



DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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HALIFAX, FRIDAY, MARCH 30, 2012

Sixty-first General Assembly

Fourth Session

9:00 A.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Gordon Gosse

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

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

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

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition, the operative words being: “. . . to have the Mark Road in Riverton repaved.” It has been signed by 55 residents on the road, and I too have affixed my name to the petition.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS****STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS****GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Finance.

RESOLUTION NO. 1

HON. GRAHAM STEELE: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall:

(1) read and table the message from Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor transmitting the Estimates of Sums required for the service of the province for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013, for the consideration of this House;

(2) table the Estimates Books;

(3) table the Crown Corporation Business Plans;

(4) table the Estimate and Crown Corporation Business Plans resolutions;

(5) deliver my Budget Speech; and

(6) move that the Estimates of Sums required for the service of the province for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013, being Supply to be granted to Her Majesty and the Crown Corporation Business Plans be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on Supply.

Mr. Speaker, for the information of the House, the budget will be presented on Tuesday, April 3rd.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 2

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 the year 2012 marks Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee, what better time to recognize and celebrate the memorable work of the outgoing Lieutenant Governor, Mayann Francis; and

Whereas Her Honour's commitment to her responsibilities as the Queen's representative in Nova Scotia has been unwavering, inspiring countless Nova Scotians to get involved and give back to their communities; and

Whereas Her Honour will conclude her rewarding and successful term as Lieutenant Governor today, March 30th;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me as I extend my sincere appreciation for the outstanding service the Honourable Mayann Francis has provided to Nova Scotians and our province over the past five years.

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. 3

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

Whereas 2012 marks Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 60th Anniversary as Queen of Canada and is a time to honour Her Majesty's service and dedication to our country and to celebrate Nova Scotia's ties with the Commonwealth; and

Whereas the Diamond Jubilee is an opportunity for young Nova Scotians to learn about good governance and active citizenship and what it means to have a strong commitment to community, province, and country; and

Whereas the Diamond Jubilee is a time to recognize Nova Scotians for outstanding service and commitment to their communities and province;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly join me as I extend warm congratulations to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and encourage all Nova Scotians to celebrate this historic and significant milestone.

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.

RESOLUTION NO. 4

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

Whereas April has been designated Daffodil Month in Nova Scotia to raise awareness of cancer and provide solidarity for those living with the disease in our province; and

Whereas the Canadian Cancer Society selected the daffodil, the first flower of Spring, because its bright, cheerful, optimistic blossom has become synonymous with activities of the Canadian Cancer Society and the support it brings to families facing a cancer journey; and

Whereas the Canadian Cancer Society counts on the tireless support of its volunteers to fundraise to provide Nova Scotians living with cancer the support services they require as they work to beat this disease;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly support the efforts of the Canadian Cancer Society by wearing the daffodil pin to show that Nova Scotia is determined to beat this horrible disease and also acknowledge the steadfast dedication of the Canadian Cancer Society's volunteers and the pivotal role they play in supporting Nova Scotians living with cancer.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, would I be permitted to make a few introductions?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. WILSON: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, many individuals in the province have contributed so much to arts and culture in the province, and especially to the bill that I'm going to introduce in a second, but some of those individuals are here today and I would like to take the opportunity to introduce them.

In the east gallery we have Barbara Richmond, Peter Dykhuis, Anthony Black and Jim Morrow who were on the committee that drafted the first draft of this piece of legislation. Also, we have M. Ron Bourgeois, president and chair of the Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council; Terrilee Bulger, who also is with the Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council; and Scott Simpson. Mary Elizabeth Luka and Candace Stevenson are newly appointed to the new board for Arts Nova Scotia. We also have Chris Shore who worked extremely hard on our transition team to bring the terms of reference for that new board, and also Marcel McKeough who is the executive director of Culture. I hope I've announced everybody in the House. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all our guests to the Legislature and hope you enjoy this morning's proceedings.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 1 - Entitled an Act to Respect the Status of the Artist. (Hon. David Wilson)

Bill No. 2 - Entitled an Act to Review the Provincial Tax Regime. (Hon. Stephen McNeil)

Bill No. 3 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 31 of the Acts of 1996. The Sales Tax Act. (Mr. Harold Theriault)

Bill No. 4 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 160 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Maintenance and Custody Act. (Mr. Keith Bain)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 5

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

Whereas 4-H is a nationwide program dedicated to the development of young people to help them become responsible members of our society; and

Whereas founded in 1922, this program now has more than 2,400 members in Nova Scotia with more than 90 clubs province-wide; and

Whereas 2012 marks the 90th Anniversary of 4-H in Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate 4-H on its 90th Anniversary and recognize the impact 4-H has on the lives of so many young Nova Scotians, and we wish them continued success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

RESOLUTION NO. 6

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 February 19, 2012, businessman and sportsman Doug Grant of Shad Bay passed away; and

Whereas Doug Grant will be remembered for his love of sports and his no-nonsense approach to running a business, exemplified by his legendary Midtown Tavern - just up the road there, incidentally; and

Whereas Doug Grant was inducted into the Nova Scotia Softball Hall of Fame in 2005;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature recognize the contributions of Doug Grant on his passing, and extend deepest sympathy to his family and best wishes to his sons, Eric and Bob, as they carry on the tradition of the Midtown as established by their dad.

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. 7

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

Whereas since coming to Canada as an international student from Egypt in 2003, Rany Ibrahim has made significant contributions to academic and community life in Sydney and here in Halifax; and

Whereas Mr. Ibrahim currently serves on Cape Breton University's Board of Governors, served on Dalhousie University's Senate, has volunteer ties to Fusion Halifax, World Food Program, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, and is the current marketing program manager of the Office of Immigration; and

Whereas Mr. Ibrahim is the only Nova Scotian nominated among the top 75 finalists in the 4th Annual Top 25 Canadian Immigrant Awards - a people's choice award that celebrates the significant contributions immigrants make to Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Ibrahim on his nomination, and encourage all Nova Scotians to acknowledge his numerous contributions to our province and our country by visiting www.canadianimmigration/top25 before April 13th to cast a vote for Rany.

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. 8

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

Whereas Rita-Clare LeBlanc, a Grade 12 student at Halifax West High School, three years ago received a Christmas gift of \$77.12 and used it not for herself but to build much-needed schools in Africa; and

Whereas Rita-Clare LeBlanc, inspired by that gift, founded the non-profit group Maritime Youth Standing Together, or MYST, and has raised more than \$13,000 to build a school in Mali, Africa; and

Whereas MYST is now fundraising to build a second school in Mali;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Rita-Clare LeBlanc and Maritime Youth Standing Together for making such an important contribution to education in Mali while changing their own lives as well.

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. 9

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

Whereas the future growth and success of Nova Scotia depends on the education of our children; and

Whereas the NDP Government has shown no clear direction in managing the public education system, decimating when we need to be building and slashing when we need to be leading; and

Whereas Nova Scotians are expecting the government to be an education leader, expecting the government to identify education as a priority and provide the best possible education for our children;

Therefore be it resolved that the NDP Government reverse the detrimental cuts to our education system and put an end to balancing the books on the backs of our children.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Preston.

RESOLUTION NO. 10

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

Whereas Reverend Glen Gray felt the call to enter the ministry in 1970, he began his studies at Acadia University and graduated in 1983; and

Whereas his first charge was Acaciaville, Nova Scotia, where he and his wife, Kathy, led the congregation in completely renovating both the church and church hall before they left for their second charge in Pennfield and Pocologan, New Brunswick, where they resided for the next eight years before returning to East Preston, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas after preaching for three years in East Preston United Baptist Church they left to build a new church calling it the New Beginnings Ministry, where Reverend Gray preached until he retired in 2012;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize and acknowledge the good work of Reverend Glen Gray as he follows God's plan for his life's work.

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. 11

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

Whereas the Minister of Health and Wellness has defended the IWK Mental Health cuts by highlighting the need to address wait list management without supporting structural programs needed to help individuals with mental health issues; and

Whereas moving children and youth on mental health wait lists in a timely fashion can only happen when programs and health care professionals are available to provide timely treatment of children and youth; and

Whereas while the concept of rapid assessment is crucial, a lack of structured programming and community-based supports only serves to move children and youth from the assessment wait list to other wait lists for programs and professional help;

Therefore be it resolved that the Minister of Health and Wellness acknowledge she has focused her attention on the wrong end of the problem and she should be addressing programs and community support-based needs first so that when rapid assessment is in place children and youth can benefit from treatment as quickly as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Preston.

RESOLUTION NO. 12

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 cost of power, gas and everyday necessities has gone up since the NDP Government has taken office, negatively impacting every family in the province; and

Whereas the NDP has turned its back on Nova Scotian families by not addressing the ever-increasing cost pressures; and

Whereas the NDP made life even more unaffordable by hiking the HST, breaking the promise to take the tax off the tax on gasoline, and by allowing rate after rate hike and imposing a tax on every power bill in this province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly remind the Premier and his Cabinet that it is Nova Scotians who are suffering when prices continue to climb and urge the NDP to act to make life affordable when it comes to power, gas and everyday necessities.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

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

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and continue my remarks on the Speech from the Throne. I want to congratulate you - yesterday in the House, the government, and the warm reception received by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor allowing an opportunity for her family and friends to celebrate her accomplishments here in the province by a reception that was held in her honour in the Red Room yesterday. It was really quite remarkable to watch, with great pride, how her family and friends and community were there to help usher in an end to her era as our Lieutenant Governor.

I noticed in your remarks talking about your home and her home of Whitney Pier and suggesting and looking forward to what is next in her remarkable professional life and what other contributions she will make to the people of this province and, indeed, to the entire country; I know that we all look forward to seeing that and wish her well as she embarks on the next phase of her life.

Mr. Speaker, it was with great interest yesterday, as part of the Speech from the Throne that was being mentioned was the great investment and work being done by the Irving company when it came to the ship procurement here for our province, for our country. I can't tell you how pleased our caucus was to support that all-Party resolution that went through this House, supporting the Irvings as they moved forward to secure that national procurement for our province, for our country. I can tell you that they have not disappointed us, as a province, with each step and each mark and measurement that we go along during this process; they not only meet it, they exceed it, and there's a great amount of excitement inside the private sector.

I have said from the very beginning, that is where we, as a province, have an opportunity. While this procurement for our Navy and shipbuilding is an important piece, the real opportunity that exists for us, as a province, is in the optimism that is being created inside the private sector and how we can capitalize on that. How do we make sure that the optimism that the men and women who are creating the jobs across this province feel that they can invest now, that they can grow their companies and create good jobs here in Nova Scotia?

I had a chance to be in Sydney and in the Strait area. I was in Pictou, I've been in Yarmouth and in a number of places across this province talking to chambers, encouraging them and asking them - how is it that we can make sure that we spread out this opportunity across Nova Scotia? How is it that we can ensure that the supply chain is there, making sure that the companies that exist in our individual communities can look at this project and say, is there a role for me to play to deliver goods and services, to deliver a product that will allow Irving to complete this contract?

I was pleased last night to hear that the federal government has not changed the timeline. We need to make sure that we are vigilant, as a province, on that, making sure that the federal government doesn't push out this project to try to balance their federal books. Any delay in this project only hampers our ability to grow the economy of Nova Scotia. It is important that we, as a House and as elected representatives, send a unified voice to the national government, that we, as a province, fully expect them to meet and keep their commitment to the original timeline. As we know, Irving will keep to theirs going forward.

Mr. Speaker, it was interesting: as we listened to and read this Speech from the Throne yesterday, there were four or five strategies that were being presented to the people of Nova Scotia. I couldn't help but feel and think that this Speech from the Throne was almost as if there had been an election held a few days ago and this was the government's first opportunity to present to Nova Scotia what their plans were to take our province forward. Ironically, they've been in power for three years and we're still getting strategies on how we're going to move our province forward.

I don't believe that was what Nova Scotians were expecting in June 2009. They're looking for a province that is going to build an economy, going to create jobs, going to make life more affordable for Nova Scotians. They were looking toward a Party that was going to be a partner with them to build a brighter future for Nova Scotia.

I couldn't help but - when we started looking at the economic development opportunities in Nova Scotia, one of the things that they highlighted and pointed to was Dalhousie taking over the Agricultural College; it was going to build the rural economy. I'm not quite sure how that's going to happen. While we may appreciate the relationship between the two institutions, I'm not sure many Nova Scotians see that as a way that's going to build the rural economy of Nova Scotia.

They were looking for some hope that we could feel the optimism that we're feeling in and around the Irving shipyard in other parts of Nova Scotia. As I said a few minutes ago - and I've been travelling and talking to chambers, talking to business communities - that optimism is not there. As you begin to dig deeper into the conversation, you begin to realize why it's not there. They talk about the HST being the highest in the country; they talk about that 2 per cent increase.

It's \$1 million a day out of the economy of Nova Scotia, and that's affecting every business here. It's affecting their ability to grow; it's affecting Nova Scotians' ability to spend; and it's why the optimism is so low in many parts of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure you remember it wasn't all that long ago we raised 1,400 user fees. That has impacted on Nova Scotians' ability to meet their basic needs. I don't have to remind you what power rates are doing to Nova Scotians. In three short years we've had a 20 per cent increase, plus on top of that we've had an electricity tax. In three short years we've had a 20 per cent increase that has impacted Nova Scotians' ability to meet their daily needs. Since June 2009, gas prices have continued to climb with little relief in sight. The only thing Nova Scotians know is that the HST has increased, and has increased their ability to meet their daily needs.

It's rather interesting that the very thing that the Nova Scotia Government can control when it comes to the price of gas is taxation, and the very thing they increased on gas is taxation. Think about that for a second. Your constituents, my constituents, Nova Scotians, are having a hard time meeting their daily needs, and government decides to raise taxes on gasoline. It affects their ability to meet their daily needs. Think about this. Many of us in my constituency, many people across this province, have no choice. They have to get in their vehicle. They have to be able to move around for work, to meet the supplies of their community, to be able to participate as an active member of their community. They need their vehicles. They need to be able to move around, and the consumption rate proves that, because every year since the NDP has been in power consumption has gone up.

Mr. Speaker, it's an important fact, and I'm going to tell you why. The Minister of Finance will suggest to you that because taxes are high, consumption goes down. It's the complete opposite. When he raised the HST, it became a cash win for him and the government. They are taking more money out of the pockets of Nova Scotians each and every time they go in to fill up their car by that simple decision to raise the HST. When they were on this side of the House, the Minister of Finance, and indeed the Premier, spoke very clearly and loudly about decoupling the taxes on gasoline; they talked about taking the HST off of the federal excise tax and the provincial excise tax. We, on this side of the House, would agree with that. We would encourage the Minister of Finance to act on the good feeling and the good thoughts he had on this side of the House when he introduces his budget next week and give Nova Scotia consumers a break when it comes time to filling up their vehicles. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, that simple act will allow Nova Scotians about a 4-cent-a-litre reduction in the price of gas - that would make a huge impact on many Nova Scotians. I wish - I would hope that he would also have the courage to scrap gas regulation. (Applause) Gas regulation has been nothing more than a failure in the Province of Nova Scotia and has done nothing more than inflate the price of gasoline, and it has done nothing more than take money out of the pockets of hard-working Nova Scotians.

It would be a great signal for government to be able to say to Nova Scotians, we've heard you, we understand the difficulty you're facing, and we've also listened to the private sector. We've listened to them and we're going to respond in a positive way by removing regulation, by allowing competition - the very thing which will grow our individual rural communities but will also provide us with the cheapest possible price when it comes to gasoline. Those are two simple acts that this government can do that will have a positive impact on Nova Scotians' bottom line.

One of the other things that has happened that has been a cause of great debate as I travel the province is the issue of power and the way Nova Scotia Power is having a free rein on the pocketbooks of Nova Scotians - with the support of government. We've laid out a number of very positive ways for government to respond.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it has been interesting, the power company wants it both ways: they want to be a private entity when it comes to being able to look and assess how their operation is working, and yet they want to be a public entity when it comes to being able to meet their bottom line. They want each and every ratepayer to pay more and more to meet their excesses.

We've asked this government over and over again to perform a value audit of Nova Scotia Power, to force Nova Scotia Power to look inward, to force Nova Scotia Power to find savings in their own pockets and not in the pockets of hard-working Nova Scotians. (Applause) Mr. Speaker, to no avail - government has been unwilling to respond. They've been allowing the power company to continue to operate as if they're a private entity, not a regulated monopoly, and they've allowed the power company to run roughshod over top of Nova Scotia ratepayers.

On top of that they've added the NDP electricity tax. We've asked them to freeze that. We've asked them to give Nova Scotians some hope that their government understands the difficulties they face every day - and what has happened? It has fallen on deaf ears. It's as if the government has ignored or simply doesn't understand the challenges being faced by so many hard-working Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, it is somewhat interesting. We look at the changes that have happened over the last three years - the increase in the HST, allowing power rates to escalate out of control, the increase in gasoline prices, and the increase on the tax on gasoline prices have had a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable members of our community. The

very people the NDP should be looking out for, the very people who were their base politically have been ignored. Their interests are being ignored by this government. It's as if they've gone to power and they believe they've done it all on their own. They believe they have all the answers facing Nova Scotians, but in the process they have forgotten how hard-working Nova Scotians are feeling.

We understand, and I think all members of this House understand, pressures being faced by government. When the Minister of Finance and the Premier stand up and tell us how difficult it is and the pressures that are being faced on their budgets, we acknowledge that. That is why we suggested they shouldn't spend \$75 million on purchasing land from Irving in these tough economic times. That is why we don't believe we should be in the business of paving; we should be allowing that money to be spent toward servicing the interests of Nova Scotians.

I would say to the Minister of Finance and the Premier, while we acknowledge the pressures they are feeling to meet their budgetary needs, we just want them to acknowledge the feelings that Nova Scotians are having in meeting their own personal budgetary needs.

Mr. Speaker, when we were looking at the Speech from the Throne, I was trying to look into this speech and see - where are they speaking to the people of Annapolis in here? Where are they speaking to the people of Yarmouth? I did actually read the fact that from Yarmouth to Sydney the optimism was high. I also read how important tourism was to Nova Scotia.

When I have been travelling this province, Nova Scotians have been telling me how important tourism is to the growth of this province, to the future of this province, but they're also telling me it has been completely ignored by the NDP Government. The cancellation of that ferry service in Yarmouth, Mr. Speaker, as you would know, has been felt from one end of this province to the other.

Tourism operators on Cape Breton Island were asked - what are some of the challenges, what has caused some of your difficulties over the last year? Do you know what their number one issue was? The cancellation of the ferry service in Yarmouth; it is not just a southwestern Nova Scotia issue, it is not just a Yarmouth issue, it is an entire issue for the Province of Nova Scotia.

The community of Yarmouth, southwestern Nova Scotia, and now all tourism operators across this province, are asking this government to take the words off the paper and put action to them. Have them show Nova Scotians that they believe tourism is an important part of our future to grow the economy of Nova Scotia, to create jobs from one end of the province to the other. Have them show that they're going to support the small-business operators who are in the tourism sector. Have them show that they are going to invest in infrastructure in this province and find an international ferry that will come into

our province at Yarmouth and will allow tourists to travel from one end of Nova Scotia to the other.

It has been somewhat interesting as well, as I have travelled this province, as I've talked to small-business operators, as I've talked to parents and educators, as I've talked to municipal leaders asking them for their thoughts on how we can work together as partners to respond to our constituents, to the ratepayers, to the taxpayers of this province, because after all, it is often said there is only one taxpayer. It has surprised me how - I'm trying to find the right word here - the morale among municipal leaders is so low in the Province of Nova Scotia for one simple reason - they don't believe they have a partner in the Government of Nova Scotia.

I don't often give credit to too many of the Tories' decisions they made before, but one of the things they did when they built the MOU, the memorandum of understanding with municipalities, was try to find a way for the province to take over its financial responsibilities that it has around education, justice, and housing. It was done in a thoughtful way, working with and respecting another elected body in Nova Scotia - other elected officials in Nova Scotia, municipal politicians - and they negotiated that. They phased it in over a seven- or eight-year period. They were prepared to work with the government today to make that come to reality, but unilaterally this government just cut the memorandum of understanding and offloaded the responsibility for education, justice, and housing back to municipalities, and on top of that, have left them sitting out there wondering how they meet the needs of their community.

That's not the optimism that we're hearing about in this Throne Speech. That optimism doesn't exist whether you are in the chambers, meeting with the Council of the CBRM, or in Yarmouth or in Annapolis County or in any part of this province. As a matter of fact, the only thing we're seeing when we cross this province is many Nova Scotians wondering whatever happened to that better deal they were promised in 2009.

Worse yet is what we are doing to our children - what this government is doing to our children when it comes to public education. As I have been travelling, like many members of this House, I had an opportunity to visit a school in my riding - Take Your MLA to School. I had been visiting a number of other schools as well. I had been invited into the ARRA at Annapolis Royal.

I must say to you, Mr. Speaker, that when I think about the education in this province I actually think about the promotion that the government is running, the TV ad that talks about the school being the heart of your community. Well, the school that I refer to, Annapolis Royal Regional Academy, which I was in visiting the Grade 7s, is closing. I guess that means we are ripping the heart out of that community, if I believe what the NDP Government is saying, and it is happening under their watch.

I can tell you that when I was in that school I didn't feel the optimism that I'm hearing coming from the government. As a matter of fact, what I heard was a lot of people who were very concerned, including students, about what the future holds for our school and for the programs that I need to graduate from it. They were very thoughtful in their decision and in our conversation.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the honourable member take a short break while the honourable Minister of Health and Wellness makes a quick introduction?

MR. MCNEIL: Sure.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Leader of the Official Opposition for allowing me to make this introduction. In our east gallery today we are joined by some very important guests from the Canadian Cancer Society. In particular, I would like to introduce to the members of the House three women, and I'll ask them to stand as I read their names: Margaret Taylor-Munro, Joyce Tanner, and Gwendolyn MacLean.

These women are well-known within the society's group of volunteers for the astounding work they do in promoting Daffodil Month every April. In fact, the trio here have contributed a combined 72 years as volunteers for the Canadian Cancer Society. (Applause) They represent hundreds of Daffodil Month volunteers from across our province. All of these volunteers show tremendous enthusiasm and dedication to both the residential canvassing and the Daffodil Campaign, raising a combined total of over \$800,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society in 2011. I want to ask members of the House to join with me in welcoming all of the people who are here, the volunteers and the staff, and thank them very much for their efforts, thank you. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all our guests to the Legislature and hope they enjoy this morning's proceedings.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. MCNEIL: Thank you Mr. Speaker, I too want to welcome our guests to the gallery. There are probably not very many people on the floor of this Legislature or across Nova Scotia who have not been touched by cancer. I want to thank them and congratulate them for giving all of us hope when it comes to making sure fewer and fewer Nova Scotians will be touched by this disease.

Mr. Speaker, I want to continue in my remarks to the Speech from the Throne. I was just getting ready to start talking about education and the impact that the cuts to education are having on our student population. There have been a number of statements

made in this Throne Speech that talked about the lowest class sizes in the history of our province. I don't know what school those are in but they are not in the schools I've been visiting, I can tell you that. I haven't been able to find one teacher to tell me that their class size is smaller this year than it was last year.

They talked about that we are spending more money in education than we've ever spent before. That's not accurate. I will give the minister her due when she says that she is spending more per student, but that is a very shallow way to view how we fund public education. As you know, I'm sure, by visiting a classroom - and I'm sure by all members of this House who were in classrooms across this province - you would know the complexity of that classroom has changed drastically. The demands that we are placing on our public education system have increased substantially but, Mr. Speaker, the funding hasn't gone along with it.

Every time a young Nova Scotian who requires support in a classroom - an EA, a TA - anytime a young Nova Scotian requires that support doesn't receive it, it only impacts on their ability to learn and their ability to get the kind of education they deserve, it impacts on the entire classroom's ability to achieve its maximum potential. So while there are many young children across this province who do not need the support of an educational assistant, they are being impacted substantially over the next year by the decision of this government because the ones who do need one will not have it.

I found it interesting as I was looking and reading this document that not once in this document did we talk about literacy and numeracy. Think about that for a second, not once did we talk about literacy and numeracy. Not once did we talk about how they should be the foundation of a quality public education system, not once. Not once did we talk about literacy in our direction for the Province of Nova Scotia.

It is our belief that we need to have an honest conversation about public education, but one that includes all the partners. One that is not going in with a decision that we are going to be reducing funding, but one that talks about how are we going to deliver the best possible program to have our young people meet the educational outcomes, educational achievements, that we expect for them.

Mr. Speaker, we have it wrong. This government has it wrong. They're slashing public education and then telling school boards and teachers to figure out a way to make it fit for their kids. What they should be saying to parents and teachers is, let's work together to find a plan for educational achievement and then we will find the dollars to make sure it happens.

They were talking about quoting economists yesterday. You cannot find a single economist on the globe who will not tell you to invest in public education, even in tough economic times. We can discuss how we do that, what we invest in, but there's not a single

economist who doesn't recognize that a good investment in public education is a good investment in the economy of Nova Scotia.

We're talking about the jobs that will come at some point down the road. Unless we invest in the young Nova Scotians today, who's going to fill those jobs? We recognize there are challenges, particularly around literacy and numeracy, but cutting programs that support teachers to be able to deliver that isn't the way to go. Investing in the classroom - investing in our children's future - is the way to go.

Regardless of which community I've gone into, public education has been at the forefront of their thoughts and minds because they do not see it as a priority for this government. They do not see this government have an honest conversation about public education and they're willing to be part of it. They understand change is coming; they want to be part of change. As a matter of fact, I would say that many Nova Scotians don't want the status quo. They want change, but they want to be part of shaping the change. They want to do it based on evidence, like Reading Recovery - what a great tool it was. It wasn't the be-all and end-all to solve all of the literacy challenges facing young Nova Scotians, but it was one of the tools that teachers should be able to use to deliver literacy to young Nova Scotians, and what do we do? We cut it.

We're still wondering what that plan looks like that was replacing it. Nova Scotians are wondering what that plan looks like to replace it, but for this government to suggest in this Throne Speech that public education is a priority to them is nothing more than a complete - I'd better be careful what I say - fiction. This government has probably been the worst government in the history of this province when it comes to investing in public education. (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker, I hear someone saying \$13 billion. They should be really proud of the fact they're asking young children to pay for that \$13 billion that they're spending. There's plenty of opportunity (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition has the floor.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I think for many families and many young Nova Scotians, a \$75 million investment in public education would have been better than \$75 million on land that Irving owned in southwestern Nova Scotia. I would suggest to you they would probably have said spending \$8 million to buy paving equipment to compete against the private sector would have been better invested in young Nova Scotians and planning toward our future. This government doesn't have a revenue problem. They have a priority problem. It's as simple as it gets.

When I've been travelling this province, the optimism that this government speaks of is nowhere to be found. Whether we're talking with municipal leaders, whether we're

talking with parents, whether we're talking with teachers, whether we're talking with business owners, none of them share the optimism that is on this paper.

My hope is that between now and next Tuesday, when the Minister of Finance stands up, he somehow finds a way to respond to the priorities of Nova Scotians, he somehow finds a way to recognize and acknowledge Nova Scotians, that he somehow understands the pressures they are having to meet their daily needs. It is my hope he stands up and responds in a positive way when it comes to finding some relief on energy, and it is my hope that when he stands up here next Tuesday he will finally say to Nova Scotians, I'm going to do what I said I was going to do in Opposition and I'm going to decouple the tax on gasoline and stop charging tax on tax. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that when he stands up on Tuesday he will send a clear signal that he believes in public education, that he will make investments in public education to ensure that our children have an opportunity to succeed into the future, and he will send a clear signal to every young Nova Scotian that he's not going to ask them to solve, to deal with the financial challenges of the province on their backs. It is equally my hope that the Minister of Education will defend public education, will fight for public education to make sure that young Nova Scotians have a voice at the Cabinet Table. It is not the responsibility of the Minister or the Deputy Minister of Education to balance the books - it's their job to fight for dollars for public education. It's the Minister of Finance who deals with the finances of this province.

It is also my hope that when he stands up on Tuesday that employers, the private sector men and women in this province who have been creating the jobs from one end of Nova Scotia to the other and who weather tough economic times, will see some hope in his words, that when he stands up they will finally say, do you know what? Maybe he has understood the error of his ways over the last couple of years. Maybe they will find some way to feel like they have a partner, someone who's really going to build the economy.

If we, as a province, are truly going to meet our true economic potential, meet the real potential that this province is capable of, we are going to have to grow the private sector. It is the only way that the government is going to be able to meet the needs that we want to invest in education, health care, and community services. Mr. Speaker, it is the only way that we are going to be able to meet those needs. It is going to be the men and women in the private sector, those who are investing their own, hard-earned money to create employment and jobs in their communities - it is the only way we're going to grow the economy of this province.

It would be our hope that when the Minister of Finance stands up on Tuesday he'll send a clear signal to the bureaucracy in the province. Things have to change, we're not going to focus on the administration of delivering services, we're going to refocus on the delivery of those services. It is my hope when he stands up, he's going to send a signal that not only is he going to cut administration and take those hard-earned dollars and move

them back into the front-line services, but it's our hope that he's going find a new model of delivering those services.

It is our hope that he will send a clear signal to Nova Scotians that he has been listening. It is our hope that when take this document and they take the words off this document that they put some action to them, that tourism operators feel supported; the classroom teachers feel supported; that front-line health care workers feel supported; and that families who need our support whether they're dealing with children in the public education system who need educational support or whether it's young Nova Scotians who need mental health support, it's our hope that they'll feel some support out of this government next Tuesday.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that as I have been travelling this province, Nova Scotians do not feel that support coming from their government - just the opposite. I have been elected to this House since 2003, and I've had the privilege to lead this Party since 2007, and I've spent a good number of those months on the road travelling the province. I must tell you that this is the first time I've seen Nova Scotians' despair, when it comes to looking for support from government, at an all-time low.

Ironically, the very people who we should be supporting the most, families that have challenges, families that want our support when it comes to educational challenges, families that want our support when it comes to mental health issues for young adolescents, they should be the priorities of our government of any political stripe, they should be the ones we should be reaching out to and helping, those families that are struggling to meet that challenge.

It is my hope that the better deal Nova Scotians were promised in 2009 shows up someday soon because many Nova Scotians are feeling the weight of trying to meet their basic needs. I hope when the Minister of Finance stands up that he sends them a signal that he has finally listened and that there will be some relief in the budget of next Tuesday, because let me tell you, there is nothing in this Throne Speech that gives any single Nova Scotian any comfort who is looking for help from this government. With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I'll take my place. (Applause)

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise in my place in this Chamber and provide an Address in Reply to yesterday's Speech from the Throne. Before I get into the details, I do want to say to my Cumberland County peer, the member for Cumberland North who was the mover of the Speech from the Throne yesterday, that I appreciated his remarks and it was good to see Cumberland County such a big part of the Chamber session yesterday and today, that although we are of different Parties, I know we share a great interest not only in Cumberland County and rural Nova Scotia but in all of

Nova Scotia. I just want to acknowledge the job he did in moving the Speech from the Throne yesterday.

In a similar light, I know the member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley also seconded the Speech from the Throne yesterday; I want to acknowledge the good job he did in doing that as the government began to lay out its plan for this session.

Mr. Speaker, as all members know, that was the final Speech from the Throne that will be read by Her Honour, the current Lieutenant Governor, who is someone I have come to know personally and professionally over the last number of years. I just want to add my voice and that of the Progressive Conservative caucus to all of those who are congratulating her and thanking her for her term of service as our Lieutenant Governor. Any Nova Scotian who encountered her during her term - and I know many did because she travelled all of Nova Scotia quite extensively - found what we know, those of us who have had the privilege to meet her, what we know to be a warm and engaging and caring and concerned and honourable representative of the Queen in our province.

Her Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, is also a very distinguished person, a very distinguished Nova Scotian; she is a woman of many firsts. Nova Scotians know she is our first African Nova Scotian Lieutenant Governor. Nova Scotians know she is only our second female Lieutenant Governor. Throughout her career, prior to being the Lieutenant Governor, she was also the person who established a number of other firsts, including the first permanent director and the first CEO of the Human Rights Commission. I just want to take a quick moment, at this time, and say a big thank you from a caucus - I know I speak for everybody in the province - from people who appreciate the career of public service that Her Honour has provided to all Nova Scotians and will continue to until her term is up. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, you will, of course, appreciate that she is from Whitney Pier, which seems to have produced a fair number of prominent Nova Scotians over the last number of years. We'll have to check the drinking water in the Pier and see how that happened.

I also would like to note that it is appropriate at this time to recognize that Nova Scotia has lost a number of its distinguished citizens. If I could just pause for a moment and speak of the few that I have gotten to know myself, such as the man who was always known by his title, "The Publisher", Mr. Graham Dennis who had a commitment to this province like no other, who took the mission of The ChronicleHerald to heart from the day he took over as a young man until his last days that it was there - to promote the interests of all Nova Scotia, to give voice to those that have none, and to hold to account those that are in positions of responsibility. That mission is written every day on the masthead of The ChronicleHerald. I know he took it to heart.

I suspect that what many Nova Scotians may not know about Mr. Dennis is that he was a great man of encouragement to others who were stepping forward either in the

business world, the journalism world or in the political world. I will personally always cherish the occasional call I would have from “The Publisher” which would always start with that now-famous, “May I say this to you, sir?” which I learned over time was not actually a question because he was going to tell you what he thought regardless of how you would answer that question. And, of course, his occasional encouragement to “not hide your light under a bushel” which is great advice to every young Nova Scotian today.

I also want to recognize that Nova Scotia lost a great senator, a great business person, a great lawyer in Senator Fred Dickson, the Conservative senator for Nova Scotia from my hometown of Truro. He was a man who all Nova Scotians continue to receive dividends from his hard work on the original Atlantic Accord, the very one that, in his words, because of his contribution, made it clear that Nova Scotians will be the principal beneficiary of their own offshore. I hope that in the schools and universities they’ll teach how it came to be that Nova Scotians earned that right where other provinces have yet to actually struggle for it that have offshores of their own. It was through the shrewd and hard negotiating style and the smart negotiating style of Senator Dickson that we came to be the principal beneficiary of our own offshore and I want to recognize that.

Dr. Peter Aucoin was actually a professor of mine of political science when I was at Dalhousie University and we all mourn his loss, all of those who were students of his.

Chief Myles Burke, who I only recently got to know, was a progressive law enforcement officer who brought great discipline and great dignity to the Cape Breton Regional Police Service and enhanced the safety of the residents of CBRM by the way he lived his own life as a healthy and giving person, provided an example of leadership to all of Cape Breton, to all of Nova Scotia.

Peter Underwood, who I got to know when I worked in Premier Hamm’s office - he was a deputy minister then - passed away just this week. He was exactly the kind of public servant that all Nova Scotians should hope to have and deserve to have, with a big brain and big heart and he wanted to do the right thing whether it was on the environment or legislation to protect pristine areas, on moving our economy forward with great natural assets like tidal power - which he was very excited about. I want to recognize Mr. Underwood.

Paul O’Regan, I will pause for a moment on. Paul O’Regan was a great resident, his family has great history in Cumberland County and Parrsboro; they are multi-generational business leaders there. Mr. O’Regan was a teacher by profession who went into the family business, who started a very small used-car lot in Dartmouth and grew it into one of our largest employers, one of the most successful car dealers for his brand in all of Canada. But mostly I want to recognize the incredible generosity that he, his business, and his family have shown in Dartmouth, in Parrsboro, as benefactors of the Ship’s Company Theatre and many other local institutions there. They are truly a great model family of putting into the

community all that they have earned through their business and more. I know for a generation of young Nova Scotia business leaders they are a great model.

Also, Madam Speaker, I recognize we lost two former members of this House of Assembly in the past year. In one case, in the case of Mr. Huskison, I did have the opportunity to meet him and I know that he served his area of Shelburne with great dedication, as MLAs should, and we should recognize that.

Madam Speaker, with those remembrances and reflections I do want to get into the Throne Speech itself because I am standing here in my place as an Opposition Leader but also as a Nova Scotian who is very disappointed in yesterday's Throne Speech. There are some things that I am encouraged by and I do support and I will highlight those as well, but most importantly Nova Scotians saw a pretty cynical document that, I think, proved beyond all doubt that we have a government, after almost three years in office, that has completely lost touch with the real world, has completely lost touch with the reality of living in Nova Scotia today, that has completely lost touch with the hardships and the cost of living, with electricity prices, with gas prices, with taxes, with unemployment, particularly outside of Halifax. As families struggle to get by, as businesses struggle to compete we have a Throne Speech that was interested in spin and public relations, and a government that has its head stuck up in the clouds when Nova Scotians deserve better.

Madam Speaker, it would have been nice if the government had acknowledged the reality of raising a family, earning a living in Nova Scotia today, because they deserve a government that knows how to meet a payroll, that knows about hiring people for a small business, that knows about meeting their expenses, that knows about going out and digging up a new contract or a new sale to cover the payroll, that knows about the burden of regulation and paperwork and how much time it takes away from the real job of generating wealth and generating opportunity in towns large and small. It would be nice for Nova Scotians to know that they have a government that knows how to do the math around deficits and debt and taxes.

Instead we had an incredible work of fiction yesterday that shows the government is more interested in spin and public relations than in actually getting things done. I'll give you an example - perhaps the most outrageous and cruel example of all - which is on Page 5 of the Throne Speech, and I know this has already been reported in the public media but I just think it sets the tone for why we're going in the wrong direction, when this NDP Government can write with a straight face that from Yarmouth to Cape Breton you can see and feel the optimism.

Well, Madam Speaker, I don't know when the last time a member of the government was in Yarmouth or Cape Breton, but for the very government that cut the legs out from under the economy of Yarmouth and the whole South Shore, to say that there is a new sense of optimism in Yarmouth shows just how out of touch that government has become in such a short period of time, it is shameful. It is a work of fiction.

Madam Speaker, there are so many examples of how this document is a work of fiction it's hard to know where to start but let's start at the beginning. On Page 3, the NDP says, and I quote from the Throne Speech, "My government is one year away from bringing Nova Scotia back to balance."

The fact of the matter is that's exactly where they found Nova Scotia in the first place, Madam Speaker and I will table for the benefit of any member in this House who wants to dispute reality, who has their head so far up in the clouds that they actually believe that ridiculous statement, the message of the minister that was attached to the audited Public Accounts for the year ended 2009, the last year before the NDP took over, which says, "The Public Accounts for the year ended March 31, 2009, reported a surplus of \$19.7 million."

Madam Speaker, between the time that that year ended and the new minister had to sign the Public Accounts and affix his signature to it, the government did change. So do you know which minister actually signed the audited statement that says the government inherited a surplus of \$19.7 million? It was the member for Halifax Fairview, the very same Finance Minister who agrees with this statement that they are going to be back to balance in one year. This document - an audited document - shows that's exactly where they found it. That shows what a great work of fiction on its own this Throne Speech is.

Madam Speaker, on Page 4 the Throne Speech says that the province has a structural deficit it inherited. Well, we'll have to ask the Auditor General about that. I know he'll tell you that you can't audit a structural deficit because no such thing exists. You audit real deficits and real surpluses, as the Auditor General did, as that very Finance Minister had to affix his signature to a surplus of \$19.7 million, which leads to the obvious question that's on the mind of every Nova Scotian that has their feet on the ground: How can a government start with a surplus, raise our taxes to the highest in the whole country, put the HST up to 15 per cent, and take an additional \$783 out of the pockets of each and every Nova Scotian, actually cut programs in our classrooms and our hospitals, and turn that into a \$221 million deficit? That is the reality of the last three years. That is the record of the last three years that this Throne Speech is silent on while it makes outrageous fictional claims like the two that I just mentioned.

Madam Speaker, to go on, I will address right now one of the items that attracted a significant amount of attention yesterday and that is on Page 15 of the Throne Speech where the government says it will "... seek locations outside this immediate area for new and consolidated agencies and offices of government." That sounds nice, and yet the government has no new departments on the books; no centralized, consolidated departments on the books. I am hopeful that a minister of the government will tell us which departments they're planning to create and how they're going to pay for them, which ones they're going to consolidate and how they're going to pay for them, but until that day comes, what a cynical and cruel promise to make to the people of rural Nova Scotia when they know full well there is no new department, no consolidated department, no detail.

The reason they're making that promise, Madam Speaker, is because they know that in reality - not in fiction but in reality - under their watch every region of Nova Scotia outside of Halifax, when added together, has lost 8,000 full-time jobs. This is the best the government can come up with, an empty promise to make up for those 8,000 full-time jobs lost in rural Nova Scotia. Rural Nova Scotians deserve better.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. With the indulgence of the member, the honourable member for Halifax Chebucto on an introduction.

MR. HOWARD EPSTEIN: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and my thanks to the honourable member for permitting the interruption of his Address in Reply.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to a group that is in the gallery opposite. These are 17 students who are here from the Quinpool Education Centre. They are students of English as a second language. They are accompanied by two of their instructors, Lena Golding and Kelly Cormier. They are here to observe our proceedings.

Although the Quinpool Education Centre is located in my constituency, many of them are residents of Halifax Clayton Park and, in fact, the member for Halifax Clayton Park has met with the students and talked with them about the democratic process as it is played out here. They are here now to observe it in person. I would ask the members of the House to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

MADAM SPEAKER: We welcome all visitors to the gallery today. We hope you enjoy the proceedings.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The point I wish to make about rural Nova Scotia is that what is lost on this government but what is known on this side of the House - which is something that has been known for years by many - is that to this day a significant amount of the wealth generated for the Province of Nova Scotia is fished and farmed and harvested and manufactured in rural Nova Scotia. The very foundations of our economy rely on the ability of rural Nova Scotia to, in a responsible and profitable and prosperous and sustainable way, fish the oceans, farm the fields, harvest our forests, manufacture important durable goods for the use of Nova Scotians and to export, as top-quality product, around the world.

The legs have been kicked out from under rural Nova Scotia in the last few years by a government that pursues high-cost policies, adds to their regulatory burden, raises their taxes, and on and on. Madam Speaker, not understanding that dynamic of the rural economy, the government's answer is to make an empty promise buried on Page 15 of the Throne Speech, that if some day they may possibly create a new department, they might consider moving some of it outside Halifax.

That's not good enough, Madam Speaker. Moving jobs around the province in a fair and equitable way is a worthwhile objective. If the NDP are serious about it, we should see a real plan that puts real jobs in real small towns, in real parts of rural Nova Scotia, in a fair way that is targeted to their fair share. You know there is an old saying about being wary of the guy that promises the sleeves off his vest and this is exactly what that old saying is about - when someone with a vest comes up and promises you the sleeves, you should be very careful. That is what Nova Scotians are going to take from this promise, until there is a concrete plan that is based on real fairness, not on fictional, new departments that don't exist. That is the problem that we have with that part of the Throne Speech, which again, is based on nothing but hot air.

For example, the government continues to fund the 10 health authorities and the 10 CEOs and the 72 vice-presidents and the 152 executive directors and the thousands of managers who look after the health care system of a province of just over 900,000 people. In the Throne Speech they bragged about creating this new service entity that's going to combine some of the services that are going to be done by these institutions but leave in place the very bureaucratic superstructure that, without question, absorbs so much of our health care dollars. If there were a place that the government could seriously consider putting jobs in rural Nova Scotia, why not do the right thing and consolidate at the health authority level and then find the most efficient place in Nova Scotia to provide that administrative service? That would be a real plan. That would not be a fictional plan. That would not be a lot of hot air. That would actually free up bureaucratic dollars and put jobs in places in Nova Scotia where they could do some good.

They actually mentioned the bureaucratic superstructure of health in the Throne Speech and then proposed to do nothing about it, and certainly when it comes to putting jobs in rural Nova Scotia, do not connect the dots at the opportunity that is right in front of their face. They are more concerned about making an empty promise than they are about actually getting things done. Rural Nova Scotians are going to see right through it until the day comes when they have a government recognizing the reality of trying to earn a living, of trying to raise a family in rural Nova Scotia, and giving them fair and equitable shares of government jobs as a way to get the economy going in those small towns and counties of rural Nova Scotia. That's what is missing from this Throne Speech.

Speaking of jobs in rural Nova Scotia and the economy of rural Nova Scotia, how laughable that the government chooses on Page 9 to celebrate the commitment of Michelin to the Province of Nova Scotia. That will be cold comfort to the 3,000 employees of Michelin in the Valley, in Pictou County, on the South Shore - one of our largest private sector, 40 years on, sustainable, high-value job employers for rural Nova Scotia. Just in the last session of this House the government put a freeze and a chill through the management team of Michelin, through the employees of Michelin and their sister companies that are great manufacturers in rural areas, with their job-killing first contract arbitration plan.

Michelin itself said, that one piece of NDP legislation puts a black mark on Nova Scotia when they consider future investments in our province. You look around the world, and Michelin has 13 manufacturing plants in North America; they have 30 around the world. Their world headquarters in France allocates billions of dollars of new investment around the world every year - dollars that not only have the opportunity for new jobs and new investment but dollars that are used to maintain the existing plants, to keep them competitive. Now, because of the NDP, there's a black mark against our province when Michelin considers where to invest their dollars to create new jobs and to make their current jobs competitive around the world.

Now we're in the next session of the House, and all the government has to say to Michelin is that they celebrate their commitment to Nova Scotia. Well, big deal. The same is true for Stanfield's, for Ropak, for PolyCello, for Sobeys, for all the companies that employ people in rural Nova Scotia that came to this place to tell the government to stop its plan before real jobs were at risk, that they cast aside without a second thought and plowed through with their plan anyway. Now what we have is a celebration in one sentence of Michelin and an empty promise to move government jobs into rural Nova Scotia at some undefined future date with some undefined new department to take the place of what they have put at risk with their first contract scheme. How audacious to dare to celebrate Michelin after what that government did to Michelin and all of their sister employees around the province.

If that wasn't enough, Madam Speaker, on Page 20 of the Throne Speech the hilarity really begins - where the government actually claims that they wish to put more money back into the pockets of Nova Scotians. The very same government that promised that same thing before the last election, that said they wouldn't raise their taxes, among other promises that went by the wayside, that in their first opportunity on attaining office took the 13 per cent HST and raised it to 15 per cent. As of this weekend, Madam Speaker, far from having more money in their pockets, thanks to the NDP, each and every Nova Scotian will have \$743 less in their pockets because of the NDP.

Now, Madam Speaker, that is a whole month of groceries for many, many Nova Scotians, that is a very good mortgage payment for very many Nova Scotians, and that would completely fill the oil tank of home heating fuel for many Nova Scotians. But instead of putting money in the pockets of Nova Scotians, this government has taken \$743 out of the pockets of every single one of us - in a family of four that adds up to \$3,000 poorer because of the NDP.

Madam Speaker, let's just pause for a moment and look at how other governments across Canada, and even the national government, are dealing with their budgets and their budget issues in the last few weeks. We have new governments in Ontario and in New Brunswick. Both brought forward budgets in the last two weeks - and a new budget for the newly elected Government of Canada just yesterday. In every case where they have financial problems, they rejected outright adding to the tax burden of their citizens. New

Brunswick rejected outright digging deeper into the pockets of New Brunswickers with a higher HST. Ontario rejected outright digging deeper into the pockets of Ontarians with their GST or with income tax. The Government of Canada rejected outright raising any taxes on Canadians, despite the financial challenges that all of those provinces and the Government of Canada face.

They rejected it because they know it is something to be true - that raising taxes may be easy on the government, but it is hard on citizens. They all are dealing with their problems by looking at their own administration, their own bureaucracy, their own costs and dealing with that side of the equation. And you know why, Mr. Speaker? They know that that might be harder on government, but it is easier on the people.

There is only one province in all of Canada that, on taking office, decided to solve its financial problems the easy way - easy on them, easy on government, easy on the NDP - and that is to leave all the bureaucracy and all the administration in place and raise our HST to the highest in the country. Never mind the promise, let's just raise the HST - and each and every one of us is \$743 poorer because of that. When we have a budget next week, they are going to have the HST still in place for another year, and by the end of that budget we will all be \$1,000 poorer because we have a unique NDP Government in this province that took the easy way out, that broke its promise, that dug deeper into our pockets rather than look at its own administration, like 10 CEOs and 72 vice-presidents and 152 executive directors, and on and on, that it accepts without question while digging that much more into the pockets of everyday Nova Scotians.

That is what's wrong with this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, and that is what is wrong with the approach of this government. It is more about fiction, it's more about spin, it's more about fancy ads on TV and not about actually dealing with the reality of living in Nova Scotia and working in Nova Scotia today.

Another example, Mr. Speaker - the NDP have a page and a half, nine paragraphs in their Throne Speech, devoted to energy, to electricity in Nova Scotia. That is a lot of time but not once does the word affordability for Nova Scotians show up in this document when it comes to our power bills. Not once has the NDP considered how much more Nova Scotians can afford to pay when they get their power bill every month. We all want a greener future, we all want hydro power, and we all want a sustainable, modern, dynamic economy that grows in a green way. Everybody wants that, that's not in dispute. But first and foremost the people that actually pay the bills, they deserve to know that they have a government that cares about whether they can afford those power bills or not. In nine paragraphs, a page and a half, not once does the government mention whether their policies are affordable to Nova Scotians or not.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, in the last year our energy costs, in reality, according to Statistics Canada, have gone up 12.3 per cent. Now I know there are some on the government side that say, well, that's happening everywhere, that's because of what's

going on around the world. But the fact of the matter is that energy costs for Canada as a whole are going up a lot less than that, 7 per cent according to Statistics Canada. That's hard enough but we are five percentage points higher in our increase, so what is so unique about Nova Scotia? What is so unique about this place that causes our power bills to go up so much more than everybody else's?

The answer is that we have an NDP Government that writes a Throne Speech, that devotes a page and a half to energy, nine paragraphs, and not once cares to mention whether their policies are affordable to the people of Nova Scotia or not, and that is what's missing when it comes to energy policy today, and that is the problem, that the fiction of the Throne Speech and the reality of living in Nova Scotia today and paying the bills are very, very far apart.

Mr. Speaker, one would think that a time when every Nova Scotian is telling us that the number-one issue is jobs and the economy, getting by, earning a living, finding opportunities for our people today, dealing with unemployment, getting people back into the workforce, finding real, honest-to-goodness prosperity and opportunity for our children, that the government would have something positive to say about the economy in our Throne Speech and yet they miss some obvious opportunities. The government talks about wanting to support our tourism industry, for example. On Page 10 the government actually says that they are interested in encouraging Nova Scotia's tourist industry.

But here we have a province, Mr. Speaker - and you will know this as well as anybody - where we have Cape Breton Island, that has been recognized as the number-one most beautiful island to visit in all the world - number one, Cape Breton Island. There is a gigantic opportunity if the government was seriously wanting to do something for the tourist industry. Is it mentioned in the Throne Speech? No. Not a single mention about Cape Breton and the incredible opportunity we have there as the province with the number-one most beautiful island to visit in the world right here in our province. Not a mention. You'd think they would at least deign to put a sign up, that they would at least put a sign up somewhere at the causeway to say welcome to the most beautiful island in the whole world. Is there a sign? There's no sign. How much would that cost? It would cost next to nothing. They didn't think of that, they didn't even think to mention Cape Breton in the Throne Speech and its opportunity for tourism. That's wrong, with having your head in the clouds instead of your feet on the ground which is what Nova Scotians really need.

Madam Speaker, one of the greatest howlers of all, one of the greatest most outrageous claims in the Throne Speech is where the government almost breaks its arm patting itself on the back for being such a great supporter of our education system which, by the way, is very directly tied to how prosperous our economy is going to be in the future.

At a time when we need every living, breathing young Nova Scotian to soar as high in our school system as their ability and their drive and their ambition can take them; at a time when we need Nova Scotia children who have special needs, who have program

assistance that they need to get through to Grade 12 and beyond; at a time when we need them all to find their place in the modern, dynamic economy - which means Grade 12, which means a trade, which means the community college, which means our universities - this is the place where the government chooses to flex its muscles and actually induce real cuts in our schools, in our classrooms.

We're losing teachers and teaching assistants who provide those very programs to special needs kids, we're losing programs, we're losing the quality classroom experience that our children deserve and expect, at the very time when we know it is no longer acceptable to lose students along the way in Grade 8 or Grade 9, because they lose interest or because of a learning challenge, where it's no longer okay to let that happen - if it ever was; it certainly is not okay now - where an investment in those kids is an investment in their future. By multiplying them by the thousands and thousands that need our help in the schools, an investment in our province's future, this government, in this work of fiction, patting itself on the back while cutting our classrooms at the same time - that is shameful.

I know that the Legislative Library, because of that one statement alone, is going to have to make a lot of room in the fiction section for this Throne Speech - because of that one sentence. We'll have to let them know.

When we have governments across the country preaching the need for restraint and balance and tax relief, this Throne Speech, if you add it all together, actually has the temerity to propose 16 new schemes and frameworks and formulas and programs and strategies. This is the fourth Throne Speech of this government, all the others having similar numbers of strategies and schemes and programs. Where is the restraint on the government side?

The classrooms are feeling that restraint. The hospitals are feeling that restraint. The mental health workers at the IWK are certainly feeling that restraint, and at a time when they're all being asked to absorb hard, meaningful, real cuts that the government in this Throne Speech, this great work of fiction, actually feels that far from exercising restraint on its own, it decides for us, for them, that they're going to come up with 16 new programs and schemes and formulas and strategies - all of which are going to require a greater use of our public resources, a greater use of taxpayer dollars, a greater use of the bureaucracy.

The point here is the government has it exactly wrong. They are upside down. The cuts they push are at the front-line level where people need help the most, and the expansion goes on at the top in the bureaucracy with 16 new programs and schemes and so on. What could be more offensive to Nova Scotians than that?

Let's use the Department of Education for an example. In the same month that school boards are getting budget cuts that are being felt in the classrooms and the relationship between the school boards and the Department of Education is deteriorating as

a result, when we need them to work together, in that same month, the Department of Education decides now is the time to post for a new senior executive director responsible for the relationship between the department and the school boards.

Well, Mr. Speaker, since Confederation the province has managed to have a relationship between its department and the school boards. For 150 years the department has managed to run the province's education system without hiring yet another bureaucrat to do that, but in the year that the NDP are putting cuts in our classroom, they're offsetting that by hiring another bureaucrat in the Education Department in Halifax to make everyone feel better at the school board level. I can't think of a better example of being upside down when it comes to where you spend taxpayers' money and where you cut than that.

This Throne Speech is just the fourth in a long line of Throne Speeches with schemes and plans and strategies that have to be funded somewhere and so when Nova Scotians ask themselves that great question - how could we start with a surplus of \$19.7 million; have the government raise our taxes to the highest in the country; kick in \$1,000 more in HST every year; see our classes cut and our hospitals cut, and end up with a big deficit at the end - how is that possible? The answer is we have four Throne Speeches each of which has dozens of new bureaucracies, new strategies, new schemes, new platforms, new frameworks that have to be funded somehow. That is how you could have a government, unique in Canada, that has all of those things and ends up with a big deficit and a lot of bureaucracy and cuts where we need help the most. That is why this Throne Speech is such a work of fiction compared to the reality of Nova Scotia today.

Mr. Speaker, that covers what's in the Throne Speech but what's too bad, again, is what's left out of the Throne Speech. We have a record waiting list of seniors looking for advanced care, in particular looking for long-term care, a record waiting list looking for a long-term care facility, a long-term care room and a bed with advanced care to look after our seniors - a record high - and yet the Throne Speech is silent on that great problem.

In fact, in the last almost three years the government had been in, they have announced no new long-term care beds to deal with that growing waiting list. They've cut the ribbons on the ones that were underway before they got in, and they were sure to have the cameras there when those ribbon cuttings were going on, but there's not a single new long-term care bed announced, or funded, or ready to go, or tendered in their term in office. Yet the very waiting list that they complained about in Opposition has grown longer and longer and longer.

Mr. Speaker, I know, and we all know, that part of the answer for our seniors is home care but the fact of the matter is one-third of the seniors who are waiting for long-term care live in a community in Nova Scotia where there is no home care option, so it is not an answer for them, and another third of that waiting list are seniors who are actually in a hospital bed today waiting for long-term care. If the government were serious about saving money in our health care system, rather than defending the 10 CEOs and 72

vice-presidents and all of that, rather than asking the actual programs to get cut, they would be looking at getting those seniors into the advanced care facilities that they need and deserve and out of those hospital beds as both the right thing to do. It provides the right level of care, is the compassionate thing to do for our seniors, and saves the system money in the long run, but there is nothing, not a word on that in this Throne Speech.

Just a few weeks ago the Auditor General raised serious ethical concerns, to use his words, about the ever-increasing pile of debt that the government is running up as long as it runs these deficits. At the time the government's response was, well, who asked you? It was a pretty arrogant thing to say to the Auditor General, a pretty arrogant thing to all those young Nova Scotians and future generations of Nova Scotians who are going to be asked to pay the bills for that debt. You would think in this Throne Speech, if the government were serious about looking after the future of the province, they would have something to say back to the Auditor General in a constructive way about how they're going to deal with the ethical concern of continuing to run deficits, of continuing to raise taxes, of continuing to pass the bills on to the next generation, but that's not what they do.

There's not a word about that in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. That government is more concerned about what the next entitlement is than what the next generation needs. That's what's wrong with this Throne Speech. That's why it's a work of fiction.

We heard the Finance Minister a week ago hint that there might be some tax relief in the budget next week - what a cruel and cynical thing to say when he still reaches into all of our pockets for \$743 in HST. This is that sleight of hand that Nova Scotians are going to see right through on Budget Day when they compare whatever the Finance Minister has in mind to the \$743 that they are out because of the NDP, and they will make their own decision then about tax relief. But if the government was serious about tax relief, why is there not a single word about it in the Throne Speech? Not once are taxes or the HST or income tax mentioned; not once is it mentioned that there is some relief coming.

I know we are going to see on Tuesday - and I hope because Nova Scotians need and deserve tax relief that there is some, but in reality how can a government, if it had its feet on the ground, look Nova Scotians in the eyes and say we're going to give you tax relief when they are taking \$743 out of each of our pockets since they raised the HST? There's nothing about that in the Throne Speech. Or, if we truly want to grow a modern, dynamic, progressive, exciting economy, why is it that the government, in their term in office, has allowed the burden of regulation on our small businesses to grow so high?

When they came in, the government had a rating of B for regulatory burden by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. We were one of the best in the country. Three years later, in that short period of time, Nova Scotia's rating has gone from a B to a D - C is average; F is fail. We are clearly going in the wrong direction. All that burden of paperwork kills jobs, discourages businesses, makes it harder for them to get their heads out of the paperwork and get on with the job they want to do, which is to grow their

business and create jobs. We are the fastest-declining province in the country when it comes to regulation - and the Throne Speech is silent on that.

Mr. Speaker, in the minutes I have left I do want to recognize that it is important when you are criticizing what the government is doing, to point out to Nova Scotians that despite all they have done in higher taxes, in more regulation, in a power policy that ignores affordability, in losing all those jobs in rural Nova Scotia, and the cynical promises that they make to rural Nova Scotians - this remains a great province with great potential. Despite the NDP, Nova Scotia has all it takes to be great again. The Irving shipyard contract is a place that we can all look to with hope for the future - real hope, not false hope, but real hope that better days can come.

Those better days can only come if we have a government that knows how to take advantage of that contract, that knows how to meet a payroll, that knows how to get out and hustle for business, that knows how to manage its expenses and make sure that there's a sustainable profit at the bottom - that's not this bunch, Mr. Speaker.

I will say on the positive side that I am pleased about some things in the Throne Speech. I am supporting and supportive of some of the elements of the Throne Speech like the attention to apprenticeship programs to get Nova Scotians ready for that shipyard contract; the new investment in a metal fabrication program to get Nova Scotians ready for that shipyard contract; the focus on teaching the trades in our schools to get Nova Scotians ready for that shipyard contract. Finally, and for once, they come around to something tangible that the government can do to really make that shipyard contract something great instead of evermore public relations spin and fancy TV ads and patting themselves on the back - this is something concrete that we can get behind, that truly will make a difference for the shipyard contract.

To conclude my review of the Throne Speech on a positive note, we do support that and we will support, Mr. Speaker, anything reasonable to make that shipyard contract all it can be and to make Nova Scotia great again. So, in my final minute or two, I just want to say that I want to thank, first and foremost, the people of Cumberland South, my constituents who sent me here to represent them, who make all of this possible for all members of the House, who I would do anything for - as I know other members would do anything for their constituents - who deserve all of the opportunities and all the best that the future can bring, who deserve to know that there is a way to make Cumberland South and all Nova Scotia great again, that there is a way to take the talents and the creativity and the uniqueness that is inherent in every Nova Scotian and unleash it and free it up so that each and every resident of our province can soar as high as they can go, that we'll get away from a version of government that believes it is their purpose to hold people down, to regiment, to compel, to regulate, to order, to spin and get on to a government that believes the proper role is to invest in things like education and the trades, to help people who need special help to get all the way through to Grade 12 and beyond, to free people up soar as high as their talents and their ambition can take them.

That is a better way forward. That is what the people of Cumberland South deserve and expect and they are representative of the whole province. That is why I want to thank them for their confidence and for sending me here to speak up on their behalf. Of course there would be no Parties, there would be no Leaders, there would be no Premiers if we didn't have MLAs who were sent here by their constituents, so we should always go back to that, Mr. Speaker, that it is because of them that all of this is possible and it is for them that we stand in our place today and show all Nova Scotians that far from having a Throne Speech that is a work of fiction, that is more focused on manipulating public opinion, on fancy ads, on public relations, on spin, on outright laughable howlers, like they support education when they cut it, like Yarmouth is optimistic when they've kicked the legs out from under them, like they are investing in the economy when they are taking \$743 out of each and every one of our pockets, like they are dealing with a financial problem when the Auditor General audited a surplus before they came in, like they are getting back to balance when they know full well that is where they started in the first place.

Instead of all that cynicism, Mr. Speaker, there is a better way forward, full of real hope, full of an economy that gets back to the basics of balanced budgets, lower taxes, less regulation, real investment in our schools as the only way forward; that is something that we will be debating throughout this session as our caucus does more than just criticize.

I know I've done my share today, but as we use this session of the House to bring forward real, meaningful legislation that talks about affordable power rates, lower taxes, less regulation, protecting our kids when they are in school and when they are out of school, and ensuring they have all the tools they need to get ahead in life, that is the better way forward that this cynical piece of fiction that the Legislative Library is going to need to find a place for in the fiction section, can ever hope to talk about. That is the difference, Mr. Speaker, that Nova Scotians are coming to see between the record of the NDP Government and the better way forward that they so richly deserve. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island.

MR. LEONARD PREYRA: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise here today and to say a few words in the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. It's a particular pleasure to follow the Leader of the Third Party because he is such a great storyteller, particularly when it comes to works of fiction. I'm sure that speech he just delivered is going to be listed in the fiction section in our Legislative Library. I want to thank him for adding to the wonderful stories he's been telling us about the year, particularly his reinvention of the Tory period in government.

Let me begin by thanking Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor for her wonderful term in office as Lieutenant Governor. I had the pleasure of knowing her before she took office, and her advocacy, her activism - particularly on human rights issues, particularly in regard to people who were on the margins - continued in her term in office. In her term in office, she continued that wonderful work. She provided caring and compassionate service

to our community, especially when it came to young people and young people on the margins of society.

I remember especially a speech that she gave on restorative justice and how important it was for us to understand young people and the social context within which those issues occur, and how important it is for us to rehabilitate young people and provide opportunities for them to get out of the trap many of them and their families find themselves in. She used her good offices, she used her great skill and her experience to promote those values, values that she fought for hard before she entered that office, and I want to thank her, especially on behalf of the young people of our community, for the work that she did on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I know that you're very proud of the fact that she is from Whitney Pier, and she herself is, but I want you to know that she has been a constituent of mine for a very long time. I would also like to thank you for sharing her with us. I spoke with her last night at the wonderful service that we had here at the House, and she said she's going to continue to live here for a while, although her heart still belongs to Whitney Pier. So we will have to share her, and I'm very much looking forward to the great work she will do after she has taken a period of rest and rehabilitation.

I also want to take this opportunity to salute our Queen, who is celebrating her Diamond Jubilee. As the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island, I had the great privilege of hosting her and welcoming her to our constituency when she was last here. The members of the House will remember what a wonderful day that was. It was blowing a gale. We had that horizontal rain and high wind. The Deputy Premier, in particular - I remember the photograph of him welcoming her on the runway in Cape Breton, and it was just extraordinary. The rain was blowing a gale and she was totally blown about by the wind, but she had a smile on her face and she had the steady sense of resolve to move ahead. It was very much a metaphor for the Royal Family and the great tradition of service to the community, particularly at difficult times, and it's also a great metaphor of our government, that we have been blown about by the storms of the economic crisis in the United States and other parts of the world, and here we are with a steady plan, a clear course, and we have a plan that is going to get us to our destination, where we will have the wind in our sails very soon.

I also want to say that it is a tradition to talk about the many people in our community who have gone and who are no longer with us. The Speech from the Throne talks about Peter Aucoin and Murray Beck, two of my colleagues in the political science field. Murray Beck, in particular, when I first came to Nova Scotia, had written the greatest work on the politics of Nova Scotia. There hasn't been one written since or before, and he was wonderful at sharing his knowledge. When I first came here, I was often asked to comment on Nova Scotia politics. I invariably called Murray and I said, Murray, could you give us some background on this, could you tell me something? He was very, very gracious with his time. I was also very lucky in the days before he died to meet him at the nursing

home and talk about contemporary politics. His mind was very active in those days even though his body was failing him. But I do want to, on behalf of the political science community, say that Murray Beck was just a great resource and really broke the path for us. Peter Aucoin as well, I served with him on two royal commissions and he was really a political-scientist political scientist. He served everywhere but in the House and did great service as well.

Joyce Barkhouse, Order of Canada recipient, also died last year. She had many accomplishments but probably her greatest accomplishment was putting Sable Island on the map. Her classic work, *Pit Pony*, is remembered by children and adults everywhere, and it tells the great story, not just about the wonderful horses of Sable Island but about Sable Island itself and the great part of our heritage.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that it is a tradition in this House to talk about prominent people who have died but I want to say a word about someone I had worked with for three years at the Brunswick Street Mission and their breakfast program. His name was John Hipson and John Hipson came every Sunday at - I don't know when he came because when I arrived he had already opened up the kitchen; he had made beans, boiled eggs, oatmeal and coffee. I really didn't know John all that well, all I know is that whenever I came in the morning he would greet me with, hello Leonard, who are you? I know I can't use the word in this House.

It was his nature, John Hipson hated politicians; he just felt that they didn't really work hard enough; they didn't understand the community, and he just felt that they were out of touch with people. But John Hipson also had a great respect for people he worked with, including politicians, so this was an odd situation, but he came every day and he was not above saying, would you mind having a conversation with this homeless person or this person who needs help because I believe you can help them. Every Sunday - I didn't go every Sunday, Mr. Speaker - but he was there every Sunday and he worked really hard to serve the people in his community.

I didn't know until he had died that he was an American. He had lived in Vietnam. He had served for two terms there and he had faced extraordinary challenges and he, himself, was very close to the line in Halifax, but he was putting in the little energy he had, the talents he had, to help people who are less fortunate. I want to commend John Hipson, and people like John Hipson, who give selflessly of their time, the little resources they have, but the great energy and the great compassion and commitment they have. To those people who have served and who have gone before the John Hipsons of the world I want to pay our tribute.

I know Mr. Speaker, I promised not to go on for too long today but with your indulgence I would like to adjourn debate today and to resume another day, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for the day. I move that the House do now rise to meet again on Monday at 7:00 p.m. Following the daily routine, we will be calling Bill No. 1 and also we will return to the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. I move that the House do now rise.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again on Monday at the hour of 7:00 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.

[The House rose at 11:14 a.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 13**

By: Mr. Zach Churchill (Yarmouth)

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

Whereas on March 21, 2012, South West Health celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the opening of the first public hospital in the Town of Yarmouth; and

Whereas the original hospital at the corner of Church and Sycamore Place was replaced by a facility on the current site on Vancouver Street in 1916, with this site seeing major changes over the past 96 years; and

Whereas for 100 years volunteers and medical staff have offered their unwavering support to patients both through quality hands-on patient care and through fundraising initiatives that have made and continue to make the health care experience even better for patients;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge this historical 100-year milestone in the Town of Yarmouth and offer both volunteers and staff of the Yarmouth Regional Hospital our best wishes for another successful 100 years.