-bodied person, you will look at that and say well, the ramp is there, we should be able to get the person in and they can vote and that will be the end of it. But in many cases some of these old halls or old churches or old schools that these polling stations end up in are not accessible to a disabled person. So I think a little more emphasis in the Election Commission would be a very important piece, to really make it that we don't forget that it's a little more than just making sure there's a ramp or an accessible bathroom. It's making sure that it's there but we need to have a person there, to make sure that it's always on top of mind when this happens.

Madam Speaker, regardless of their physical ability, everybody should be able to cast a vote. Again, to that end, we ask that every polling station in the riding be accessible, with level access, with an internal structure that allows persons with disabilities to cast their ballots without barrier or obstruction. Bill No. 59 requires only that one polling station in each riding be accessible, although they did take our suggestion that the building cannot have internal structure problems that would prevent a person with a disability from easily casting their ballot, so we need to make sure that - I know that sometimes it's physically impossible to have every building accessible - but to make sure that we know that there is one next door that they can actually get into, not to be forgotten.

We have just again gone through a federal election and only now are we starting to hear some of the stories coming back of being able to vote. One that I heard of already on two occasions now - and I'm wondering how we can fit this maybe into the bill or how that adjustment can happen - is the issue of identification. I know we need to make sure that the person who is voting is the person who has the card, who is the resident of that address and all that information, yet what we have and the sort of basic structure of polling stations, especially in rural areas - I know it's much harder to do it in a more urban setting where there is a transient population where people are moving in and moving out so it's hard to

know exactly who is there, but the issue of identification is one that I continually hear of in my riding.

You have an individual, for example, who goes to vote, who has lived in that community for 63 years, who is known by every single person sitting at those tables, but because they don't have their driver's licence - and one of the individuals that I heard of actually doesn't have a driver's licence so it makes it that much more difficult but, realistically, if everybody knows who that person is they can cross his name off and let the guy vote. What you end up having are people of, in my estimation - well, I've heard it more for people of a more advanced age, so you know 60s, 70s, and even 80s in some cases, who maybe don't have those pieces of identification at this point, who have voted their whole lives, are getting there and looking at people who say, listen, you can't vote because you don't have your driver's licence. Well, you know, I'm your uncle, cousin, next door neighbour - and they're not letting them vote.

This is an issue in the federal election I do know, but we need to make sure that it's strong in the bill - make sure that this doesn't happen because finally you have people who are voting, they're actually showing up to the polling station and they're getting frustrated and mad and leaving, and if we think we're going to get them to come vote again I think we are mistaken. We should not have that kind of barrier to that.

We feel that Bill No. 59 is a really good first stab at things, but we do hope that there will be a number of amendments, again, to go to the issue of third party advertising. Again, to strengthen not only, let us say the third party advertising - I think we've all in one way or another been attached to one negative thing when it came to the way monies are gathered in this province, whether it's mainland trades, whether it's trust funds, whether it's whatever, we need to make sure that this information is accessible and it can make true and distinct change to what is happening in this province, not only in third party advertising but in many other pieces.

We think that every vote counts; we think that we should find opportunities to get younger folk [No audio due to technical difficulty]

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Thank you. Maybe I wasn't speaking loud enough. Maybe that was the suggestion, that I was starting to get too quiet on this - was I getting too quiet?

The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal is over there listening and I do know the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island was, because he was commenting along the way as I was chatting - as he always does. I would hope, of course, that maybe during discussion on Bill No. 59 that member would get up and speak. I would love it, when I'm finished my time that he would take that opportunity and stand and speak to the bill. He seems to have lots of great ideas sitting over there and I'm hoping that the

Minister of Justice has spoken to that member to make sure that his ideas are incorporated within this bill.

Going back to the youth vote, I don't know what the true answer to this one is but I think it really sits with making sure we're teaching our children the value of government, the value of the democratic process. I enjoy, Madam Speaker, having the opportunity to visit - I think in École Belleville in Grade 5 they have the civics course - and sit and answer questions of the Grade 5 children, so these are ages 10 and 11, as they're going through their course, to really see what their thoughts are. (Interruption) Well, they're asking everything from what's the mace, what is the makeup of the House of Assembly, who's in government, what does the Premier wear? It's a whole bunch of really neat questions.

There's a whole bunch of really neat questions as the hour goes on. I tried to help them out a little bit, of course, the House of Assembly does produce a number of documents that really help out. Whether it's the symbols of the House of Assembly, whether it's - I forget the one that was done for Democracy 250, there was a really nice booklet done in French and English that does come in handy for me because it explains a lot of things that they are getting as a base part of their course of what the process is in Nova Scotia.

I think that's something that should be held within the Elections Act. How do we make sure that children in school are getting this kind of instruction from their school teachers. I'm hoping that every member of this House takes the opportunity to visit a Grade 5, 6 or 7, even to Grade 12. I remember one of my visits to a Grade 12 class, some of them who were 18 years of age or just about to be 18 years of age when the election would have rolled around, knew very little about our process, even of what level of government that I represent. There are some very basic things that if you're just hanging out in your community you probably wouldn't know, who is responsible for what. Who's responsible for roads and education, who's responsible for your street lights, who's responsible for your garbage pickup - who's responsible for defence, who's responsible for that?

It's interesting of exactly what levels of government, who's doing what and how everyone interacts and works together and I think that should be part of the curriculum. Because of the federal election just the other day I know there was basically a mock election, all the kids in the upper classes of École Belleville, I think it was Grades 4, 5 and 6, had the opportunity to vote for one of the members. Overwhelmingly the result was for the current member, it was for Mr. Kerr. In second was the Liberal, Mr. Thibault and in third Mr. Barron who was the representative of the NDP. I think we had a Green but I don't recall who that person was. That's funny because it was very representative of what the election actually turned out to be.

Never mind the polling that we do in Ottawa or the polling that we do at CRA but just go and ask your Grade 5s exactly how they think the election is going to turn out because I don't think they've ever been wrong. I think the Grade 5s in Pubnico, I was

talking to the school teacher there and I think it was the last election, and honest to goodness they've never been wrong. They have called the election every time that they have had the opportunity. Kids know what's going on, whether it's the instruction they're receiving in school, what they're hearing from their parents, what they are hearing from their friends and I know it's an important one.

Just before I finish up talking about how we try to get children involved in elections in one way or another, how we get them to know what's going on, you know, I get a kick out of my 12-year-old, André. André tends to be a little more politically connected than I ever was at 12 years of age. He tends to be very conservative in his thinking and gets mad at his friends who torment him just a little bit because actually he's interested in politics and they're not. They really couldn't care less but he can't understand why they're not interested in it at all.

So, you know, there are kids out there and I think we've all had kids like that in our constituencies, in our constituency associations, you can never seem to get a youth member and then all of a sudden one kid rolls around, 13, 14, 15 years of age, and would do anything for it, will spend hours on end making phone calls, will spend hours on end putting up signs, will go to every possible rally that they possibly can go to, but there's such a low number of those ones. I wish I could have six of those guys in my constituency and because I come from a small constituency, my association tends to be small, but just a couple of those youth members would make a world of difference.

Maybe it is incumbent upon all of us as MLAs, as political figures, to make sure we go and get hold of some of these individuals, who we know have that political mind, or are politically interested, and get them involved in one Party or another. Like I say, when I sit with kids in Grade 5, or Grade 6, or even the ones in Grade 11 and Grade 12, listen, I represent a Party, the Progressive Conservative Party, but at the end of the day I really don't mind if you're going to go and support the NDP or you're going to support the Liberal Party, at least you're involved in a process that is good, that does do good things for Nova Scotians. Again, I always find it very interesting that when kids go out and vote, you give them the opportunity to vote for someone, and they predict how that election is going to go, I think that's very valuable for them.

So that brings us to the next step of, again, voting technologies. How do we give them opportunities? Where are elections going to go? We've seen, across North America, different systems being used whether they're electronic, whether they're manual, whether they're mechanical. We went through some U.S. elections where we got stuck with hanging chads and a whole bunch of other fun things like that. (Interruption) Well we have a Chad who works for us so we do harass him once in awhile about hanging chads, but ultimately it's not exactly the same thing.

There are some case studies that we can look at across North America to give us an idea of where we should be going. We, in Nova Scotia, and we, in Canada, use an old

system. It's a very robust system. As long as people aren't stealing your ballot boxes, you could have some pretty good results on them, making sure that every vote is being counted. I think it is still apt that people can misread some of those ballots. Lots of things are thrown out. Sometimes the ballots aren't counted because of their uncertainty, but for the most part we have a very robust system in which to be able to do that. Again, we are looking forward to seeing the amendments for Bill No. 59. We hope that we're going to be able to agree that this is the way forward, to ensure that third party advertising is being addressed in a responsible manner, and we're hoping that there are other amendments that can come along over time to make our system much more robust and inclusive to all Nova Scotians.

I do have some more to say but maybe at this time, if the House Leader is ready to call other things, I'll go slowly in the way I'm talking. I'll drink some water while I'm waiting. (Interruptions)

Well, we could talk about my last election. I've got to say - I mean my election - the last election, of course, is one that I will cherish always, simply because when a lot of my friends didn't return to this House, I was returned to this House with a margin, like a percentage off of where it was before, instead of taking 67 per cent of the vote in my constituency, I think I only took 66 per cent of that. I was very happy that I lost a little bit, but not too badly. I am hoping that I do continue to represent the constituency of Argyle but there are lots of great friends, of course, who didn't make it back here, but there is a whole batch of new friends who are here that we get to work with on a regular basis.

Again, there are some issues we'd like to discuss - maybe if we look at some amendments as we go around - but in the meantime I'd like to move we adjourn debate on this bill, to come back at another time.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

[2:36 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker, Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

[3:01 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and considered the following 13 bills:

Bill No. 1 - Motor Vehicle Act.

Bill No. 7 - Justice Administration Amendment (2011) Act.

Bill No. 13 - Pharmacy Act.

Bill No. 15 - Electricity Act.

Bill No. 19 - Nova Scotia Business Incorporated Act.

Bill No. 21 - Public Archives Act.

Bill No. 25 - Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Bill No. 27 - Financial Measures (2011) Act.

Bill No. 30 - Land Registration Act.

Bill No. 33 - Court and Administrative Reform Act.

Bill No. 42 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, and Municipal Government Act.

Bill No. 43 - Interior Designers Act.

Bill No. 47 - Summary Proceedings Act.

and the chairman has been instructed to recommend these bills to the favourable consideration of the House.

MADAM SPEAKER: Ordered that these bills be read for a third time on a future day.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, there is some work to be done today but I would ask the indulgence of the House to take approximately a 20-minute break recess.

MADAM SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

We will recess for 20 minutes, approximately.

[3:02 p.m. The House recessed.]

[4:01 p.m. The House reconvened]

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, with the indulgence of the House, could we revert to the order of business, Presenting Reports of Committees.

MADAM SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

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

Bill No. 20 - Trustees of Liverpool United Baptist Church Act.

Bill No. 22 - Public Service Commission of Bridgewater Act.

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

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

The honourable Acting Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee on Law Amendments, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bills:

Bill No. 51 - Public Highways Act.**Bill No. 54 - Cemeteries Protection Act.****Bill No. 56- Real Estate Trading Act.**

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

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

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee on Law Amendments Committee, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bill:

Bill No. 35 - Body Armour Control Act.

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

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

[GOVERNMENT BUSINESS]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Would you please call Bill No. 59.

Bill No. 59 - Elections Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Madam Speaker, it's a pleasure to stand for a few last minutes in speaking to Bill No. 59. We are very happy to see a press release, released by the government a few moments ago, in regard to what we've been

asking for along the way, basically what the amendment will look like, what it will be adopting as far as third party advertising.

I just want to read a few pieces out of here, quickly, before I sit down. It basically says that under the Act third parties will be allowed to spend a maximum of \$10,000 on election advertising, no more than \$2,000 may be spent in a single constituency. These limits will apply to any third party, including a corporation, trade union, organization or individual. It also contains rules to prevent third parties from subdividing or joining together to avoid adhering to spending limits.

The press release goes on further and says that third parties will have to clearly identify themselves in any advertising. They will also have to register with the chief electoral officer if the spending is over \$500 on election advertising. The chief electoral officer will maintain a registry of third parties. As soon as I get another copy of this I'll submit that for the House.

We feel these are good moves forward. It's not quite exactly what we had proposed in our modernization bill but they do come pretty close. I think we had looked at 1.3 per cent of total spending within a constituency, which is sort of in the \$50,000 range, and then multiply that by the 1.3 per cent, or the total net of the national campaign, or the provincial campaign. So these numbers are well within those limits and we can say that we'll look forward to seeing the full amendment as this does go forward to the Law Amendments Committee. So with that, I want to thank the government for bringing these amendments forward and look forward to discussing them at the Law Amendments Committee.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 59, the Elections Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 59. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, with the indulgence of the House, I request waiver to move to third reading the bills that we had passed in Committee of the House on Bills today. If it's necessary, I'll read them in. If you're comfortable, we'll just move forward.

MADAM SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

[PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING]

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 1.

Bill No. 1 - Motor Vehicle Act.

Bill No. 7 - Justice Administration Amendment (2011) Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motions are carried.

Ordered that these bills do pass. Ordered that the titles be as read by the Clerk.
Ordered that the bills be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 13.

Bill No. 13 - Pharmacy Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Madam Speaker, here on third reading, I just wanted to make a couple of comments about this bill, which is a bill to actually provide a professional recognition for pharmacy technicians, primarily, and as the members of the House know, we've been speaking at length here and in the Committee on Law Amendments process on the role of pharmacies and pharmacists and how they're changing and their scope is changing.

I think that as this bill moves through third reading, we should recognize that it's a positive thing to make further use of well-trained people to expand what they're able to do and we do support that. I want to reiterate that we're also looking forward to seeing the pharmacists doing more in that provision of health care in communities. I know that what we've heard the last few days at the Law Amendments Committee was that they are also excited to see that happen, but the cost is still remaining an unknown and this bill, once we create a professionalism for pharmacy technicians, means that there will be an increase in their responsibilities and that will have to come with a commensurate increase in their remuneration.

The bill does not affect any pharmacy technicians who work in hospitals so it is entirely going to have an impact on community pharmacies. I think that it behooves us to be aware of that and to hope that, very quickly, we'll be able to identify the areas that improve scope of practice that pharmacists are going to be taking on, and their new tariff arrangements, so that we can move forward in an environment where there's a lot more certainty. The fact that pharmacy technicians are going to be able to do more will enable the pharmacists to take on that expanded scope of practice that we've been talking so much about and anxiously waiting for the schedule of what they will be paid to do, those services that we now pay doctors to do. With that, I certainly do support this third reading and I'm going to see it go forward to the vote.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Madam Speaker, quickly too is our support for this bill. It's kind of funny where we have so much going on about pharmacy within this House, whether it's another bill that's before the House or whether it's about tariff agreements or whether it's - in this instance - about freeing up a pharmacist to do the work that they do by truly acknowledging the pharmacy tech.

I think a lot of times we would believe that the actual pharmacist that we're seeing shouldn't be burdened with counting his stock or making sure that he has the right number of pills in a bottle. A lot of these things can be done by another individual, freeing up that pharmacist to do the things that they should be doing, that is seeing patients, actually prescribing things, in some cases, because of the expanded scope that they will be doing or just helping out people with a little bit of counselling along the way; making sure that med reviews are being done. I think this bill is a very strong one; one that we're supporting through this House and I thank the minister for bringing this one forward.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 13. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 19.

Bill No. 19 - Nova Scotia Business Incorporated Act.

Bill No. 21 - Public Archives Act.

Bill No. 25 - Occupational Health and Safety Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motions are carried.

Ordered that these bills do pass. Ordered that the titles be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bills be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 15.

Bill No. 15 - Electricity Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Madam Speaker, I just very briefly wanted to recognize that at second reading we had suggested to the minister amendments which would actually entrench the 40 per cent in the goal of renewable energy in law, as opposed to being in regulation. I did want to recognize that the Minister of Energy did have that done and we certainly appreciate him giving consideration to the amendment we suggested. I think it is stronger being in legislation. It is an important goal to be achieved and I'm pleased that the minister saw fit to agree to that amendment and I would like to publicly recognize that they did that. Thank you very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: If I recognize the honourable Government House Leader it will be to close the debate.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, I move Bill No. 15 for third reading.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 15. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that the bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 30.

Bill No. 30 - Land Registration Act.**Bill No. 33 - Court Administrative Reform Act.**

Bill No. 42 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, and Municipal Government Act.

Bill No. 43 - Interior Designers Act.

Bill No. 47 - Summary Proceedings Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motions are carried.

Ordered that these bills do pass. Ordered that the titles be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bills be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 27.

Bill No. 27 - Financial Measures (2011) Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise for a few minutes to point out a few of the areas in the Financial Measures (2011) Bill that obviously cause us not to support the Financial Measures (2011) Bill.

First of all, we had hoped the government was going to follow through on the indexing of personal taxation. This is now more understood by a wider group of Nova Scotians as to how bracket creep does take away much of the increase or, in some cases, perhaps all of the increase that Nova Scotians deserve a break on. It is this issue that we were hoping for some consideration at this point, mid-point in the NDP term - I know Nova Scotians who communicated with me were hoping the time had arrived.

With that not having taken place, secondly, some of the 1,400 user fees that saw an increase this Spring again needed to go through the Financial Measures (2011) Bill to be legislated. These 1,400 user fees come at a very, very difficult time for an ever-growing number of Nova Scotians who are having challenges around making ends meet - and 1,400 is a considerable number and many impact on Nova Scotians, if not weekly, then during the course of most months of the year. User fees do affect us.

The third substantial reason, along with the two I just pointed out, is that the downloading to municipalities, we've gone through a long discussion here in the House and whatever way you frame it, municipalities are picking up further costs to them as a result of government not taking over services that they were promised in the MOU. We will see all Nova Scotians get an increase on their property taxes as a result of this downloading to the municipalities.

That's all I really needed to point out about the Financial Measures (2011) Bill and we are obviously not supporting this, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and we would echo the concerns that I've just heard from my honourable colleague over here. We have difficulty supporting this bill. We've expressed it earlier in the Legislature, in the earlier readings of this bill. We stand with the municipalities. We look at municipalities as partners and we are all in this together. At the end of the day, we should be making decisions together that are in the best interests of Nova Scotians.

Shifting responsibilities between different levels of government - in that case, if we're shifting responsibilities and we're breaking a funding agreement, we're creating an imbalance and it's no different than if the federal government did it to this province and if you buy into that logic, then this government shouldn't be doing what's it's doing to municipalities.

The other matter that we have a problem with, with this piece of legislation, has to do with user fees. I brought a suggestion forward in the Legislature during Question Period today, Madam Speaker. How often does that come up, when a member brings forward a constructive suggestion on where the government can save money, nobody is negatively impacted by it? That suggestion would pay the cost of the increase in user fees that's brought forward as part of this piece of legislation.

Madam Speaker, those are the kinds of things that government needs to be putting its focus and attention to, is trying to make government more affordable for Nova Scotians. If we were looking at ideas like taking them seriously and acting upon them, we wouldn't need to increase the cost of user fees. But that's the choice Nova Scotians have and that's the choice they'll have in the future, when they decide who is in the best position to manage government.

Another point though, and I think this shouldn't be lost, I know the honourable Minister of Finance in Opposition had called for transparency, and we agree with that, but we notice that there are no measures in this legislation to provide transparency for those user fees. If Nova Scotians were to ask, why should a user fee cost as much as it does?

There is no way to answer that question because their government is not transparent about the costs that accrue when delivering that service. How can we make sure we're giving Nova Scotians best value for the dollar if we don't care to look at the costs that are underlying these user fees? That is something that I want to highlight again for the government and perhaps it's something they can work towards next year.

There are some other clauses in the bill, Madam Speaker - those are the two main ones that stick out for myself - that have to do with dividend tax rate, a request by CRA to better define something in the income tax, for when Nova Scotians are filing their income tax, we don't have a problem with that. We see the decrease in small business tax and, I mean, that is a good a thing. There are a lot of people like the pharmacists, for instance, and we've been talking a lot about that issue.

There's an example of some small-business people in the province, people who take risks. They choose a riskier lifestyle, as far as generating an income for themselves and their families, and reducing small-business income tax is good for them. Well, we should be rewarding those people, because if we have people taking chances, those are the very people who are driving our economy. I know if there's one thing we could ask for more of in this province is employment opportunities, and why not reward those people who are creating employment opportunities?

Madam Speaker, there are some other items - there are some items about tobacco tax and bus inspectors. We don't have any problem with that but when we look at the lack of transparency around user fees that this government said they wanted to make people aware, to make government transparent, now on the government benches they're deciding not to. We find on the government benches they are deciding not to, we find that it's not acceptable. That is probably the main reason why I cannot support this bill but the other reason is because of the MOU. We've talked about that, its impact on municipalities and ultimately on Nova Scotia property owners. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 27.

A recorded vote has been called for.

Ring the bells. Call in the members.

[4:26 p.m.]

[The Division bells were rung.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

Are the Whips satisfied?

[The Clerk calls the roll.]

[4:43 p.m.]

YEAS

Mr. Landry
Ms. More
Mr. Estabrooks
Ms. Peterson-Rafuse
Mr. Corbett
Mr. Steele
Ms. Maureen MacDonald
Mr. Paris
Ms. Jennex
Mr. MacDonell
Mr. Belliveau
Mr. Preyra
Ms. Zann
Ms. Kent
Ms. Conrad
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Parker
Mr. MacKinnon
Ms. Raymond
Mr. Smith
Mr. Epstein
Mr. Prest
Mr. Ramey
Mr. Skabar
Mr. Whynott
Mr. Morton
Ms. Birdsall
Mr. Boudreau
Mr. Burrill

NAYS

Mr. Samson
Mr. Glavine
Ms. Whalen
Mr. McNeil
Mr. Manning MacDonald
Mr. d'Entremont
Mr. Baillie
Mr. Bain
Mr. Porter
Mr. MacMaster
Mr. MacLeod
Mr. Younger
Ms. Regan
Ms. Casey
Mr. Colwell
Mr. Theriault
Mr. G. MacLellan
Mr. Z. Churchill

THE CLERK: For, 29. Against, 18.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

[GOVERNMENT BUSINESS]

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. 62.

Bill No. 62 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

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

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 62 for second reading. These are amendments to the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. The Dartmouth Common has struggled to remain a central part of Dartmouth's identity for all. The Dartmouth Common should be a space for families and friends to come to gather to enjoy the green space and parks, a space to host community events. It is an oasis in the centre of the urban core and these amendments will protect it for future use.

For far too long, the Dartmouth Common has been a topic of unproductive debate. Not only was it not always clear what could be done on the Dartmouth Common, it was also unclear what the municipality could do with this land. These amendments bring clarity, define roles and set out in legislation the intended use of the Dartmouth Common and the roles of the municipality and the province in protecting the Common.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. There's just a little too much chatter in here this evening. I wonder if the members would take their conversations outside the Chamber so we can listen to the honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

MR. MACDONELL: Thank you. Any development or expansion of the buildings or parking lots that already exist on the Dartmouth Common will require the agreement and consent of both levels of government. The province and HRM will collaborate on these decisions to ensure the community benefits. These amendments bring the right balance to the future of the Dartmouth Common; it will be a space that can be used to host community events and business can participate in those events. The Dartmouth Common brings vibrancy and energy to the community and all residents can be proud of it and use it together.

The province has ensured the integrity of the Dartmouth Common and the Common will not just be part of Dartmouth's history, it will be carefully protected for use by today's families and by future generations. I look forward to any comments by members opposite on this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, it's interesting, the timing of second reading on this bill was particularly interesting since just up the road council is debating their response to this bill, a bill which the government had committed it would actually work with council on but in fact did not do so as we've heard today. I would start my remarks by quoting a councillor and former mayor of Dartmouth, Gloria McCluskey, but most of what she said this morning about it is actually unparliamentary and so I can't quote most of what she said.

Mr. Speaker, let me start by saying that I think there is a general interest, a widespread interest, to protect the Dartmouth Common. I know that Mayor Kelly, on behalf of council, wrote a letter to the Premier saying that he and council would be happy to work with the Premier to develop an appropriate bill. Yet, my goodness, weren't they surprised to get notification last week that the bill was coming forward and actually included a number of items that they had concern with.

Then, of course, yesterday we had the Premier stand up and say to the press at his media briefing that he hadn't seen plans and wasn't able to get a copy of plans for the Dartmouth Sportsplex and couldn't address whether those plans might be approved when, in fact, they've been publicly available for over 18 months, have been on television and they're on-line. You know, it's fairly widely known and this has gone through 18 months of public consultation, yet we don't find them included in the bill.

I think, Mr. Speaker, it's important to give some background and some clarity around the issue of the Dartmouth Common and why it exists and why it was there because I think that issue very much puts into context why it's important to protect the Common, but also why there are very serious errors with this bill the way it is currently worded.

Much like many commons, the original intent of the Dartmouth Common was to provide a public space for grazing of livestock. People had been encouraged at that time to leave Europe, to move to a place - Nova Scotia - where they would find more land, where they would have an opportunity to graze their livestock more easily than the overcrowded conditions, particularly in England.

It hadn't quite worked out and somewhere around 1750 and 1751, when the Town of Dartmouth was becoming incorporated, you actually had a situation in Dartmouth where cattle and pigs were wandering through the town streets. There became a necessity to designate land for this specific purpose. The north ridge of Dartmouth, which was toward

the original town plot, was designated for the purpose of grazing land and this would end up being a precursor to the Dartmouth Common. At the time, there was a blockhouse built - it was around 1751 - a blockhouse was built to warn people living in Dartmouth of any coming danger, either from over land or from the harbour.

There were a number of incidents and there were a number of conflicts between the First Nation communities who lived in places such as Tufts Cove and around what is now the Dartmouth community, and the newcomers to Nova Scotia from Europe. Ultimately a treaty was signed between the villagers, in what would become the Town of Dartmouth, and the First Nations. This resulted in them creating a parcel of land that would become the Dartmouth Common. It became the Dartmouth Common as they pushed out beyond the north ridge.

Now, there are a number of interesting things about this land which makes this bill very intriguing to me, especially some of the regulations around the expansion of buildings and the use of land. Because in fact, the bill as proposed today actually violates some of the original intended actions and uses of that Dartmouth Common land. Much of that land, specifically downhill, was actually a copper mine and the top of the land was an iron ore mine and the copper mine eventually migrated to become a gold mine.

The minister and the Premier, yesterday, quite rightly talked about the fact that there has been a dispute over the boundaries of where the Common ends and they're absolutely right, and that's not new. That dispute goes back to 1844. In fact, in 1844 a petition was signed by 124 Dartmouth residents complaining that the boundaries of the Dartmouth Common were being interpreted incorrectly. So this is not a new problem in Dartmouth and this bill is not going to solve that problem. There are a number of people who have already noted that the boundaries in this bill are incorrect. The Premier as much as admitted that in his press briefing yesterday. So, again, we have arbitrary lines being set. So it doesn't actually address the problem, it continues a problem that has existed since 1844.

A number of residents around that time approached Governor Parr, who was governor for Nova Scotia at the time, and asked that a grant be given to create a formal common, much like there is in Halifax. That was turned down. The Dartmouth Common has, from that date, never actually been a legal granted common. It isn't today, it wasn't then. That makes it no less important, mind you, but it never had that official designation. Instead, they went back when they were turned down and they asked for and were awarded an ungranted common. So, it said you need land for grazing your cattle, here you go, go ahead and do that.

All that land didn't ultimately come from the province. The land that we consider the Dartmouth Common has gone up, it's gone down, it's gone up, it's gone down. It started with 50 or 60 acres and then I think many members of the House will be familiar with the Quakers and, of course, they were called the Whalers at the time, which is why we

have the Dartmouth Whalers hockey club, who - a group of them decided to return to Europe and before they did they granted 137 acres of their land to the Town of Dartmouth, to be added to this ungranted common land, for the purpose of pasturing.

Now, again, so we run into the second problem of what happens in terms of the boundaries? Repeatedly, over the next century, there were arguments over whether that land was properly deeded to the Common or whether it was not properly deeded to the Common, whether it was added there, so you can draw a line that includes it or you can draw a line that doesn't include it.

Lo and behold, we then come to what is effectively the provincial government of the day - it is not quite the same - tried three times to pass Acts, tried three times to do what the government is doing today. In 1798, 1868 and 1872 they tried to do exactly what the government is trying to do today and it failed, it didn't work. The result was, they went back to the Town of Dartmouth, which was incorporated by this point, and in 1888 the town council took over charge of the Dartmouth Common and they have retained that control since that time, despite subsequent Acts, for example, in the Charter and so forth that regulate the use. The town council and their predecessors - so now HRM - has retained that ultimate control over that land since 1888, because it was determined three times before then, that the provincial control didn't work. Now here we are trying to revisit history from over 200 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to understand the history and why there are concerns about this bill, because there are potentially some good things about what's being trying to be done with the bill but there are some serious errors with this as well. That's why it's important to understand the history.

In the summer of 1888, when the Common came under control of the Town of Dartmouth, a commission was formed that included the mayor and two councillors and two citizens. The current Premier was obviously not on it then but he became the chair of it much later on, of that same commission and it worked, and I think the Premier would probably say that it worked when he chaired it. I haven't heard him say otherwise.

Following that came developments of a fountain and tree planting, although there's a lot of stories about trees getting damaged by cows that roamed the park because, of course, it was still being used as grazing land and park benches. They were having a problem of what to use the land for and this gets to the heart of this bill, that this bill tries to determine what should be used on that land and this was already determined. It wasn't the same as some of the other commons, where it was going to remain open pastoral lands and open pastoral spaces. In fact, it was determined - the Dartmouth Agricultural Society was formed at the time - and it was determined that those lands should be used for exhibit halls and exhibit spaces, cattle sheds that ended up lining one end of the Common.

The first covered rink in the Town of Dartmouth was built on those lands. In fact, that opened in 1884, around Christmas, the very first one. I know that a couple of members who may disagree with me here and we'll have a debate, but I know the member for Dartmouth South-Portland Valley will agree with me when I say that was one of the tools in Dartmouth being the birthplace of hockey. It goes back to the Starr Manufacturing (Interruptions) See, I knew I was going to start a debate on that one. It's a shame that Windsor still tries to hold that title, even years after it has been shown that the first game was played in Dartmouth and there is plenty of archival evidence and so forth.

This is how this Common land differed. In 1919, the Common became a fairground - it evolved over time, it became a fairground - and the sole purpose of it becoming a fairground in 1919 was for the Dartmouth Hospital Trust. Now, as it happens, they never got the hospital built until 1976, but that's when they started raising money to build a hospital in Dartmouth, 1919, and that's what the purpose of the Common land was for a number of years - it was a fairground, to raise money for that - where the Holiday Inn now stands, which I know is not part of the boundaries that are talked about in this bill.

Mayor Kelly has already talked about the fact that there is no talk about what happens to private lands when they cease their existing function, but that was land that was only supposed to be leased for 21 years to an athletic club - the Chebucto Club - for a baseball pitch and a track. Yet, still, here we are years later (Interruptions) You know, I think the member for Dartmouth South-Portland Valley and I are going to have to get the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism a copy of the book and the history of hockey in Dartmouth and so forth - baseball, we won't take credit for that yet.

This is where it becomes important when we look at the Sportsplex. Facilities on the Dartmouth Common were always envisioned as part of the Common and as early as 1921, when the Dartmouth Athletics Association was formed, they started by suggesting to build toboggan runs, to keep kids from sledding on the street. Then they took over the rink and they looked at other recreational facilities.

The problem was not the fact that there were encroachments from recreation facilities or from schools, which I'll talk about in a little while, but it's the fact that it was the government itself that was encroaching on the land, just like what has happened on the Halifax Common. In 1931, they took Thistle Street and carved out Thistle Street from the Dartmouth Common, and the quote at the time from an early publication was: The expansion of Thistle through the common to Wyse Road, to relieve traffic and to make a short-cut to Highway Nos. 7 and 18, which are of course now Main Street and Highway No. 118.

The problem wasn't recreation facilities that were encroaching on the Dartmouth Common; it was government itself that was going in and building highways and roads, often the provincial government itself. I don't think there were a lot of complaints when, in 1951, the Dartmouth Memorial Rink was built where the Dartmouth Sportsplex sits now.

Many of the problems that we talk about today - you know, as I said, in 1884 they were talking about the boundaries and arguing about the boundaries. Well, today we hear people talking about vandalism, vehicles and concerns in the forested park there with police. Well, in 1935, the biggest issue police had on the Dartmouth Common was vandalism. It hasn't changed in 80 years or more.

This bill, as I understand it, is about worrying about encroachments on the Dartmouth Common, and yet it doesn't deal with a lot of what took place. We need to understand that some of the encroachments actually happened as a result of plebiscites and votes by residents of Dartmouth, rightly or wrongly. I mean, we look back and we go - back then, I'm sure they said, look, there are all kinds of trees and green space and we can give up a bit, but I don't think if you had a plebiscite in Dartmouth today, anybody would agree to give up any of that land.

Now the Common - depending on what you consider the Common - is somewhere from 26 to 60 acres, down from its original almost 300, if you included the Quaker lands, originally. It was early trails. It was the fact that in 1840 they took a chunk of the Common and built housing and in the Dartmouth directories of the day, they actually listed people's address as Dartmouth Common and that's how you'd find people. Some of the people who lived there were people like Alexander Lyle and John Fairbanks and some of those famous industrialists of the day. There were other things that were taken - it wasn't just that the old burial ground was taken out of the Dartmouth Common in 1835. In 1860 they took more land to build other cemeteries. In 1877 they built a school on the lands which was destroyed in the Halifax Explosion, and then the rinks that I talked about.

Many of these encroachments were supported by repeated plebiscites, including one in 1915 which asked residents whether they wanted to give up a chunk of the Common to build housing and to build lots in an area that's now bounded, roughly, by Windmill Road, Wyse Road and Lyle Street - and it passed. The residents of the day voted on that and they decided they wanted to give up part of the Common to build housing lots.

While I agree with many of the people who talk about the idea that it's a shame that we've lost some of these Common lands, they are absolutely right, but let's not forget some lands were lost through a democratic process where people of the day voted to give up those lands to create housing. In 1935, one of the cemeteries was created by a plebiscite, they had a plebiscite as to whether the church could take land and create a cemetery and that is exactly what happened. I note that this bill actually includes some of that in some of that land.

Then it was the province and the education board - I don't know what they would have been called at the time - but in the 1950s they took land to build Dartmouth High School and Bicentennial School - two excellent schools. Now the Minister of Education is seeing to it that Dartmouth High School is renovated and it's going to continue to serve that use.

We lost land for the Macdonald Bridge approaches and then in 1961, when the Dartmouth Athletics Association folded up shop, they didn't give the land back, they gave it to the Holiday Inn - I don't know if it was called the Holiday Inn at the time, but they built a hotel and it's now the Holiday Inn. Then the Dartmouth Shopping Centre ended up sitting on Dartmouth Common land.

Nowhere in this bill is there a provision around land that was either granted properly or improperly for the Dartmouth Shopping Centre. Nowhere is there the fact that Scotiabank is sitting over there on Dartmouth Common land. What happens if that ceases to be a Scotiabank, does government get first right of refusal to return that land to the Dartmouth Common? But we're worried about the Dartmouth Sportsplex expanding or a building like that expanding without Cabinet approval when the very original purpose of this land - or secondary purpose, I guess, after grazing - was for use by the people of the Town of Dartmouth at the time, actually, as recreational facilities and often enclosed recreational facilities. It just doesn't make any sense - that was the whole point of this land for much of the time.

We know that in 1957 the town hall was built and I'm sure many of us remember going to the Dartmouth Library and the old Dartmouth Heritage Museum. I spent many many days as a kid wondering around the old Dartmouth Museum when it was on the second floor of the Dartmouth Library. The Premier seems concerned that the municipality can't be trusted to return that land to Common land when, in fact, what did they do when that building was torn down? There was no, oh, we should sell this off, we should build a parking lot, we should do this. In fact, they shrunk the parking lot that was there, they grassed the site over and that is now open space. So what evidence do we have that the municipality can't be trusted to continue their stewardship of those lands and return lands to public open space?

This bill suddenly says you must do that, that's the only choice you have. You can go and build a facility to support the school or to expand the Sportsplex unless you come to us. It doesn't make any sense to me. Believe me there are enough people involved. You only have to look back - and the Premier talked about this gentleman, Leighton Dillman, and the Leighton Dillman Scenic Garden is now named after this gentleman who never got any pay. From the 1950s on, he kept the gardens, built the gardens and the stone walls, and people would come and help him. I never had the privilege of meeting him but I know other members of the House did. He was actually made Citizen of the Year in 1963 by the Dartmouth Common and that's what the Common is about. It's about people who have protected this land.

It strikes me that what has happened here is the municipality had an original plan for a transit terminal. They went back to the public, and through public consultation asked them to move it and change it around. The public asked that this be moved around and it was done through public consultation. The Premier didn't like it at first - I don't know whether he likes it now, but at first he seemed very concerned that the transit terminal was

moved. A transit terminal that is widely used, it's busy, is a safety issue for the employees of Metro Transit and the users of transit and is overburdened. Then he says: I'm going to do this bill, I'm going to do something to protect that land.

I don't believe that the residents who were part of the public consultations or the municipality were trying not to protect the Dartmouth Common, I think they were trying to ensure that we've promoted the use of transit and created a safe environment and supported the wishes of the employees of Metro Transit and the residents who use Metro Transit and all the people who came to this consultation. I don't think that the municipality is looking to go and dig up the Dartmouth Common and pave it over - it just seems ridiculous that anybody would think that - and there would be an uprising in Dartmouth if it ever happened.

In my view, the issues with this bill - I think there are some key issues. First of all, the renovation of the Sportsplex, which has now gone through 18 months of public consultation, should be grandfathered in this bill. It shouldn't have to now go to Cabinet for approval which again would delay the process, just like the reason that we don't have the new bridge terminal for the buses built now is because it got delayed and they missed the construction season because of the delays in approval of those amendments.

We don't want to see another project delayed, especially something that has already gone through so much public consultation and, frankly, I really haven't heard much by way of concern about the design or the plans the Sportsplex has. Why are they doing that? They're doing that because they want to serve the needs of the community and they want to be able to retain their lower rates so that it stays as an accessible recreation facility. Frankly, when we look at the history of the Dartmouth Common, these enclosed recreation facilities were part of the fabric that made up the Dartmouth Common and what made it unique to other areas. I think that absolutely has to be in this bill.

The second issue is that you have a number of parking lots that are protected in here and the municipality can't do anything with them. If they want to change these - say, for the sake of argument, there are certain types of accessory buildings which I guess might be permitted, but you need the flexibility. Paved parking lots are what we're talking about at the moment, which are protected in this bill - in some cases, overly protected. It doesn't make any sense.

The third issue is, before this bill passes, somebody needs to sit down with the folks up the road and talk about the boundaries and agree to the boundaries. I know that they have concerns that there is land that was added that's in the rail marshalling yards that they can't figure out why it's even included on the map - it's one of the PID numbers that is included and it was never considered part of the Dartmouth Common. It was a piece of land that was purchased for park purposes, absolutely, and is currently in the CN marshalling yards. But there's a difference between the restrictions that are proposed in this bill and

what has always been proposed as the waterfront redevelopment of Dartmouth once those marshalling yards, hopefully, move one day.

This would restrict that. It makes no sense because the whole reason the municipality bought that piece of land - and I might add, bought that piece of land within the past 20 years - is not part of the marshalling yards, it was part of shipping activities at the time the Common was created. It makes no sense that PID is included because it was purchased for the purpose of actually building things along the waterfront and doing a public waterfront redevelopment at some point in the future should the land assembly work. It was almost sold off a number of years ago as a surplus piece of property because nobody could remember why they purchased it until - I think it was former councillor Bruce Hetherington who spoke up and said, no, we have a reason for that. It's good they've kept that. So that's another concern with this bill.

The other issue is that this bill, in my view, absolutely should address - if you're going to put a boundary in, put a boundary in that covers those private lands that should be part of the Common. Now how you deal with them, maybe you just include that boundary for the purpose of recognizing that they were originally on common land. I recognize there are private property rights, and it is limited in terms of what you can do, but if we're going to talk about restricting what you can do on other parts of the property, why wouldn't we at least have a discussion about the fact that even if in name only we say that we recognize this as part of the Common, it should never have been given up. I think it's horrible that there's a mall on part of the Common. That mall prevents there from being a beautiful gateway as you come off the Macdonald Bridge, but we could at least be recognizing the fact that those lands are part of it.

The other part to this is, I just don't understand - the only thing, if anything should require Cabinet approval, it should be that if the municipality ever wanted to dispose of some of the lands that create part of the Common, and hopefully Cabinet would say no. I don't understand why it is that designs and changes to facilities would have to go to Cabinet. Maybe if they want to build something, a building, but to change an existing building, that makes no sense to me.

The very last thing that I want to talk about with respect to this bill is I think it does beg the question of why the Dartmouth Common is being treated in this way and yet over on the Halifax Common, where a provincial building, the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre, is looking to expand onto the former site of the Queen Elizabeth II High School, is not being covered by the same restrictions. If this bill were applied to the Halifax Common, what they are proposing there would not be allowed, because it says that it reverts to open space.

That is not going to revert to open space, just as when the Nova Scotia Community College was torn down it didn't revert to open space; they built Citadel High School. When the VG Hospital, which I understand is looking at different options on their site and I've

heard rumours that they might want to do buildings or something on part of where that parking lot is, well that wouldn't be allowed by this bill because that's part of the Halifax Common land and would revert to open space.

You know, it probably should revert to open space but there's no bill covering that so it really begs the question as to why the same principles are not being applied to the Halifax Common when the Halifax Common, in fact, was granted as open space whereas the Dartmouth Common was never given a grant as open space and was used for a variety of enclosed uses, from agricultural display buildings to exhibit halls, to horticultural halls and indoor recreation facilities. So you are prohibiting the original use on one side of the harbour, yet you are allowing things which were not the original use on the Halifax side. That makes no sense to me at all.

I know we've all heard them, I think they're called Friends of Halifax Common, there's an organization that is very concerned about that and has expressed concern around a number of projects there.

Yes, we need to protect open space. Yes, the Dartmouth Common is a special place and it is a place that is certainly part of my growing up and it's part of many people's growing up. I can remember them tearing down the old Park School on the corner and watching from my swimming lessons in the Sportsplex, at the time, and even last year, standing up on the hill is the best place to watch the Queen's viewing of the parade of military ships in the harbour. It's the best place in the city to watch that.

There are problems with the way the bill is worded. I want this to be a bill that is something I could vote for and support but there are critical issues. I think, especially when the mayor and council wrote a letter to the Premier saying they would be willing to work with the Premier to create a bill that they could all support and then that didn't happen, I just think that's not the right way to approach this when three times in the 18th Century the provincial government tried to do this, and it didn't work out, and they had to hand it back to the town to deal with. Why would you try to do it again without their support? It makes no sense.

It's only some minor changes that need to be done to this bill; it's only some minor changes to make this work for everybody so that it's not heavy-handed but achieves the goals and also addresses those concerns. It is my very sincere hope that the Premier and the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations - although I do understand that this is a pet project of the Premier, and I don't want to take away from the minister on that, but it's my hope that they will listen and look at those changes. They've already heard it in the past few days from the two councillors representing either side, Mr. Jim Smith and Ms. Gloria McCluskey, and let's accept that they have the ear of people in their communities as well, that these are real concerns and at the very, very least, this bill has to grandfather in the proposed changes for the Dartmouth Sportsplex.

My goodness, Mr. Speaker, they're not looking at building a road to expand the Dartmouth Sportsplex. They're not looking at taking any of the existing green space. So, yes, people can stand up and say, well, I'm sure Cabinet will approve it but we know what the delays cost in terms of getting the Dartmouth Bridge Terminal done for the buses. We don't want to see unnecessary delays waiting for Cabinet approval. Because, Cabinet, I know, has a lot of issues on the table and it's not a matter of calling up Cabinet and you have a meeting that afternoon and it's approved. I understand that things don't happen like that and I understand why. Sometimes we wish they would happen that fast, I'm sure.

Mr. Speaker, I do hope that the Premier and the minister will give consideration to those concerns, because they're real concerns. They're about doing this right and not recreating the mistakes, mistakes that were made three times in the 18th Century, only to have to turn the whole thing back over to the town anyway. We can do this right and I hope the Premier and the minister will give consideration to that, between now and the end. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: If I recognize the minister it will be to close the debate.

The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Dartmouth East for his comments - I really appreciated some of what he said. I think that that little bit of history, if he was accurate with it, I found that quite interesting, and I would say that certainly, if you look at those pieces of legislation and the time when they were entered, certainly, I think the residents of the area would have felt, you know, if you use up part of the Common, that there's other lands. In my memory, I can think of going beyond the City of Dartmouth, just a short distance and you were in agricultural land. So I can certainly think that the residents might not think that using up some of that land, closer to the city core, would have been such an issue with so much other available land, but that's not the case anymore.

Mr. Speaker, certainly this is about protection, it's to try to stop the eroding. That's why the actual parcels have been identified by PID numbers and the member can debate that. I do want to make one point. The member is right about the letter from the mayor. He was concerned about this and the transit terminal. He was concerned about protection in legislation, he encouraged that, but I want members to know that for eight months staff from Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations have met with staff from the HRM and I would think the mayor would have to be aware of that long process of engagement between Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations and the staff of the HRM around this piece of legislation. The community council is certainly in the loop on this piece of legislation. They've been involved.

So with those comments, Mr. Speaker, I want the members of the House, the people from the City of Dartmouth who are concerned about the Common to know that this is

about protection, not about erosion. So, anyway, with those comments, I move second reading of Bill No. 62.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 62. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, after making considerable progress today, with the help of the other two Parties, that concludes the government's business for today. I will now turn it over to the House Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party for Opposition Day business.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Progressive Conservative House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we'll be meeting from the hours of 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. After the daily routine and Question Period we will be debating Resolution 1239, and we'll be debating Bill No. 61, the Pension Benefits Act.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House do now rise, to meet again tomorrow at 2:00 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We have now reached the moment of interruption and the topic chosen earlier reads:

“Therefore be it resolved that this House recognize the Bell Park French Immersion School for its unique educational approach and importance to the local community.”

ADJOURNMENT**MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

EDUC. - BELL PARK SCH.: IMPORTANCE - RECOGNIZE

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this very important topic in my community and, indeed, outside of my community. During a recent study that was commissioned by the Halifax Regional School Board, the Gunn's Leadership Consulting Services made some recommendations that were very disturbing to the community. I have some of this here and I will read a very short part of it - and then table it - recommending that the French Immersion Program at the Bell Park Academic Centre may indeed be cancelled in the coming years.

To give you some background on this, the French Immersion Program in Bell Park Academic Centre is the only French Immersion Program in a large geographic area and, indeed, children come to that school from outside the area to take French immersion. Now, the rules for French immersion at the Bell Park Academic Centre aren't the same as the ones for the French schools - for the French schools you have to have a French background and French family members; at Bell Park it allows people the opportunity to send their children from Primary to Grade 6 into a French Immersion Program that otherwise they would not have this opportunity.

Now this is a very, very special school. This school should be a model in the country of how a school should operate. They have an incredible staff, incredible administration, they have a French Immersion Program, but, besides that, it's a racially integrated school and this is by choice. A lot of the parents bring their children here from outside the community, especially the Black community bring children here, as well as from North Preston and East Preston already go there, as well as the kids from Lake Echo and Mineville - so it's a very diverse group of children who go there. I can tell you by going to functions at the school and dealing with the parents and the staff at the school, it's a very special place. Everybody works as one unit. There is no discussion about any racial disparity at all. It is, indeed, a model school. I can't give enough credit to the parents, the teachers, the staff, and the administration of that school of the way the school is operated. The school is just incredible - there's no other way to describe it.

One of the parents said at a meeting we had recently about the French Immersion Program, a gentleman from East Preston said: my child would not have this opportunity to learn French immersion any place else. He said: I can't afford to send them to another school and get tutored for this, but it gives my children an opportunity to learn French and, indeed, get more secure positions in jobs and a better future for my children. I think that says it all and it's very important that this program continue.

Also, I'll read from a document here that just in a very short time, in five days, the parents of the - I have the copy of the document that will be presented to the Halifax Regional School Board and I'll read what it says - it's a petition to save Early French Immersion at Bell Park Academic Centre. "This petition is in support of the longevity of the French and English programming at Bell Park Academic Centre. We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who urge the Halifax Regional School Board to act now to support the Early French Immersion Program at Bell Park Academic Centre."

There are a few names here, but approximately over 200 people signed that document in support of that program. When you look at that and see how involved the community was with that, you can see how committed the community is, how committed the community and the school are to maintaining and improving the French Immersion Program.

There has been some downturn in the class sizes in French immersion, but there's also been in the English program. If you look at the history of the thing and the history of the French immersion, you'll see that indeed, this year the enrolment is going to be up again. So, as time goes on and as people become aware of this, because the school can't advertise this - they're not allowed to advertise this French Immersion Program, which is very unfortunate, they should be able to go out to the community and say, we have spaces here for French immersion students.

Indeed, we've had people who have moved into the community, realizing the importance of French immersion in the program and moved to the community and bought homes in the community because of this program. If this program is lost to that school, or to any school indeed, I think our education system will suffer greatly and so will our society over time.

I can tell you from personal experience, I travelled all over the world and I can only speak English, unfortunately, but if I would have had the opportunity to learn French, it would have been a lot easier to do business outside of Canada and within Canada. I remember going to a very intense meeting in the Gaspé, a very French area, and nobody spoke English except one gentleman who went with me and it was translated. It was very difficult for me and very difficult for the people I talked to, or trying to explain very technical terms to them. But indeed, we did get through it but it would have been a lot easier for me and for them if I could have spoken French.

I think this is a very important thing for our community, very important to the citizens of the community. As I say, even though the school's geographic area is only Lake Echo, Mineville, East Preston, it also takes in kids in the French Immersion Program, from Porters Lake and other areas outside of there, so the school really services a large area. If you could just go and see the school for one day, you would understand what I am talking about. I've had lots of difficulties in other schools from time to time but never this school.

I know they have a Martin Luther King awards presentation every year and it is kids from both communities - the white community and the black community - who get these awards. It's so important and you see how it works and you see the kids are all playing together, working together, all the parents working with each other, for one goal, one goal and one goal only. The goal is to educate their children the best way they possibly can. I can tell you that when the kids leave that school and they go to Grade 7, they are well prepared.

The parents wouldn't move their kids from there for anything and especially when it comes to the French immersion. I will go back to the gentleman who said it, and I think this is the gist of the whole thing: I cannot afford to put my children anywhere else and I want to give them an education in French, because I know that when they apply for a job, that they'll have more likelihood of getting that job and a better job as time goes on and therefore, will be able to look after their family a lot better.

I think that's true, when you look at the requirements now of the federal government, where you really have to have French, in the community, in the civil service, to move forward in a job, I think it's very, very important. I think that's also going to be true, and shortly, in Nova Scotia and in other areas. I mean why should anyone not have the opportunity to speak French, if that's their native language, or if that's their language of choice. I mean we are a French-English country and it also gives opportunities to people to go to other places in Canada to work, to go to Quebec and work. You can do other things in this country and places in this country.

I know, we've seen - I used to represent Chezzetcook, an Acadian community, and in my generation, the people in that community told their children not to speak French because it was a detriment to getting employment and because of that, they lost the French language. Now, they're trying to bring the French language back in the community. I think Bell Park has gone a long way, in order to start this process over again. I think as people become aware that the service is available at Bell Park and the quality of teaching that's going on there and the quality of the school itself and the people who work there and the parents who support the school and the parents' associations there, we'll see that more children will go to that community, to learn French and enrol in that program.

I think if the school board was even to consider the elimination of French immersion in the Bell Park Academic Centre, I think that would be a crime against the children in our province and indeed, in our community.

There are a lot of things we talk about passionately here, but there's nothing better than having opportunities for young people and families that never had those opportunities before and can have them no other way.

I'm looking for the school board to consider this and consider this very actively and indeed not decide to close this important program down for the children and for our

community. Again, this is a model school, a school that should really be reviewed to see how they work, so other schools can live up to the standard they have set. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MS. MICHELLE RAYMOND: Bonjour M. le Président. Il me fait grand plaisir et honneur de me lever en adressant la proposition ci-dessus aujourd'hui au sujet de formation de français immersion en Nouvelle-Écosse.

Education is a priority of government and it would be wonderful if, in fact, every member of this House were equally comfortable in both of our official languages. It is something which is in process; it has certainly been one of the goals of the federal government, for a number of years, to ensure that there is an increasing amount of French capacity in the population across the nation. But we're not there yet.

In Nova Scotia we put students and learning first. Certainly every child does deserve a quality education and Nova Scotian families put their trust in public schools, providing their children with the resources that they need to develop all sorts of capacities in literacy and languages in general, in math and sciences, social studies, et cetera, also to become critical thinkers and engaged citizens.

On a fait, en étant des citoyens engagés, ou en français, ou en anglais, c'est surtout important de savoir ce qui est une des plus importantes valeurs des écoles de notre province. And, on est heureux de pouvoir offrir la formation immersive en français ici.

Learning French as a second language does open up many opportunities for young people. Students who learn to speak French will find it is a great advantage to them after graduation. The ability to communicate in both of Canada's official languages and being bilingual expands both career opportunities and knowledge opportunities, and social opportunities in later life.

I can remember occasions in which there were not rooms full of people who spoke all the same language, but as long as some of them spoke one of two languages, communication was possible. Research shows us - it hardly takes research, simple inquiry shows us that French immersion graduates do feel very strongly about that program. I personally think that one of the strengths of French immersion is that it engages parents as well. No matter what the program may be, what the school may be, it is a huge reinforcement to any school community; it is reinforcement to the learning of the students, if parents believe in the school as well. To participate in a French Immersion Program to have one's children participate in a French Immersion Program, which is not the default program in our province, is to have parents who have placed a strong value in a particular school community.

A recent survey of French immersion graduates from Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School in Antigonish, covering the years from 1994 to 2009, showed that 91 per cent of the French immersion graduates had enrolled in post-secondary programs. I believe this speaks, however, not only to the strength of the French Immersion Program but to the strength of an education which is fully supported by the parents of the children involved.

I understand that learning French is not for everyone, but those French immersion graduates would tell you that their ability to speak French has improved their job prospects. Even when it's not a requirement, it is an asset. As far as the French Immersion Program in the province goes, Nova Scotia has two entry points of French immersion: the early immersion and the late, at Primary and at Grade 7. Both are supported by the Department of Education. It is, however, up to the school boards to decide, exactly, what will be the distribution, within their boards, of the French Immersion Program.

It is an optional program, not necessarily tied to any particular school. It was begun as early as 1977 here in schools. Chacune des sept commissions scolaires dans la province ont offerts une ou les deux de ces programmes de formation d'immersion.

The interest in French immersion has grown, no matter that numbers have been declining, still, enrolment per capita in French second language in our Nova Scotia schools is above the national average. I think this is an important reflection on our very unusual and deep cultural mix in the province.

We are a province, I often say, sometimes, of refugees, but a province of many many cultures who have come here and who have found ways to live well, over many years. I am very glad that our Department of Education supports, in so many ways, the learning of both official languages and both of the main streams of language in our province today.

Nova Scotia does offer mandatory French second language programming, which is core French from Grade 4 to 9. I'm afraid I'm only a veteran of that program, I would continue this way and expect everyone else to understand me equally well if I were a veteran of a longer program, but I'm afraid that's what I had. It can be offered as a course credit in Grades 10 to 12 and all the other French second language programs are optional. It is, as I said, up to school boards to decide which programs they deliver and they do carefully consider the needs of their specific student population.

In March 2011, just recently, the Halifax Regional School Board did receive a report on the French Immersion Program and the board and provided this to the Department of Education. It shows a decline in enrolment in French immersion at Bell Park since 2008 to 2009 and the report recommends that the board should, during the next year, evaluate whether or not there is the potential to grow or at least to stabilize the program.

The report also recommends to the school board the recommendation that they ought to consult with the school and community before any decisions are made. Further to what I was saying, any education is best supported when it has the full endorsement of the parent community and I believe that an effective consultation by the school board, with the school and the school community, will, in fact, reveal whether or not there is full parental support and engagement for a continued French immersion program in this school.

It is my understanding that the board has made no decision to eliminate the immersion program at Bell Park and that there will be a Primary French immersion class at Bell Park in September. As we know there is, sometimes, attrition from entering classes in French immersion, however, the existence of a Primary class should assure, at least, the first continuing year, and if there is full parental support and community support for the students in this, then I have no doubt that they will continue in their French immersion programming.

I have great respect for French immersion programming and I have seen wonderful results, myself. As often as the programs have been moved around within the school board, they have consistently produced students who are very good learners as well as very good speakers of French.

The report has called that the board ought to study the existence of this particular program at Bell Park and certainly doesn't recommend that it ought to be eliminated. The board will not make any decisions before consulting with the school and the Department of Education fully respects the board's role in conducting these consultations in making the decisions on where to locate appropriate programming within.

However, in concluding, I really would like to thank all our province's French language educators, because in the various venues and forms in which they do conduct French language education, whether it is children who are entering the school system for the first time and also entering a total immersion program in a foreign language, which is French, for the first time; or whether it is going into the classroom with the flash charts of nouns, verbs, agreements, and complements and spelling, dealing with the Grade 4 student in a very academic context in which it will continue through to Grade 9; or whether it is the Grade 7 late immersion teacher who takes young junior high students from their English learning experiences and broadens it to a French language learning experience; or whether it is in fact the dedicated educators of CSAP, the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial, who educate the children of Francophone parents in the school, and in the province, entirely in French.

All of these teachers and educators and their supporters are extraordinary dedicated people who are working to, not only promote the education of the children in their care, but also to preserve the remarkable cultural diversity of our province. I would like to thank and to congratulate them and to thank and to congratulate the board and the Department of Education, which supports these possibilities, and I would encourage all parents to take

advantage - even if it is only on an experimental basis - of what is on offer in French language education. If they choose not to, to be well aware, that this is the choice and the best thing that one can give to one's children, is the support of their education - in French, in English, but at all times. Thank you very much, Monsieur le Président, je vous remercie.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Merci beaucoup, M. le Président. J'aimerais premièrement répéter les mêmes mots d'encouragement aux enfants dans la région, dans nos régions acadiennes et non-acadiennes en Nouvelle-Écosse, de prendre l'opportunité de prendre des études en français.

I would like to first of all echo the same comments as the member who just spoke before me and to say that all Nova Scotians with children, all Nova Scotians, should take the opportunity to take other schooling in either the French language or immersion. In my particular area of Argyle, even though it is 60 per cent Acadian, it does have two immersion programs as well, along with the CSAP's French program. What we have found is that many of the parents have found it important, if they don't go to that French school, that they still want them to learn French anyway and it has been very important.

I, myself, during my schooling - because let's not forget, immersion in the official languages didn't date until probably the 1970s. So when I was getting to school, immersion was starting to be important and understood. I guess we might have been sort of the first batch of immersion children versus core French students, sort of the preliminary of the CSAP, as the school system did revolve around.

Did it do us any good? Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it did us a tremendous amount of good. You know, if I look at what I've been able to do during my career - here especially, as a politician, as an MLA for Argyle - ultimately it is my capability in the French language that has pushed me into a few places that I don't think I ever would have been able to go. That's what I tell students a lot, is that the French is what's going to be able to push you that extra step along in your career.

Mr. Speaker, what we see today and really more into the core of the discussion this evening, brought forward by the Liberal Party in this particular case, really revolved in and around Bell Park School and its challenge right now on looking at its immersion program. As we know, on Monday, May 2nd, there was a community meeting to be held. I haven't really had the response from that but it was to discuss this very issue - the parents, the people interested in their community - because really what's happening is because of upcoming cuts to education by this government, school boards are having to make difficult decisions insofar as programming, teachers and programs within their board.

I can tell you, I've heard this a bunch of times in the Tri-County Regional School Board. Sometimes some of the first programs really are the immersion programs that sort

of float to the top of the cut pile because of their complexity and because of the cost. You are running in some schools two sets of classes, two sets of school teachers, two sets of almost everything in order to truly provide an immersion program in the school system. The SAC for Bell Park School is in initial stages of mobilizing all parents and the student body and all residents of the entire school catchment area - and that includes Lake Echo, Mineville, East Preston - for an action planned meeting in anticipation of the opportunity to present the case to maintain the French Immersion Program at Bell Park, at the HRSB meeting that is going to be happening on May 25th.

Mr. Speaker, there is little doubt of the importance of French immersion in this province and, you know, ultimately I would be there with them saying that French immersion is extremely important to us and to those communities because it's another benefit to living in such a beautiful part of our province, to not being disadvantaged of not being able to get a program like that. Many parts of this province don't have the opportunity to get an education in French or to get an immersion program in all areas. That's very difficult because ultimately, as I started off in my discussion, it's the capability of being able to speak in both of our official languages.

We have been a bilingual country pretty much forever and in order to accept not only the language to be able to do business, to speak to friends in two languages, but to truly understand the cultures that have made up this great country. If we look at the founding fathers of this country, going back to 1604 and the arrival of the French, to the arrival of all other cultures to this country over time and exactly what we have become as a people - sitting in this House of Assembly, we see many people of different cultures, of different backgrounds. It creates a richness that I don't think can be copied in other places or duplicated in other places.

The idea that I stand here as an Acadian or that the member for Richmond would stand here as an Acadian versus what somebody from an anglophone background, an Anglo-Saxon background or the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, with his African Nova Scotian background. You know we take all this and put it together and I think we can come up with making this province a better place.

My final comment is basically the richness of the Acadian culture. That is echoed not only in our French school board but also in learning French and being part of that community as an immersion student. In 2004, we were able to celebrate the arrival of the French to truly be Nova Scotia. We welcomed francophones from all over the world - especially those of Acadian descent - to celebrate this greatness of exactly where we came to, the first permanent establishment in North America at the time.

It wasn't just the celebration that they came for but there was - in French we call it *les retombées*. But the return on that investment was not just monetary, people coming to visit and spending money in a community and all that, but it was *la fiertée*, to be truly proud of who we are. I've seen that over and over again in our communities, that it's once again

something to be proud of. To be francophone, to be Acadian, to be a very integral, important part of, of course, our province.

It saddens me when I see a school truly having to relook at its programming, that Bell Park is going to have to do. I'm hoping that through discussions with the school board and hopefully the discussion with the school board and the department and the minister - because I know the minister, and I've had many opportunities to talk to her about the whole issue of declining enrolments and cuts to education. I know she is sincere in trying to find opportunities to mitigate some of these problems. This is a problem for that community and I think that maybe a resolve can be found.

The only time we're going to be able to find out about that is almost getting kind of late because if we're looking at May 25th as a true meeting with the Halifax Regional School Board, we look at the school board having to make and render its decision on it. If they are going to be going back to the department and to the minister saying, really we need this to make this work. I worry that we're getting late in the year to be able to be able to tell parents that this program is going to be available in this place in September.

Parents are going to have to make a decision that if the immersion program is not available at Bell Park - I don't know where the nearest school is that they might be able to trip to, but I don't think there is one. They may have to make a decision to truck their kids great distances, if they're going to be available to get them into that program. It would be a shame to know that you've gone through a number of years of immersion programming, but that you're going to lose that step up and get back into the regular programming of English instruction.

I thank the members opposite for their comments on this. I hope there's a resolve found when it comes to Bell Park and I thank you for the opportunity to speak to this resolution tonight. Merci beaucoup.

MR. SPEAKER: Merci beaucoup. I would like to thank all the members tonight for an excellent debate on a very good topic.

We will now rise to sit - as from the motion earlier this afternoon - between the hours of 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 5:56 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1265**

By: Hon. Wayne Gaudet (Clare)

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

Whereas the NDP Government has made the ill-advised decision to get into the paving business, saying it would save money for Nova Scotians; and

Whereas the NDP has already spent nearly \$9 million on paving equipment alone; and

Whereas the NDP awarded tenders for the paving and chip sealing equipment that were 41 per cent higher than the minimum competitive bids, already costing Nova Scotians money for the NDP paving scheme;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly insist that the NDP Government cease its provincial paving operations, stop wasting taxpayer funding and allow the private sector to do its job in a competitive environment.

RESOLUTION NO. 1266

By: Mr. Harold Theriault (Digby-Annapolis)

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

Whereas during the last provincial election the Dexter NDP promised to make life better for Nova Scotian families; and

Whereas both the Premier and the Finance Minister called user fees “across the board tax increases” while in Opposition; and

Whereas on March 25th, during a day already saturated with news events and late in the afternoon, the Dexter NDP tried to sneak through 1,400 user fee hikes, making life more expensive for Nova Scotians from across the province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly condemn the Dexter NDP for hiking user fees and for yet another broken NDP promise.

RESOLUTION NO. 1267

By: Mr. Zach Churchill (Yarmouth)

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

Whereas during the last provincial election the now-Premier promised that there would be no tax hikes; and

Whereas the Dexter NDP has been taking more and more money from Nova Scotians every day by hiking the HST and breaking a promise to index income tax brackets; and

Whereas the Dexter NDP has ensured that property taxes will go up by breaking a promise to the municipalities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly condemn the Dexter NDP for not telling Nova Scotians the true story when it comes to their agenda of endless tax hikes and broken NDP promises.

RESOLUTION NO. 1268

By: Mr. Geoff MacLellan (Glace Bay)

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

Whereas during the last provincial election campaign the now-Premier promised that he would deliver balanced budgets with no tax increases or program cuts; and

Whereas the Dexter NDP have delivered tax hikes, program cuts and deficits since taking office; and

Whereas Nova Scotians are still searching for the return policy on the Dexter NDP who have failed to deliver what they promised to over and over again;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly condemn the Dexter NDP for failing to deliver balanced budgets yet hiking taxes and fees and delivering program cuts and for yet another broken NDP promise.

RESOLUTION NO. 1269

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear fallout disasters were the topic of conversation as people gathered to worship in March at the United Church in River Hebert and asked themselves what they could do to help; and

Whereas many residents from the River Hebert area made boxes of cookies and the children made drawings to deliver to every international student from Japan who was attending Mount Allison University; and

Whereas the outreach and kindness was very much appreciated and made a difference to the students who were concerned about their family and friends back home;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the residents of River Hebert, Cumberland County, on this act of kindness and compassion, and wish them all the best.

RESOLUTION NO. 1270

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas Parrsboro's Sarah Colpitts is only 15 years old and she already has a 2nd Dan Black Belt in Shotokan karate, and has been teaching karate in Parrsboro for two years; and

Whereas Sarah started karate eight years ago in Parrsboro and when the club ended she switched to Amherst, only to start up a Parrsboro club again herself two years ago; and

Whereas Sarah believes there is always more to learn, it's never-ending, and karate is a sport that gives her confidence and self-discipline;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sarah Colpitts on her success and dedication to teaching karate in her community, and wish her continued success.

RESOLUTION NO. 1271

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas Milton King, a Grade 12 student at Oxford Regional Education Centre, is a major winner in this year's school science fair; and

Whereas Milton's project, an exercise vest and belt, earned him a second-place standing in the recent Regional Science Fair in Stellarton; and

Whereas Milton also won a plaque for most original project and a new award called Taking Science to Market, along with a \$1,000 per year, renewable for four years, scholarship to Mount Allison University;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Milton King on his outstanding achievement, and wish him continued success in all his future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1272

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas Spencers Island resident Meggie Spicer is a provincial soccer champion once again after her team, the Dartmouth United Under 18 Girls, defeated South Shore 1-0 during the Nova Scotia Soccer League's Indoor Provincial Championships in Bridgewater; and

Whereas Meggie Spicer has played with Dartmouth United for five years, this being the second year in a row as indoor provincial champions; and

Whereas Spicer is a Grade 12 student at Advocate District High School and will attend the University of New Brunswick in September on an athletic scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Meggie Spicer on her team's championship, and wish her continued success in all her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1273

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas Sarah Collins, of Oxford Regional Education Centre, placed well at the regionals in Sheet Harbour, in the senior girls 65 kg Regional Wrestling Tournament; and

Whereas three of the OREC wrestling ladies placed in this tournament, which will take them to the provincial wrestling tournament; and

Whereas Sarah won the gold medal in the tournament guaranteeing her a spot in the provincials;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Sarah Collins on her gold medal win and wish her continued success in all her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1274

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas Mallory Thompson, of Oxford Regional Education Centre, placed well at the regionals in Sheet Harbour, in the Junior Girls 70-plus kg Regional Wrestling Tournament; and

Whereas three of the OREC wrestling ladies placed in this tournament, which will take them to the provincial wrestling tournament; and

Whereas Mallory Thompson won the gold medal in the tournament guaranteeing her a spot in the provincials;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mallory Thompson on her gold medal win and wish her continued success in all future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1275

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas Maureen Hickman, of Oxford Regional Education Centre, placed well at the regionals in Sheet Harbour, in the Junior Girls 57 kg Regional Wrestling Tournament; and

Whereas three of the OREC wrestling ladies placed in this tournament, which will take them to the provincial wrestling tournament; and

Whereas Maureen Hickman won the bronze medal in the tournament guaranteeing her a spot in the provincials;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Maureen Hickman on her bronze medal win and wish her continued success in all future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1276

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill)

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

Whereas Erica Wicks, business sustainability coordinator for the Colchester Regional Development Agency, believes that businesses should efficiently reuse production waste; and

Whereas for the second year in a row Erica Wicks organized a materials exchange event where businesses, organizations and schools could network in an effort to redirect unwanted equipment, rejects and other materials to others who may be able to use it and therefore redirecting 12 tons of waste from the landfill; and

Whereas Erica Wicks has brought together as many as 17 local businesses and organizations to teach the environmental benefits that are possible by reducing waste, emissions and fuel consumption but that this also has the benefit of saving companies money;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate and commends Erica Wicks and the Colchester Regional Development Agency for initiating

the material exchange project and thank them for their dedication toward making the business community more environmentally friendly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1277

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill)

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

Whereas Joanna Burris, a 15-year-old Grade 10 student at Cobequid Educational Centre in Truro, has been enrolled in French immersion since beginning her education and was speaking French from a very young age; and

Whereas Joanna Burris wrote a French speech for her Grade 9 class that won her the opportunity to attend a regional French public speaking competition where she again won and advanced to the provincial Concours d'Art Oratoire; and

Whereas Joanne Burris also won the provincial Concours d'Art Oratoire which gave her a trip to Ottawa for a one-week, all-expense paid, bilingual trip as part of a group of over 100 people from all over the country, where she was able to visit the Parliament Building, the National Art Gallery, the War Memorial and the theatre and also took part in workshops at the Terry Fox Centre;

Therefore be it resolved the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Joanna Burris for her dedication to being fluent in the French language and for winning the local and provincial French competitions that gave her the opportunity to participate in the trip to Ottawa.

RESOLUTION NO. 1278

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill)

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

Whereas Riley Marshall, a distinguished Truro resident, has been involved for 47 years in all aspects of Rotary Service; and

Whereas Mr. Marshall has often gone beyond the call of duty with regard to the service he has provided to Rotary International; and

Whereas Riley Marshall is the recipient of the 2011 Avenues of Citation award, which is often referred to as "Our Club's Lifetime Achievement Recognition";

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Riley Marshall for receiving the 2011 Avenues of Citation Award and would like to thank him for his lifelong contribution to the Truro Rotary Club and the many benefits that his work has given to the local and international communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 1279

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill)

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

Whereas Shawna (nee Paris) Hoyte, a former Truro resident, is a lawyer with Dalhousie Legal Aid and a clinical therapist at a health centre in Halifax; and

Whereas Shawna Hoyte has received numerous awards for her work in the areas of youth, education and mental health; is the founder of the Black Community Advocates Association of Nova Scotia and sits on various boards and committees in the community; and

Whereas Shawna Hoyte was recently appointed to the Queen's Counsel, which is awarded for demonstration of professional integrity, good character and outstanding contributions to the practice of law;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature recognize the outstanding contributions that Shawna Hoyte has made to her profession as well as to the community and congratulate her for her appointment to the Queen's Counsel.

RESOLUTION NO. 1280

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill)

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

Whereas Truro Toyota is a local car dealership that has been in business in Truro since 1993; and

Whereas Truro Toyota received the highest customer service score amongst all Toyota dealerships in Canada; and

Whereas Truro Toyota has a continued commitment to offering their customers the highest level of service and support possible, resulting in Truro Toyota being voted the best dealership to buy a new or used car as well as the best dealership for service;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Truro Toyota for receiving the highest score for customer service, for being voted the best dealership and for providing outstanding service to the Truro area for the past 18 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 1281

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill)

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

Whereas Ulnooweg Development Group Inc. opened their head office in Millbrook in 1986 and has been providing loans and services to Aboriginal entrepreneurs for 25 years; and

Whereas Ulnooweg understands that Aboriginal business owners have unique experiences and skills that are not necessarily understood by traditional business resources; and

Whereas Ulnooweg Development employs a staff of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal client service representatives who understand the unusual challenges and opportunities that may exist for Aboriginal entrepreneurs therefore working closely with their clients to ensure their success;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Ulnooweg Development Group Inc. for successfully providing 25 years of loans and business services to Aboriginal entrepreneurs throughout Atlantic Canada.

RESOLUTION NO. 1282

By: Mr. Maurice Smith (Antigonish)

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

Whereas French for the Future's 2010-11 national essay contest challenged students to answer the question "Imagine that you have the authority to declare 2011 the International Year of _____ (fill in the blank)! What theme would you choose and why?"; and

Whereas Katherine Pettipas, a Grade 12 student at École acadienne de Pomquet submitted an essay entitled *L'année des casque bleus* about international conflict and the work of UN peacekeepers; and

Whereas Katherine Pettipas was recently chosen one of the winners in the French for the Future essay contest, an award which came with a \$5,000 scholarship to l'Université Sainte-Anne;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House extend congratulations to Katherine Pettipas for her prize winning essay and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1283

By: Mr. Maurice Smith (Antigonish)

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

Whereas Theatre Antigonish is a non-profit community theatre, supported by the people of Antigonish and St. F.X. University, whose mandate is to involve the campus and community residents as participants and audience members in a variety of productions during the winter months; and

Whereas Theatre Antigonish presents the Father Cyril Bauer Award in recognition of an individual's significant contribution to theatre in Antigonish and acknowledges major commitment over time to the support and promotion of local theatre; and

Whereas on March 20, 2011 Theatre Antigonish awarded the Father Cyril Bauer Award to local music teacher Brent Bannerman for his work as music director on many community productions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Brent Bannerman on receiving the Father Cyril Bauer Award and thank him for his continued commitment to the growth of local theatre.

RESOLUTION NO. 1284

By: Mr. Maurice Smith (Antigonish)

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

Whereas the Stephen Lewis Foundation's A Dare to Remember campaign challenges Canadians to find creative, courageous and public ways to raise money for programs to support families and communities that are working to combat HIV/AIDS in Africa; and

Whereas Corrine Dunphy of Antigonish, drawing on her NSCAD education, had the idea to create a public mural and raised more than \$4,500 for the Stephen Lewis Foundation through her efforts; and

Whereas after working on the mural in pieces in her apartment for more than a year, Dunphy unveiled the completed 40 foot by 12 foot piece, Parallel Universe, on an exterior wall of the Antigonish Medical Centre;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House applaud Corinne Dunphy's fundraising efforts on behalf of the Stephen Lewis Foundation's, A Dare to Remember Campaign and congratulate her on displaying the finished artwork in a public place for all to enjoy.

RESOLUTION NO. 1285

By: Mr. Maurice Smith (Antigonish)

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

Whereas the Resource Recovery Fund Board (RRFB) and the municipalities of Pictou, Antigonish and Guysborough presented the 11th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Awards on April 28th; and

Whereas the theme for this year's awards was "Reduce your waste by ¼ - Get to 300 kg!", a challenge to help reach the provincial goal of reducing our solid waste to 300 kg per person per year by 2015; and

Whereas Shala Knocton, a Grade 9 student at Dr. J. H. Gillis Regional High School was the Region 2 winner for the Grades 7/8/9 category;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Shala Knocton on winning the Region 2 Grades 7/8/9 category at the Nova Scotia Recycles Awards and applaud her commitment to the environment.

RESOLUTION NO. 1286

By: Mr. Maurice Smith (Antigonish)

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

Whereas the Resource Recovery Fund Board (RRFB) and the municipalities of Pictou, Antigonish and Guysborough presented the 11th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Awards on April 28th; and

Whereas the theme for this year's awards was "Reduce your waste by ¼ - Get to 300 kg!", a challenge to help reach the provincial goal of reducing our solid waste to 300 kg per person per year by 2015; and

Whereas Dr. J. H. Gillis Regional High School students Devon McGrath and Colette Murphy were the Region 2 winners for the Grades 10/11/12 category;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Devon McGrath and Colette Murphy on winning the Region 2 Grades 10/11/12 category at the Nova Scotia Recycles Awards and applaud her commitment to the environment.

RESOLUTION NO. 1287

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas the 39th Annual National 4-H Seminar in Ottawa is taking place from April 8-14, 2011; and

Whereas this event allows 4-H members from across Canada to learn about leadership, helps them to develop and practice the knowledge, resources and skills learned through 4-H and allows for discussions around national and international issues that could affect young people and their communities; and

Whereas Nova Scotia will be represented at this conference by ten delegates from Nova Scotia including Kim Walters of New Germany and Chelsea Crawford of West Northfield;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Kim Walters and Chelsea Crawford for their participation in the 39th Annual National 4-H Seminar in Ottawa this year, and commend them for being ambassadors for our province.

RESOLUTION NO. 1288

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas the Lunenburg Board of Trade is a non-profit organization founded and run by a group of volunteer business-minded people who share their collective business experience and expertise; and

Whereas Andrea Zwicker of Lunenburg has been the administrative assistant for the Lunenburg Board of Trade for the last five years, organizing all aspects of the board and promoting events and businesses within the Town of Lunenburg; and

Whereas Andrea Zwicker will be leaving the Lunenburg Board of Trade to begin a new position with the Fisheries Museum of Atlantic on the Lunenburg Waterfront as a Core Interpreter;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Andrea Zwicker's years of service to the Lunenburg Board of Trade and wish her success in her new position with the Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic.

RESOLUTION NO. 1289

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas noted local educator Barbara Welsford, an assistive technology specialist with the South Shore Regional School Board, has been accepted into the Apple Distinguished Educators program, an international program that focuses on educational excellence and leadership; and

Whereas Ms. Welsford is one of 1,500 people worldwide approved for the program that focuses on education and leadership using Apple products to support children and adults with disabilities; and

Whereas Ms. Welsford will travel to Vancouver in July 2011, to learn and collaborate with other Apple Distinguished Educators, bringing that knowledge back to the students and projects of the South Shore Regional School Board;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Barbara Welsford for her acceptance into the Apple Distinguished Educators program and recognize her expertise in educational technology leadership.

RESOLUTION NO. 1290

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas Park View Education Centre is hosting its 9th Annual Knowledge Festival on April 15-16, 2011; and

Whereas the Knowledge Festival is hosted by the school's International Baccalaureate Society to celebrate knowledge by allowing students to showcase their talents through competition such as Superword and Mental Math; and

Whereas this year's theme is "Technology in Society", and will feature new events such as a planetarium show put on by the Discovery Centre, Lego robotics, junior architecture competitions and the Adventus Music booth, all designed to feature technology-based activities;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize the 9th Annual Park View Education Centre Knowledge Festival, taking place on April 15-16, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 1291

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas Lunenburg-based publisher MacIntyre Purcell Publishing, publisher of the national bestseller, Book of Everything series, has announced the signing of book deals with four local authors; and

Whereas MacIntyre Purcell publishing is branching out from their usual destination-based publications to showcase the wealth of local talent on the South Shore; and

Whereas MacIntyre Purcell publishing will be producing an exciting line-up of titles including a book on superstition by Vernon Oickle and several children's books including works by Steven Rhude, Mary Anne Donovan and Travis Hiltz;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Lunenburg based publishing house MacIntyre Purcell Publishing and congratulates all the authors who will gain wider exposure through this locally owned publisher.

RESOLUTION NO. 1292

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas communities across Canada celebrate National Volunteer Week from April 10th to 16th to thank and honour people who donate their time to help others by supporting the causes in which they believe; and

Whereas Volunteer Week, highlighted in Nova Scotia by the Provincial Volunteer Awards being held on April 4, 2011, reinforces the human values that volunteering represents and increase awareness of the vital importance of volunteerism to our communities; and

Whereas Howard Keeping, of the Town of Lunenburg, and Cathie Slauenwhite-Nowe of the Town of Mahone Bay, have both been nominated for Provincial Volunteer Awards;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognizes the contributions that Howard Keeping and Cathie Slauenwhite-Nowe have made to their communities through their volunteer efforts and congratulates them for being recognized during the Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony on April 4th.

RESOLUTION NO. 1293

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas Michelle Stevens Sailloft Ltd. has partnered with noted Ontario sail maker Dick Steigenga to expand the business of sailmaking at the Sailloft's historic Second Peninsula location; and

Whereas Mr. Steigenga's business, Performance Sails, focuses on racing sails and is moving his company's stock, designs and technology to Nova Scotia to ultimately share space with Michelle Stevens Sailloft Ltd.; and

Whereas this new partnership will allow for the expansion of their product lines, a concentrated effort on marketing racing sails and will allow for the training of new and existing staff;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly commends Michelle Stevens Sailloft Ltd. and Dick Steigenga of Performance Sails for their new Partnership that will bring a new dimension to an historic South Shore tradition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1294

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas all Nova Scotians will achieve better health and a sense of achievement through active participation in recreational sports; and

Whereas the Queens County Bantam B Cougars hockey team have enjoyed a successful 2011 hockey season; and

Whereas the Cougars qualified for the Hockey Nova Scotia 2011 Provincial Championship recently held in Cole Harbour and placed in the top five Bantam B teams in Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates the Queens County Bantam B Cougars on their successful season and participation in the Hockey Nova Scotia 2011 Provincial Championships.

RESOLUTION NO. 1295

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas we know that in the past year, approximately 2,750 Nova Scotians lost their lives to cancer and approximately 6,200 new cases were diagnosed; and

Whereas the curling community of Liverpool, Queens County, raised over \$10,000 in fundraising, prizes, donating and participating in a Curl for Cancer tournament; and

Whereas the 24th Annual Curl for Cancer tournament in Liverpool brought together 32 teams of both experienced and novice curlers to raise this money for the Canadian Cancer Society;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognizes the curling community of Liverpool, Queens County, on their fundraising efforts to benefit the Canadian Cancer Society.

RESOLUTION NO. 1296

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas Essential Skills teaches students an array of skills, ranging from portfolio development to public speaking; and

Whereas the students were required to take a community volunteering course and put together a March Break Kid's Day; and

Whereas \$1,500 was raised and donated to the breakfast programs at Dr. John C. Wickwire Academy, Milton Centennial School and North Queens Elementary School;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates the Essential Skills students on their volunteer fundraising efforts which, in turn, have benefited three school breakfast programs in Queens.

RESOLUTION NO. 1297

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas food banks have become a fixture in our communities and the students of the North Queens Community School recently worked together to support the food bank; and

Whereas each grade in the school worked together to complete and purchase from a list of needs for the local food bank; and

Whereas those needs identified were school lunches, school supplies, birthday party items, storm survival items and breakfast basics;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulates and recognizes the North Queens Community School for all of their work on completing most of their lists and supporting the food bank in their community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1298

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas Gary Fancy of Pleasant River has been a very important volunteer at the Pleasant River Community Club; and

Whereas volunteers are the heart and soul of our communities and Gary has been nominated to represent Queens County at the Provincial Volunteer Ceremony this year; and

Whereas Gary Fancy continues to be involved with all aspects of his community on a volunteer basis and it is wonderful to recognize all of his efforts;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates Gary Fancy of Pleasant River, Queens County, on having been recognized by his community with a Provincial Volunteer Award for all of his volunteer efforts.

RESOLUTION NO. 1299

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas involvement in activities which build confidence, excitement and energy are so beneficial to young girls in Queens County; and

Whereas when the activity, with lots of practicing, rewards the participants with a first place banner for their division of 10 teams at the Junior Level in the Maritime Meltdown, it encourages the young girls for future competitions; and

Whereas the Queens County cheer group LPCC Odyssey, are very successful in their Cheer Group competitions, as well as taking part in fundraising and community events;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates the LPCC Odyssey of Queens County on having won the First Place banner for their division of 10 teams at the Junior Level in the Maritime Meltdown.

RESOLUTION NO. 1300

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas we know that every day, four Canadians are killed and 200 are injured as a result of impaired driving crashes and the Lunenburg/Queens chapter of MADD Canada provides support to the victims of this crime; and

Whereas a benefit hockey game between the Sobeys' South Shore Wild and the RCMP Bisons took place on February 4, 2011 to raise funds for the chapter; and

Whereas the event resulted in the raising of \$1,500 for the Lunenburg/Queens chapter of MADD Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognizes and thanks the Sobeys' South Shore Wild and the RCMP Bisons for their fundraising efforts on behalf of the Lunenburg/Queens chapter of MADD Canada.

RESOLUTION NO. 1301

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas Margo Cross of Brooklyn, Queens County, has contributed to the business community of Queens County for over 30 years; and

Whereas through the activities and growth of her business, Seams Sew Simple, in Liverpool, Queens County, Margo Cross has been a leader in providing fabric and craft products, custom sewing and alterations; and

Whereas with over 30 years in various aspects of business in Queens County, Margo Cross has retired;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates Margo Cross on her retirement and thank her for the contribution she has made to the business community of Queens County.

RESOLUTION NO. 1302

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the Meadow Ponds Stables Show Team of Liverpool competed in the National Reining Horse Association show circuit, placing three riders in the top 10; and

Whereas the dedication of these riders and the quality of their horses has been acknowledged on the national front; and

Whereas Alyssa Oickle, Sonia Smith, and Mallory Maxwell of Queens County, were ranked among Reining Canada's Top 10;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates Alyssa Oickle, Sonia Smith, and Mallory Maxwell for their success in the National Reining Horse Association show circuit.

RESOLUTION NO. 1303

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas Mike Quinn of Liverpool, Queens County, has contributed to the business community of Queens County for 21 years; and

Whereas through the activities and growth of his business, Quinn's Painting and Decorating in Liverpool, Queens County, Mike Quinn has been a leader in the area; and

Whereas Mike Quinn, after 21 years in business, has decided to close and pursue other interests;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates Mike Quinn on his years of business in Liverpool and thanks him for his contributions to the business community of Queens County.

RESOLUTION NO. 1304

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas seniors are being reached where they live and they are being supported in activities that encourage positive aging and continued community involvement; and

Whereas the Age-Friendly Communities Program, meant to help improve physical and social environments that allow people to fully participate in their communities and remain in them, received funding from the Department of Seniors; and

Whereas the Queens County Crime Prevention Association received \$11,332 and will be used to support senior safety academics, home safety, car theft and personal safety;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates the Queens County Crime Prevention Association on having received funding from the Department of Seniors and thanks them for their concern for and assistance to the seniors in Queens County.

RESOLUTION NO. 1305

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas Terriann Munroe of Liverpool, Queens County, has been a very important volunteer for the Special Olympics Lunenburg Queens, and the Liverpool Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary; and

Whereas volunteers are the heart and soul of our communities and Terriann has been nominated to represent Queens County at the provincial volunteer ceremony this year; and

Whereas Terriann Munroe continues to be involved with all aspects of her community on a volunteer basis, and it is wonderful to recognize all of her efforts;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Terriann Munroe of Liverpool, Queens County, on having been recognized by her community with a Provincial Volunteer Award for all of her volunteer efforts.

RESOLUTION NO. 1306

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the Lunenburg/Queens Timberwolves competed on March 20th in the 2011 Special Olympics Provincial Winter Games; and

Whereas the Timberwolves succeeded in winning the silver medal in C Division floor hockey; and

Whereas the Lunenburg/Queens Timberwolves, consisting of Bryan Campbell, Michael Moreau, Jamie Belong, Joey McGinnis, Neil Luxton, Nicholas Whynot, Matthew Veinot, Candace Neals, Adam Dexter, Freeman Wamboldt, Rebecca Maule, Colby Oickle, Roxanne Weare and Charlie Bachman, with their coaches Sarah Corkum, Saye McLellan, and Don Burgess truly represent team spirit and integrity;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Bryan Campbell, Michael Moreau, Jamie Belong, Joey McGinnis, Neil Luxton, Nicholas Whynot, Matthew Veinot, Candace Neals, Adam Dexter, Freeman Wamboldt, Rebecca Maule, Colby Oickle, Roxanne Weare, and Charlie Bachman, with their coaches, Sarah Corkum, Saye McLellan, and Don Burgess for the success of the Timberwolves at the 2011 Special Olympics Provincial Winter Games.

RESOLUTION NO. 1307

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas Tina Lilly-Corkum of Brooklyn, Queens County, has been a very important part of the Dr. J. C. Wickwire Academy as a volunteer for the past six years by running the school's breakfast program, serving as chairman of Parents of Wickwire, the school's parent support group, and participating in the organization of the school's annual Super Spring Fiesta; and

Whereas volunteers are the heart and soul of our community, and Tina has been nominated to represent Queens County at the provincial volunteer ceremony this year; and

Whereas Tina Lilly-Corkum continues to be involved with all aspects of her community on a volunteer basis, and it is wonderful to recognize all of her efforts;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Tina Lilly-Corkum of Brooklyn, Queens County, on having been recognized by her community with a Provencal Volunteer Award for all of her volunteer efforts.

RESOLUTION NO. 1308

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the community of Liverpool would love to take the challenge to become healthier, get in shape, and live a healthier lifestyle; and

Whereas residents have rallied to work towards convincing Village On a Diet to focus on their community to enable them to meet their healthier goals; and

Whereas every Saturday morning members of the community have been participating in a Social Walk, with the focus on becoming healthier;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the community of Liverpool and their goals to become healthier, get in shape, and live a healthier lifestyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 1309

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas physical activity is so important for the health and well-being of the youth in Queens County, and skating is one of those wonderful activities; and

Whereas achieving Gold Skills Test status is the highest test achievement a skater can acquire through the National Skate Canada testing system; and

Whereas Chloe Pitre passed the Gold Skills Test and is a member of the Queens County Blades;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Chloe Pitre of Queens County for having passed the Gold Skills Test through the National Skate Canada testing system.

RESOLUTION NO. 1310

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas physical activity is so important for the health and well-being of the youth in Queens County, and skating is one of those wonderful activities; and

Whereas achieving Gold Skills Test status is the highest test achievement a skater can acquire through the National Skate Canada testing system; and

Whereas Bailey Selig passed the Gold Skills Test and is a member of the Queens County Blades;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Bailey Selig of Queens County for having passed the Gold Skills Test through the National Skate Canada testing system.