



## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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**HALIFAX, TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 2012**

**Sixty-first General Assembly**

**Fourth Session**

**12:00 NOON**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Gordon Gosse

**DEPUTY SPEAKERS**

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Before we start the daily routine, the subject matter for late debate has been chosen and I would now read:

Therefore be it resolved that the Minister of Community Services admit she mishandled the issues around Talbot House and resolve the situation as soon as possible so that the staff and the board can continue to provide valuable services to the community.

This was submitted by the honourable member for Glace Bay.

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make an introduction. I'd like to draw your attention to the gallery where we have people with us today. Today we have with us Trinda Ernst, Jessica Lyle, and Dan MacRury of the Canadian Bar Association. I'd ask them to stand. Also, Andrée Godbout, representing AJEFNE - L'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse - and Susan MacKay and Robin Elliott, co-chairmen of this year's Law Week for Nova Scotia.

They are here today to celebrate the Canadian Bar Association's Law Week events and the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. I'd ask the House to please give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

**RESOLUTION NO. 213**

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

Whereas this Tuesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, is Law Day in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Canadian Bar Association sponsors this annual event to educate the public about the law, the legal profession, and some of the legal institutions that form the cornerstone of Canadian democracy; and

Whereas this year Law Day also marks the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate the Canadian Bar Association and other participants who donate their time and efforts to offer the public an opportunity to learn about the law and legal system.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, could I be permitted to make an introduction as well?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to draw the attention of members of the House to the east gallery where we are joined by some guests, whom I will ask to rise.

Joining us this afternoon from the Parkinson Society Maritime Region are Mark Pridgeon, Interim Executive Director, and Karen Janik, Communications Coordinator with the Parkinson Society Maritime Region. I'd ask members of the House to extend a warm welcome to our guests in the gallery. (Applause)

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

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 214**

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

Whereas more than 4,500 Nova Scotians are living with Parkinson's disease and the number is expected to increase over the next 10 years as the population ages; and

Whereas April is Parkinson's Awareness Month, which provides Canadians an opportunity to become better informed about this neurological disease and to offer support to those who are affected by it; and

Whereas for the past 26 years the Parkinson Society Maritime Region has had an impact on every community across the Maritimes, been the voice for people living with Parkinson's, and is committed to finding a cure through support services, education, and advocacy;



Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize the month of April as Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month, and recognize the contribution of the Parkinson Society Maritime Region and its volunteers for their dedication to persons living with Parkinson's.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 215**

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

Whereas April 14, 2012, marked the conclusion of the second Black Youth Ice Hockey Initiative Program, a 19-week program designed to expose African Nova Scotian youth, ages 5 to 8, to the sport of ice hockey as a game "for all"; and

Whereas Black Ice Society board members Wilfred Jackson, Andrew Tench, Lee Francis, Olive Jackson and Barbara Borden, along with volunteers and certified hockey instructors, have been successful in introducing ice hockey to a total of 54 children of African descent over a two-year period; and

Whereas to make the program accessible for all, funding and equipment was obtained from Support4Sport and the NHL Players' Association, and ice time was sponsored by Hockey Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that this House join me in congratulating the Black Youth Ice Hockey Initiative Program for exposing African Nova Scotian youth to ice hockey and wish them many years of 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 Health and Wellness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 216**

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

Whereas Accreditation Canada is an independent organization that provides national and international health care organizations with an external peer review process to assess and improve the services they provide to their patients, based on standards of excellence; and

Whereas Accreditation Canada has recognized the Cape Breton District Health Authority for having three national leading practices in the areas of matrix monitoring, diagnostic services utilization improvement process, and the policy on referral for organ and tissue donation; and

Whereas the Cape Breton District Health Authority is using different, more creative ways to provide services efficiently while continuing to meet the needs of their patients, improving processes, improving outcomes, and improving quality of work life;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Cape Breton District Health Authority on this prestigious accreditation, and commend their dedication to providing quality services and patient care to residents in Cape Breton.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 24 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 381 of the Acts of 1989. The Purchasing Management Association of Canada Act. (Hon. Ross Landry)**

**Bill No. 25 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 14 of the Acts of 1989. The Victims' Rights and Services Act. (Ms. Diana Whalen)**

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

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might be permitted an introduction before I introduce my bill.

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw the attention of members of the House to a number of distinguished visitors in the gallery opposite. First of all, Travis Price and his friend Megan Smith are with us today. Members may recognize Travis who, along with his friend David Shepherd, at Central Kings Rural High School started Pink Shirt Day, which has since spread across our country, in his efforts to combat bullying in our schools.

Secondly, I would like to introduce to the House and to you, Mr. Speaker, Tom, Sharon and Chad Brown of Parrsboro, Cumberland County. They are the parents of the late Courtney Brown, whose story I'm sure members are familiar with, and I would like you to encourage all members to welcome them to the proceedings here at the House of Assembly today. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all the members to the gallery and hope that they enjoy this afternoon's proceedings.

**Bill No. 26 - Entitled an Act to Establish Stand Up Against Bullying Day. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)**

**Bill No. 27 - Entitled an Act to Promote Cyberbullying Intervention and Parental Responsibility. (Mr. Allan MacMaster)**

**Bill No. 28 - Entitled an Act to Promote Safer, Inclusive and Peaceful Schools. (Mr. Eddie Orrell)**

**Bill No. 29 - Entitled an Act to Protect Children from Those Who Might Harm Them. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)**

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

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 217**

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

Whereas Middleton boxer Cyrus Taylor boxed his way to a gold medal win at the national championships in St. Hyacinthe, Quebec; and

Whereas discipline, determination, and dedicated coaching all culminated in Cyrus claiming victory over his opponents; and

Whereas Cyrus intends to continue to train hard for the next opportunity that comes along to demonstrate his strength, speed, and skill as a young boxer destined for more sweet victories ahead;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Cyrus on his latest victory and wish him continued success in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

**RESOLUTION NO. 218**

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

Whereas Halifax Regional Police Chief Frank Beazley announced his retirement on Monday, signalling the end of a distinguished 42-year policing career; and

Whereas Chief Beazley has provided strong, steady leadership to the force and instilled in his officers the true meaning of the police motto “to serve and protect” their communities; and

Whereas Chief Beazley is the recipient of the Police Exemplary Service Medal and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and is a member of the Order of Merit of the Police Forces;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House thank Chief Beazley for his many years of selfless service to his community and wish him well as he begins a new chapter in his life, with more time to spend with his family.

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 Richmond.

**RESOLUTION NO. 219**

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

Whereas Strait Area Transit is a non-profit charitable organization made up of a volunteer board of directors, along with many partners and sponsoring organizations, with a goal to provide an all-inclusive, accessible, and affordable means of transportation to all residents of the Strait area; and

Whereas Malcolm Beaton, general manager of Strait Area Transit since its official opening on September 22, 2008, retired from his position on March 16, 2012, having provided Strait Area Transit with strong leadership and expanded routes during his tenure; and

Whereas prior to becoming general manager of Strait Area Transit, Malcolm was employed with the Richmond Literacy Network for a number of years, all the while serving as a municipal councillor for District 3 in Richmond County for over 20 years;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Malcolm Beaton on his well-deserved retirement as general manager of Strait Area Transit and thank him for all his hard work and dedication.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 220**

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

Whereas Kayla MacLeod, a Grade 6 student at the Whycocomagh Education Centre, won the provincial Terry Fox poster contest; and

Whereas students were encouraged to participate in the province-wide art contest sponsored by the Terry Fox Foundation; and

Whereas Kayla created a poster that truly embodies Terry Fox's accomplishments, and with its bold, colourful design and informative numerical facts about Terry Fox, her poster caught the eyes of the judges and was awarded the best;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kayla MacLeod for winning the contest and acknowledge her support of the Terry Fox Foundation.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 221**

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

Whereas Mario Larose and his wife Mireille Jean of Nictaux, Annapolis County, turned their love of Christmas into a spectacular light and music show for all to enjoy; and

Whereas each year, thousands of spectators converge on Balcom Crescent to view the 28,000 LED lights synchronized to keep time to music on the preset radio station in the viewer's car; and

Whereas through the generous donations of delighted visitors, over \$7,000 was raised in support of the Middleton Rotary Club's newest initiative, which is a new splash pad park in the Middleton area;

Therefore be it resolved the members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Mario and Mireille Jean on another successful holiday season and thank them for their generous spirit in supporting valuable initiatives in their community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 222**

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

Whereas Mr. LeRoy Peach from Port Morien is a well known educator, community activist, author, columnist and an amateur historian who has written a new book; and

Whereas this book, entitled *Flint Island: The Silent Republic*, chronicles the history of this little island off the mouth of Morien Bay; and

Whereas Mr. Peach's book tells the stories of lighthouse keepers and their daily lives, their triumphs and the tragedies of their families;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate LeRoy Peach on the recent book and thank him for protecting the story of Flint Island that speaks to our unique coastal history, and Mr. Speaker, I have a copy of this book that I will be donating to the library here in case other members are interested in reading this book.

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. 223**

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging at Mount Saint Vincent University was established in 1992 to advance knowledge on aging and enhance the quality of life of older people and their families through research, education and community engagement; and

Whereas the centre's work is especially relevant in Nova Scotia as our population is older than the Canadian average and the number of seniors is projected to double by 2026; and

Whereas on April 19<sup>th</sup> the Centre on Aging is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and reaffirming its work and mission to help inform public policy and practice on age-related issues here in Nova Scotia and beyond;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate the centre and its director, Dr. Janice Keefe, the Canada Research Chair in Aging and Caregiving Policy, on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the centre and acknowledge their work to enhance the quality of life for seniors in this province and beyond.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

**RESOLUTION NO. 224**

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

Whereas in 1939, the National Park Service hired Stanley Thompson to design the Highland Links, a golf course that was built by 400 Ingonish residents and opened in 1941; and

Whereas the Highland Links Stanley Thompson Historical Society has been raising funds to have a life-size bronze statue commissioned and unveiled in June 2012 at the Highland Links; and

Whereas the bronze statue will commemorate and pay tribute to the people in Ingonish who built and contributed to the construction of the Highland Links and will be placed alongside the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada's plaque;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Stanley Thompson Historical Society and recognize the families of the 400 Ingonish people who were hired in the 1930s to build this historic and renowned golf course by hand.

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. 225**

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 Canadian Forces women's hockey team from 14 Wing Greenwood were recent winners at the Canadian Forces national tournament in Borden, Ontario; and

Whereas this women's hockey team also took part at the World Pond Hockey Championships in New Brunswick and went undefeated through to the national tournament in Borden; and

Whereas Greenwood dominated the opposition and came home with the national trophy;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the Canadian Forces women's hockey team from 14 Wing Greenwood, Nova Scotia, for their accomplishments and wish them well in future competitions.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 226**

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

Whereas over the holiday season Eddie Brookman dressed up as Santa Claus and embarked on an eight-hour trek from South Bar to Ashby, just as he has done for the last 24 years, stopping to see kids and pass out treat bags; and

Whereas Mr. Brookman made the journey with helpers and the two horses that he co-owns with Paul Whelan and dedicated this year's journey to James Delorey; and

Whereas this was the first time Mr. Brookman's wife, Pearl Jolly, was not by his side helping him to hand out candy to the children, as she lost her battle with cancer in July;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly salute Eddie Brookman for his community spirit and generosity.

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 Clare.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 227**

HON. WAYNE GAUDET: Monsieur le Président, par la présente, j'avise que je proposerai à une date ultérieure, l'adoption de la résolution suivante:

Attendu que depuis soixante-quinze ans, les Acadiens de Clare et d'ailleurs ont la possibilité de lire un journal francophone chaque semaine; et

Attendu que ce journal reflète toujours la vie quotidienne, la culture et le patrimoine de ses lecteurs; et

Attendu que cet hebdomadaire intitulé Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse a été primé par une association nationale de journaux hebdomadaires;

Qu'il soit résolu que les membres de cette assemblée se joignent à moi pour féliciter le conseil d'administration et le personnel dans le cadre du 75<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse et leur souhaiter un succès continu.

Monsieur le Président, je propose l'adoption de cette résolution sans préavis et sans débats.

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

Whereas for 75 years, the Acadians of Clare and elsewhere have had the opportunity to read a French newspaper every week; and

Whereas this newspaper still reflects the everyday life of its readers and their culture and heritage; and

Whereas this weekly newspaper, named Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse, has been awarded recognition by a national weekly newspaper association;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the board of directors and staff on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse and wish them continued success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hants West.

### RESOLUTION NO. 228

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia Talent Trust is a not-for-profit charity that provides scholarships to Nova Scotians who demonstrate exceptional potential and commitment to becoming established artists in their chosen fields; and

Whereas 13-year-old Windsor resident Elsa Hodder, daughter of Christy Hodder, is a two-time Nova Scotia Talent Trust recipient who also continues to maintain her Grade 8 studies; and

Whereas Elsa is considered a triple threat in the performing arts world, as she studies ballet at the Maritime Conservatory of Performing Arts in Halifax, fine-tunes her vocals twice a week, and has performed in local productions such as *Little Women: The Broadway Musical*, *A Little Princess*, and *Into the Woods*;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Elsa on her second Nova Scotia Talent Trust scholarship and wish her continued success in the performing arts.

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. 229**

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

Whereas palliative care refers to the special care, comfort and support of a person whose disease cannot be cured, as well as to the family of that person; and

Whereas Ann McKim of Valley, Colchester North, who has been working in the palliative care field for over 20 years, has recently retired; and

Whereas medical associates say McKim has left a void in the Colchester East Hants Health Authority felt by families and staff, as well as patients, because of her intelligence, her compassionate personality, her nurturing spirit, and her enhanced skills;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Ann McKim on her retirement, and extend best wishes as she has an opportunity to relax and enjoy some personal time and interests.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 230**

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

Whereas L'Arche Cape Breton has renamed its Siesta Club, The Old Hen Café, in honour of three of its deceased core members; and

Whereas Janet Moore, Cathy Brady and Mary LeBlanc used to joke around by calling themselves “old hens” and that, coupled with their love of the Siesta Club’s tea and baked goods, was enough to rename it in their memory; and

Whereas the beautifully renovated building is equipped with a bakery and is currently used as a space for large gatherings and meetings;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the L’Arche community on the opening of The Old Hen Café and wish them success in its future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Preston.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 231**

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

Whereas Davis Edwards was born and raised in Ontario until the age of 18, when he joined the Royal Canadian Navy and fought in World War II; and

Whereas he returned to school, rejoined the Navy and retired in 1970, and shortly thereafter moved to Nova Scotia with his wife; and

Whereas while he lived in Nova Scotia he has been an avid volunteer in the Nova Scotia Literacy Program, the Citizens on Patrol, West Chezzetcook-Grand Desert Community Interest Group and was one of the persons responsible for obtaining a helicopter landing site for the Twin Oaks Hospital;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly recognize the many contributions that Davis Edwards has made to his community and to all of Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Argyle.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 232**

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

Attendu que Peggy Boudreau a été nommée au poste de coordonnatrice de la sécurité pour les personnes âgées de la région d'Argyle; et

Attendu que Mme Boudreau habite à Ste. Anne du Ruisseau et a été employée de la municipalité d'Argyle pendant 34 ans; et

Attendu que Mme Boudreau occupera son nouveau poste en avril mais continuera à coordonner les services d'urgence et à assurer la liaison avec le service d'incendie de la municipalité d'Argyle;

Par conséquent, qu'il soit résolu que tous les membres de cette Assemblée se joignent à moi pour féliciter Peggy Boudreau dans son nouveau poste et lui souhaitent bon succès de carrière.

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

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

Whereas Peggy Boudreau has been appointed as the security coordinator for the elderly for the Municipality of Argyle; and

Whereas Ms. Boudreau is from Ste. Anne du Ruisseau and has been employed with the municipality for over 34 years; and



Whereas Ms. Boudreau will begin her new post in April and will continue to coordinate emergency services and ensure the liaison with the fire departments of the Municipality of Argyle;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Peggy Boudreau in her new post and wish her continued success in her career.

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. 233**

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

Whereas Bedford resident Pamela McKay recently opened Pamaya Organics, a local health and beauty products manufacturer and retailer; and

Whereas McKay designed Pamaya Organics to be fully sustainable, with products she personally designed, tested, and made on-site, packaged in recyclable or decomposable materials, and with the boutique itself operating on Bullfrog Power, a green energy provider; and

Whereas McKay plans to further reduce her environmental impact by calculating the carbon footprint of the shop and planting enough trees to compensate for the emissions;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Pamela McKay for her foresight, ingenuity, and commitment to creating a fully green business, reducing her effect on the environment while running a commercial operation.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 234**

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

Whereas it's not often that we see an individual display exceptional community spirit on their own; and

Whereas Michael Francis of Albert Bridge expresses his community spirit with light displays that celebrate the different holidays of the year; and

Whereas Michael's cheerful light designs enhance and brighten the mood of many as they travel through Albert Bridge;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate and thank Michael Francis for brightening the evenings with his cheerful light displays that put a smile on the faces of so many.

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. 235**

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

Whereas 10-year-old Maryn Matheson of Bedford is today a healthy and happy survivor of Stage 4 liver cancer, after being diagnosed with the disease at the age of 2; and

Whereas Maryn and her siblings, Isaac, Neve, and Ronan Matheson, were all so grateful to the staff of the IWK Children's Hospital for helping Maryn in her battle with a life-threatening illness that they decided to thank the hospital in a special way; and

Whereas the four children teamed up with local chocolate maker Jill's Chocolates, to create Izaak, the chocolate Easter bunny named after Izaak Walton Killam, and sold the bunnies through friends and family, the Alderney Farmers' Market, the hospital, and at Jill's Chocolates, with all proceeds going to the IWK Hospital;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Maryn, Isaac, Neve, and Ronan Matheson, and Jill's Chocolates, for the remarkable ingenuity and generosity born of gratitude and appreciation for the hospital.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

**RESOLUTION NO. 236**

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

Whereas the first J.J. McDermitt Long John Jaunt, hosted by Cape Breton Road Runners, took place in the community of Ross Ferry, Victoria County, on February 25, 2012; and

Whereas the 21.1 kilometre race is named after J.J. McDermitt, the first Boston Marathon winner, who some residents believe was once a blacksmith on Boularderie Island; and

Whereas the J.J. McDermitt Long John Jaunt was the Cape Breton Road Runners first winter 21.1 kilometre run and proved very successful by attracting 86 runners, some of whom were scheduled to run in the Boston Marathon yesterday;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate race director Jim Forsey, volunteers, and all members of the Cape Breton Road Runners on the success of the J.J. McDermitt Long John Jaunt, and thank them for encouraging and supporting our local athletes.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 237**

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

Whereas this year marks the seventh year for the Postmedia Canspell National Spelling Bee competition; and

Whereas throughout February and March more than 1,000 spellers in Grades 4 to 8 competed in more than 21 Canadian cities; and

Whereas Maxwell French, a Grade 8 student at Caledonia Junior High, was one of 43 provincial finalists for this prestigious award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Maxwell for his excellence in academic achievement and the pursuit of positive study habits, which will serve him well in the years to come.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 238**

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

Whereas Doug Carter, a North Sydney resident and stonemason at the Fortress Louisbourg, regards Terry Fox as a role model and hero, and in the last five years began running recreationally; and

Whereas in 2009, with little experience, Doug ran in the Boston Marathon, and since December has run 1,500 kilometres and qualified for this year's Boston Marathon; and

Whereas on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 25,000 runners competed in this year's Boston Marathon and Doug finished as number 8,285 with a time of 3:58:23;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Doug Carter on running a successful race and wish him continued success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

**RESOLUTION NO. 239**

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

Whereas the Yarmouth Veteran Firefighters Association recently held its annual banquet; and

Whereas the late Roger King, Jr. was honoured as the Yarmouth Veteran Firefighters Association's Veteran Firefighter of the Year; and

Whereas Roger King, Jr., who joined the Reliance Company of the Yarmouth Fire Department in the winter of 1973, held all positions in this company, received the Fire Service Exemplary Service Medal in 1993, the Nova Scotia Fire Service Long Service Medal in 1998, and the Fire Service Medal Clasp recognizing 30 years of service in 2003, and was described by former mayor and fellow firefighter Charles Crosby as "a firefighter's firefighter";

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize the late Roger King, Jr., on being named the Yarmouth Veteran Firefighters Association's Veteran Firefighter of the Year, and for the many important and selfless contributions he made to our community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hants West.

**RESOLUTION NO. 240**

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

Whereas A Child's Voice Foundation Angel Hair for Kids creates wigs for cancer patients who lose their hair during chemotherapy treatments; and

Whereas Windsor Forks District School students Hannah Benedict, Allison Fudge, Allison Power, Taylor O'Leary, Courtney Sherman, Megan Whitehead, Hayley Sherman, Sammy Brooks, Jessica Barnett, Chelsea Swinamer, Hayley O'Leary, Mia Simm, and Grace LeFresne were among a group of donors who volunteered to cut 10 inches off their locks on Valentine's Day, during the school's first Head For A Cure hair donation drive; and

Whereas local hairstylists Lorraine Rawlins, Gayle Bartlett, Michelle Young-Hiltz, Tara Johnson, Samantha Davidson, Krista Conrad and Pam MacKay-Edgcombe volunteered their time to help make this event such a huge success;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly wholeheartedly thank those who donated their hair, along with the volunteers who donated their time to this very worthwhile cause.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 241**

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

Whereas the 2012 Canadian CheerExpo, Cheerleading & Dance Grand Championships, was held in Halifax, March 24<sup>th</sup> and March 25<sup>th</sup>, featuring 109 teams from across Canada; and

Whereas the Glace Bay High School Panthers were crowned "A" Division Champions, capping off a season of hard work, dedication and success; and

Whereas the Panthers carried on their tradition of dominating cheerleading competitions, winning provincial, regional, and CheerExpo Championships since the team's inaugural season in 1990;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly join me in congratulating team members Renee Anderson, Kara Debison, Christina Headley, Lisa Headley, Tiffany Gouthro, Kandice Rosnok, Jess Kaiser, Alyssa Stubbard, Lauren Dolhai, Leah MacPherson, Maria MacIntyre, Shondra Headley, Laura Murrant, Amanda Sawlor, Jess Gillis, Emily McDonald, Beth Edwards, Haily Timmons, Linea Livingstone, Natasha Hinchey, Savannah MacArthur, Rhiannon Summerell, Samantha Blois, Emily Gracie, Hailey Budden, Britney MacKinnon, and Priscila Generoso, along with coaches Ashley Timmerman, Ruth MacAulay and Stacey Blois, and manager Kathleen Budden, and we wish the athletes best of luck in the future and we know that their hard work and courage will shape their character moving forward - go Panthers, go.

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 Richmond.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 242**

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

Whereas Friday, March 23, 2012 marked the grand opening of Alyson's Styling Boutique on Pepperell Street in St. Peter's, Richmond County; and

Whereas Alyson's Styling Boutique is a new salon which will service clients in St. Peter's and surrounding areas; and

Whereas St. Peter's resident Alyson King is the owner operator of Alyson's Styling Boutique;



Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Alyson King on the grand opening of Alyson's Styling Boutique and wish her great success with her new business.

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 Clare.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 243**

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

Whereas the Acadian community of Clare suffered a tremendous loss losing Marc Robichaud, a young and innovative business man, on January 10, 2012; and

Whereas Marc was manager of U.J. Robichaud, a fifth generation family business established 144 years ago in Meteghan Centre; and

Whereas Mr. Robichaud exemplified the entrepreneurship, spirit, and commitment to his community;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize the life and accomplishments of Marc Robichaud and send our sincere condolences to his family and friends.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 244**

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

Whereas this year marks the seventh year for the Postmedia Canspell National Spelling Bee competition; and

Whereas throughout February and March, more than a thousand spellers in Grades 4 to 8 competed in more than 21 Canadian cities; and

Whereas William Mann, a Grade 7 student at Eric Graves Memorial Junior High, was one of 43 provincial finalists for this prestigious award;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate William for his excellence in academic achievement and pursuit of positive study habits and wish him well in his future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 245**

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

Whereas Craig Dale, a 21-year-old resident of East Mountain, Colchester North, presently attends Holland College's golf management program; and

Whereas in June, Dale will become a part-time professional golfer and part-time instructor at Sean Foley's golf academy in Florida; and

Whereas Dale recently signed a sponsorship deal with Titleist, which will support him through the PGA developmental tour;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Craig Dale for achieving this important opportunity in his desire for a future career in professional golf.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Preston.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 246**

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

Whereas Frances Diggs was born and brought up in the community of East Preston; and

Whereas she was recently appointed the board chair of the Shiloh Community Church; and

Whereas she has spent her adult life volunteering for such organizations as the Red Cross, C.G.I.T, Guide Leader, and foster mother of many children over the years;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House acknowledge the many contributions that Frances Diggs has made to her church, her community and to all of Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 247**

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

Whereas since taking office the NDP Government broke a promise and hiked the HST, increased over 1,400 user fees and ensured that the people of Nova Scotia get an income tax hike every year by breaking a promise to end bracket creep; and

Whereas the Premier and the NDP have done nothing to stop the ever-increasing price of power, have ensured that students paid higher tuition every year and have broken a promise to take the tax off tax when it comes to gasoline; and

Whereas Nova Scotians face high prices for food, power and gasoline every day, as life becomes less and less affordable under the NDP;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly remind the member for Antigonish that the decisions the Premier and the NDP Government have made since taking office have made life less affordable for Nova Scotians as they continue to face high prices for everyday essentials, gasoline and power, with no relief in sight under this government.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

MR. SPEAKER: The time now is 12:57 p.m., we will end Question Period at 1:57 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

### **PREM. - CAP FUNDING NDP GOV'T. ACTIONS**

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, more recently all Nova Scotians have heard the Harper Conservative Government back away from their funding to the CAP program, which is accessed by many communities across this province and used by many Nova Scotians. My question to the Premier is, what steps has the NDP Government taken to convince the federal government of this wrong-headed decision?

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, as I am sure the member opposite knows, these are important particularly in rural communities but throughout Nova Scotia the CAP sites have provided public access. We have made it clear that we intend to stand by our commitment to those sites. We're still working through what this is going to mean potentially to service around the province.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, in the Premier's answer he talked about how important these are to communities across this province, not only in my constituency but in all constituencies across this province. Organizations and Nova Scotians who support the CAP program, that they are available, are now sitting there with uncertainty about what the future is for this program.

Would the Premier tell this House what the NDP Government has done to reach out to those Nova Scotians who are in the front lines delivering this service to our communities?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, actually the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage has in place a program currently that provides an envelope of funding that can be accessed by libraries, so that if they're looking to have their Internet connections paid for, they can access that money through the department. Now not all of them are CAP sites, but many of them are, and we make that funding available.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, as the Premier alluded to in his answer, there are many variations of CAP sites across this province. Some are in libraries but all of which, though, play an important role in our communities. It's a place where Nova Scotians who

cannot afford access to Internet service at home can go to look for jobs. They also provide, quite frankly, training for Nova Scotians who are looking for support around technology.

So as all members of this House and Nova Scotians try to convince the federal government of this wrong-headed decision by removing funding away from the CAP program, is the Government of Nova Scotia looking at being able to, in the short term, meet that shortfall of funding that has been caused by the Conservative Government pulling away from this program?

THE PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, we are still doing some evaluation of what the potential costs are but I will table for the member opposite, the letter that was written on behalf of the government by Minister Paris, with respect to the financial support for the Community Access Program 2012-13. I won't read it all, I will simply say that the last paragraph reads:

"I cannot stress enough how important this program is to our communities and businesses, especially in rural areas and for those with limited means. We welcome the opportunity to continue our partnership with the Federal Government, to ensure the future success of CAP.

Mr. Speaker, there may be other things that are of interest to the Leader of the Official Opposition in the letter.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. It's improper to refer to another member by their name in any way during any proceedings in the House. This includes Notices of Motion or while reading from documents such as newspaper stories. Thank you.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

#### **COM. SERV.: TALBOT HOUSE - DEPT. RESPONSE**

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Community Services. When it comes to recent news stories about Talbot House in Frenchvale, Cape Breton, I can only shake my head in disbelief and wonder what's going on in the Department of Community Services.

When serious allegations were made about a staff member at a daycare, the minister didn't even see fit to pick up the phone and call the board. When an allegation was made - a false one - about the executive director of Talbot House, the minister's department refused to give details about the accusations to the board so that they could investigate. In both cases, department staff hoarded information in their Halifax ivory tower - information that would have allowed both boards to do the right thing to protect the vulnerable Nova Scotians in their care or put concerns to rest.

My question through you to the minister is, will the minister immediately order institutional changes in her department that will allow it to more fairly and effectively perform its job to do the right thing for the people it's legislated to protect?

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, once again the member opposite has the facts mixed up and wrong. We have explained it many times over. In the situation with respect to the daycare, as we said, we did our due diligence. We took immediate action. We had the authority to investigate an issue that is a current issue and passed the information along to the appropriate authorities that investigate historical allegations.

With respect to Talbot House, once again, it was a current allegation. We did go forward with the authority that we have. We met with the board and gave them the appropriate information they needed.

MR. BAIN: Well Mr. Speaker, I can't believe that answer. Really and truly, I can't believe it. The board of directors at Talbot House has said that the report that was produced by the minister's department was prejudicial, riddled with errors, and fundamentally flawed in process and analysis. The minister then released the report, which detailed unfounded allegations against a well-respected priest, yet she kept the board of directors in the dark about this for months.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you is, why did the minister publish discredited slurs and unfounded allegations about Father Paul Abbass on the department's Web site yesterday? What happened to the presumption of innocence, an ideal that only a couple of weeks ago, this minister touted as one of the foundations of our democracy?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, once again, they do not understand the facts. The fact is, they were not there. The fact is, our staff in Community Services sat down with the board and explained that we would be doing an organizational review, and it came upon immediately receiving information from a complainant. We also offered the board of directors at Talbot House an opportunity to sit down and hear firsthand the concerns of this gentleman, and they declined. We offered the board every possible support and information that was available and they decided they did not want to hear it.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, it's very sad that the department published a report yesterday with unfounded allegations against a priest, Father Paul Abbass, who worked at Talbot House. It makes you wonder what's going on in that department. They're working in a silo. Much of what the department has said about Talbot House is disputed by the board of that facility. The reputations of several people, many of them who are well-respected volunteer board members, have been called into question by the department.

So, Mr. Speaker, my final question to the minister is, will the minister immediately undertake a thorough independent review of the actions of her own department around Talbot House, get the facts right and set the record straight?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, once again I will be very clear with the facts, which they don't want to appreciate or understand. Number one, the review was an organizational review; it did not indicate any individual's name in that. It was about whether they were meeting the standards. Now, for example, one of the standards would be to have your annual general meeting. The board of directors didn't meet for 13 years (Interruptions) In terms of having an annual general meeting, they did not in 13 years. That's just one.

People are invited to read the review and, no, we're not going (Interruptions) We did, we were responsible. We did our due diligence and we focused on the organizational review and that's all we focused on.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

#### **EDUC.: ORANGE LUNCH BAGS/EDUC. ASSISTANTS - RELATIVE COSTS**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday I asked the Minister of Education to explain using taxpayers' money to buy orange lunch bags for pre-Primary students. The minister was appalled by me calling them lunch bags, saying that calling them orange lunch bags was a derogatory term - although her own department refers to them as lunch bags in their own tender documents.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education has already spent \$124,000 on orange lunch bags. Now we know that this government is prepared to spend \$527,000 over three years on these lunch bags. The Minister of Education couldn't answer my question about how many education assistants or teacher assistants could be paid for with \$124,000.

So my question to the minister today is, how many education assistants or teacher assistants could be paid for with \$527,000?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: The literacy packages that we sent out with our early learners are part of our Succeeding in Reading, so that we're supporting literacy with our youngest students when they come to school.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, tender number 60143757 closing on the 27<sup>th</sup> of this month calls for an additional 17,600 lunch bags, except that this time the tender specified that the bags cannot be orange in colour. (Interruption)

Mr. Speaker, CUPE, NSGEU, SEIU, have called on the government to reverse the cuts because of the impact felt in the classroom; students are walking out of their schools



because of the impact this minister's cuts will have in the classroom and education; 16,000 Nova Scotians have signed a NSGEU petition because they are concerned about the impact the cuts will have in the classroom. Meanwhile, the Minister of Education is looking to buy an additional 17,600 lunch bags full of trinkets.

Now, my question is how can the minister justify these cuts to education while spending \$527,000 of taxpayers' money on orange lunch bags?

MS. JENNEX: This minister and this government is investing in our children's literacy, which I see the member opposite does not agree with, but this is making sure that we are providing, in the hands of families, appropriate literacy supports before children come to school.

MR. SAMSON: Well, Mr. Speaker, if someone can explain to me how a glue stick and a Hacky Sack is helping with literacy for our children, I'd certainly love to hear the argument. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, what we're saying over here is \$527,000 could have saved three schools in the Strait Regional School Board - \$527,000. If the minister is concerned about literacy, that \$527,000 could have paid for teacher assistants and education assistants to help our children with literacy. That money could have gone for helping to keep librarians and our libraries open in schools throughout the province. Yet, Mr. Speaker, at a time of cuts, this government felt it was useful to use taxpayers' money, \$0.5 million, to buy orange lunch bags for our students.

My question to the minister, will she immediately cancel the purchase of 17,600 extra lunch bags that will cost taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars and invest the money where it belongs - in the classroom?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, we are working on making sure that our children have the supports necessary to make sure they are successful with literacy and numeracy. We are investing in our children younger, that is where we are putting our investment and it's unfortunate that the members opposite do not see how important it is to invest in our young children. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond on a new question.

#### **EDUC. - ORANGE LUNCH BAGS: SCH. BDS. - INVOLVEMENT**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, last week, on April 10th, when asked about the orange lunch bags bought by the NDP Government, the Minister of Education stood in the House and told members that her department worked with school boards to develop these very orange lunch bags. School boards themselves are telling us that they

were not consulted about the bags and that some felt it was a fait accompli, only being asked to submit enrolment numbers to order the bags.

Mr. Speaker, I asked the minister last week to table information showing how school boards had been involved in the development of these orange lunch bags, which she has failed to do. So my question to her is, if school boards that are responsible for delivering programs and services to students in Nova Scotia did not ask for these orange lunch bags, exactly who did?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, school boards were consulted and they work with their literacy specialists. The reason that not all students in the province and not all boards are going to be using the literacy packages is because they already have their own that they are sending out. This is an initiative that many boards have already started and we're just making sure that all students, our youngest students, have supports offered to them when they enter school. Thank you.

MR. SAMSON: Well, Mr. Speaker, every day the story changes. Now, all of a sudden, school boards were not part of the development of these orange lunch bags.

Mr. Speaker, 75 education assistants were cut from the public education system last year, 82 teaching positions were cut to reach budget targets, and boards are now looking at having to cut library services. Schools across the province are being slated for closure; three of them have already happened in my own board. Parents of students with special needs are worried about the supports their children will lose because of this government's \$65 million in cuts to education over the past two years. Still, the Minister of Education spends \$124,000 on orange lunch bags and \$90,000 in promoting her education plan. That would pay for a lot of education assistants to help our students with literacy and with all other needs they have in the classroom.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Education is, did she personally approve the spending of \$527,000 of taxpayers' money to purchase orange lunch bags?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, working with the department and looking at the strategy around supporting our students with Succeeding in Reading, I definitely did support signing the request to make sure that we are making sure that we have what we need in the hands of our youngest students. Thank you.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, apparently she also signed a request to cut \$65 million out of classrooms in Nova Scotia that will have a detrimental effect on all of our students - \$65 million out of the classroom, \$0.5 million for lunch bags. How much more do Nova Scotians need to see how out of touch this government truly is?

Mr. Speaker, students are starting to stage walkouts to protest library cuts, parents with children with special needs are continually expressing concern as to what will happen

to their children in the upcoming school year and yet the minister tries to justify spending over \$0.5 million on lunch bags, only this time the new bags won't be the colour orange.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, when will she stand up for the students of Nova Scotia, reverse the funding cuts and cancel the order for more orange lunch bags?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, we are making sure we are investing appropriately in our students, and the per-student funding has gone up. We are making sure that our children are getting the supports and resources that they need. The Department of Education has many different departments that look at making sure students have what they need. We have a plan and we're going to follow it.

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

**COM. SERV.: EAST PRESTON DAY CARE/TALBOT HOUSE - DEPT. POLICY**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Community Services. I am looking for clarification. On the one hand, in the case of the East Preston Day Care, the minister knew of serious allegations being made against an employee there. She failed to inform the board of directors. She kept that information to herself - from them - hiding behind some kind of protocol in her department.

On the other hand, in the case of Talbot House, there are serious allegations of which she has been made aware - false allegations, as it turns out - against an employee there, and she's only too quick to inform the board of directors and then later spray that allegation on the government Web site. Just outside this House before Question Period today, when asked about Talbot House, the Minister of Community Services said that it is their duty to go to the board of directors in these situations.

My question to the minister is, why did she fail in that exact same duty to the children of the East Preston Day Care, yet rush to judgment on Talbot House?

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the member opposite that I'm a mother - a very proud mother of a young gentleman - and every day I count my blessings that I have a child. I think children are a gift to this world, and in the Department of Community Services we work each and every day for the well-being and safety of children. In this circumstances, nothing is different from that. We took immediate action. We took the appropriate action, and they just do not want to accept the correct facts.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the correct facts are that in the case of the East Preston Day Care, the minister knew of a serious allegation against an employee there and didn't tell the daycare board. She didn't tell the daycare. They allowed those children to

continue to be at risk. Her excuse is that it is a past allegation, as if that will make any difference to the parents of those children.

In the case of Talbot House, when she was informed of allegations against an employee there, she tells the board instantly but then doesn't tell them exactly what the allegation is. When they report back that there is no wrongdoing, she sprays that information all over the public Internet. This minister does not know what her duty is or who it is to. I will ask her, why did the children of the East Preston Day Care not warrant the same protection as the clients of Talbot House?

MS. PETERSON-RAYFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I'll repeat the facts again. The facts are that we did what was under our authority to do - a protocol that has been established in legislation since 1996, that we have the ability to look into current allegations, which we did with the daycare centre, and nothing came forth. We also, because of the historical allegations - and it's the responsibility of the RCMP - passed that along to the RCMP because that's their capacity they have and their mandate.

With respect to Talbot House, it was a current allegation. We went to the board and gave the board the opportunity to firsthand . . .

AN. HON. MEMBER: Oh, just admit it's a cover-up.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order, please. I have just done a little bit of research in the last little while and realized that the word "cover-up" is unparliamentary. I would remind the honourable member not to keep using that word in the Chamber from this present time forward. It was ruled unparliamentary in 1958 and again in 1986, and that's three times I've heard it during QP here today, so I'd ask the honourable member not to say it again. Thank you.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: With respect to Talbot House, what we did was an organizational review to ensure that the board was meeting the standards in the service agreement. We did, however, also offer up to them the claimant who put pen to paper with respect to the issues that he had, so that they could speak firsthand to that gentleman. It is the board's decision. For whatever reason, they declined the offer to hear that information firsthand.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, in the case of the East Preston Day Care the minister didn't even give the board a chance to decide what to do to protect those kids, because she didn't tell them the allegations that she was aware of. In the case of Talbot House she put it into the hands of the board and then complained when they acted.

The fact of the matter is she's hiding behind some protocol that she keeps quoting but the only protocol that minister is interested in is the protocol that protects her own political position. My question to the minister is, if you don't tell the board in the case of East Preston Day Care, but you rush to judgment and tell the board in the case of Talbot House, which is wrong and which board deserves an apology from that minister?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I can't help if they can't understand the facts and way things - the protocol that we're referencing is a protocol that they followed, within the legislation, on current allegations. Once again, I will stress the fact that with respect to the daycare, we did investigate if there were any current allegations and if there was any substantial evidence for that. There was not. Therefore the RCMP, who do historical investigations, were given that job to do. I'm sorry that they question the RCMP's ability to do their work.

As I said before, with Talbot House it was a current allegation, we did an organizational review, gave them the opportunity to hear more information from the complainant, and they decided not to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

#### **EDUC.: PER-STUDENT FUNDING - AMT.**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, daily in this House we're seeing a pattern where the Minister of Education is unable to answer questions about the cost of public education. These are the basic costs that are required to deliver programs and services to our students. Nova Scotians are expecting that the minister would understand the costs to deliver education. My question to the minister is, what is the average cost to educate a student in the public school system in our province?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, we are making sure that the resources that our schools need have been provided to them. We have increased spending over the last number of years and this year we've increased per-student spending. Our ratios continue to be low and our class sizes are the best they have been in a generation.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, obviously the minister either doesn't understand or have the answer. Funding per pupil is important but it does not drive the budget process. What should drive the budget process is the cost per student to deliver the program. The outcome of the budget process should be the funding. My question to the minister is, how does the funding per pupil that's provided to the boards compare to the cost per pupil of delivering the program?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, we are making sure that our budget matches the resources that are needed to deliver a public education program in the Province of Nova Scotia.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, most people would understand that before you determine the funding you have to know the cost. It appears that the minister does not. My question to the minister is, if the funding is adequate, which she says it is - adequate to cover the cost - then why have boards been faced to have severe cuts, for example, last year 82 teaching positions, 75 education assistant positions, if the funding is adequate, then why the cuts?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately we are in a situation of declining enrolment.

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

### **PREM. - LIBRARIES: FUNDING - HOGG FORMULA**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Last week in this House the Minister of Education, during Question Period, said, "...through the Hogg formula there is a line there for support of the libraries. They have \$3.8 million in their budget line in Chignecto for their libraries."

That turned out to be wrong. The Premier said, "They are funded for those positions and if they don't use the money for that funding, then maybe they just don't want the funding." That also turned out to be wrong. The fact of the matter is there is no specific line item that boards are funded for libraries out of global funding like they are for many other things. My question to the Premier is, will he now admit that he was the one playing political games with the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board and take this opportunity to correct the answers that they gave in the House last week.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to respond to this question. It's always nice to get one in Question Period.

What I would advise the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party is that the information that we gave them last week was full and correct.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, if that was true we would remember it because it would have been the first time in the history of this government's Question Periods that they did give a full and correct answer.

Mr. Speaker, while the department gives boards no targeted specific funding for libraries, there is in fact targeted funding for other things like special education assistance to children with special needs. The department, in fact, has earmarked \$22.6 million to the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board for that purpose. But the fact of the matter is it is inadequate to meet the special needs' needs of that school board and the board, as a result, spends more than that and it is allocated out of their general funding, a total of \$27.4

million, or an additional \$4.8 million, to meet that need, to cover the actual needs of children with special needs in the Chignecto-Central area.

My question to the Premier, now that he has sent someone up to look for other savings, will he guarantee that parents of students in the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board that, whatever cuts he comes up with, they will not target the additional special needs funding?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the special needs funding that has been targeted to those boards, we've already said, have been protected - that will continue to be the case.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, what I was asking the Premier is that he won't claw back the extra \$4.8 million that that board identifies as needed to meet the actual needs of special needs kids with that school board - that answer certainly is not going to be much comfort to the parents of the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board.

But if we take the Premier at his word that he wants to protect the librarians and he wants to protect special needs funding, where is he going to go, what is he not willing to protect to see that he meets the budget target for the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite would know, the Chignecto Board's enrolment has declined by some eight per cent; their actual per student funding has increased by some 12 per cent. It is, of course, unfortunate, we would much rather be in a position where we're actually seeing the number of students going into our schools increasing. Unfortunately, that's not the case. As he knows, the province - and I would say a majority of this took place on the former government's watch, but we've lost more than 30 thousand students out of the public school system, the result of which is that the demand for educational services have been declining.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

### **EDUC. - SPECIAL ED.: THRONE SPEECH - OMISSION**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, the government has stated that there are three pillars around which they set their priorities - unfortunately for the students in this province education is not one of those pillars. In the Speech from the Throne less than two pages spoke to education, but even more disappointing was there was no mention - absolutely none - no mention made of special education.

So my question to the minister is this, what message is this obvious omission sending to the parents of students in our public schools, whose children do have learning challenges?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: I would have to reread the Throne Speech, but I'm quite sure that the autism strategy was mentioned in it, if my memory serves me correctly. But I just would like to point out that every child in this province deserves a very good solid education - and every child means every child and children who have special needs are children. They are part of our Kids and Learning First plan, thank you.

MS. CASEY: Parents of special needs students who are entering our public school system are telling us that they are terrified; they are watching how this government is ignoring the needs of their children. What they need from this minister is a commitment to adequately support programs and services for students with special needs. The allocation that boards are getting for special education is not enough. Will the minister stand up for students with special needs and adequately fund the programs and services that they require, that would be adequately funded?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, recognizing the increased costs that boards informed us they were spending, we made sure that within our funding formula we have increased the restricted funding going to every school board in this province.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, what the minister is saying is that boards have identified the needs and what they're also saying is the funding they're getting will not meet those needs. We know that one in 10 has some form of learning disability. The number of students with autism has increased to one in 110. This is the reality of today's classroom. It has nothing to do with declining enrolment. Boards recognized this. They shared the information with the department and yet the funds they receive are not enough to meet those students' needs.

So will the minister acknowledge that boards are having to use additional funds in order to make up the gap that her government has created in special education funding?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, we are making sure that we are adequately providing resources to each and every one of the school boards. We have increased our per-student funding. We have a situation where we have lost 30,000 students out of our system over the last 10 years and we will continue to lose students. At the same time this government is investing in our children more than any other government.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

#### **FIN. - POLITICAL ADVERTISING: TAXPAYERS - NDP REIMBURSE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, while Nova Scotia schools and hospitals are being forced to gut front-line services, students and patients can rely on the need to deal with the NDP's misplaced priorities. The government has taken to the airwaves with more election-style advertising campaigns and, you know, really I wonder who exactly signs off on all of this wasteful spending, the advertising that's going



on. So I'm going to guess it's the Minister of Finance, the same MLA for Halifax Fairview who many times, when he sat in Opposition, spoke against government spending on advertising.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you is for the Minister of Finance. In the light of his brazen hypocrisy, when will the Minister of Finance admit his mistake and take the appropriate steps to ensure that the NDP, or New Democratic Party, reimburses the taxpayers for their shameful political advertising?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Unparliamentary language again today - "hypocrisy" is unparliamentary, and I would ask the honourable member to retract that. Thank you very much.

The honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. GRAHAM STEELE: Mr. Speaker, I find myself in the same position I was in in the last budget session. Although it's flattering that members of the House think that I control every line of every budget, it's actually not part of the budget of the Department of Finance. (Interruptions) I would like to suggest that the member address his next question to the Chairman of the Treasury Board.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, you know, I'll probably get the little runaround on who, exactly, actually signs off on these things. The Minister of Finance should actually be ashamed of that answer. On one hand he's preaching fiscal restraint and then he passes on the decision to spend money to someone else, all the while students and patients in Nova Scotia suffer because of the clumsy efforts on front-line services.

So when will the Minister of Finance stop putting the political interests of the NDP ahead of the real interests of Nova Scotian students and patients?

MR. STEELE: I can see the member opposite didn't take my advice. I would refer that to the Chairman of the Treasury Board.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, as usual, they've got it all wrong. It's plain to see that one day they're in this House going on and on verbatim about what we need to tell the people, what programs are there for them, and when we do it, they complain again, so Mr. Speaker, they are full of ifs and buts. We all know that if ifs and buts were candy and nuts, every day would be Christmas. Thank you.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, parts of the government's new radio ads would be laughable if the situations in our schools and hospitals weren't so serious. In particular, I'm thinking about a line where a woman tells the audience: Paying a little less

tax, that's better for me. Then a man enthusiastically jumps in and says: Me too. I don't think any of the Nova Scotians who have shelled out over \$1,000 in higher HST think that they're paying any less tax, seeing how the minister can be taking \$4,000 more in a higher HST from the average Nova Scotia family this year, how many families did it take to pay for the NDP political advertising, to the Minister of Finance?

HON. GRAHAM STEELE: Mr. Speaker, when we came into office we inherited a structural deficit that was going to lead us to a \$1.4 billion deficit, \$17 billion of debt. This province has had enough of Liberal and Progressive Conservative finance. We have restored sense to the province's finances rather than consuming the services now (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Finance has the floor.

MR. STEELE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We are the ones who restored sense to the province's finances, rather than burdening future generations like the Liberal Party and the Progressive Conservative Party did.

Mr. Speaker, here's the simple fact, we have spent 40 per cent less on communications than that Party did when they were in office. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

### **EDUC.: SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS - NUMBERS**

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, according to the Learning Disabilities Association of Nova Scotia, one in 10 people has some form of a learning disability. According to Autism Nova Scotia, the diagnosis for autism spectrum disorder grew at an exponential rate in the past 20 years, jumping from one in 1,000 students in the 1990s to one in 110 today.

My question for the Minister of Education is, how many students in the public education system currently have identified special needs?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for that question. We have now, through our Kids and Learning First plan, we're making sure that every school in this province is connected through the iNSchool and we are now going to be able to collect the data appropriately, over the next number of years, to be able to (1) identify and (2) make sure that students are receiving the programs and services that they need, as opposed to not getting the information from school boards after the fact. We have a plan to make sure everything is connected through iNSchool. Thank you very much.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, that's an important question, the minister couldn't answer it in estimates; she can't answer it now. That's proof that she doesn't know

what the real costs are of educating our young people in the Province of Nova Scotia, yet the minister continuously attacks previous governments for increasing investment to our classrooms and, in particular, investment that was increased to support the diverse needs that we have in today's classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, since the minister is so critical of increased funding for students with special needs, can the minister tell us specifically what services and supports have been and will continue to be cut for students with identified special needs, with her cuts coming continually to the classrooms?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, we will continue to support our students and especially our students with special needs. Thank you very much.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that parents and teachers and professionals are telling us that students with special needs are losing supports under this government. Seventy-five educational assistants were cut from the system last year alone and now parents are concerned that their children will have to share education assistants between students.

Mr. Speaker, children who have autism don't have it half the time, children with special needs don't have their needs half the time, they can't have the supports in place half of the time. Is the minister keeping track of those special needs students who are losing services because of her government's gutting of our education system?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I just would like to remind the member opposite that supports for students are based on identified need through an individual program plan. Part of that plan: the parent, the teacher, the administrator, and all agencies associated with that student to make sure that the appropriate resources are provided to the student. Every case is different - in some cases a student will receive full-time support and in other cases it will be divided up appropriately, to make sure our students are given the opportunity to become independent.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

### **JUSTICE: HFX. DEATH (04/16/12) - DETAILS**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, we're learning the details of a violent assault and death which took place in Halifax last evening and, on behalf of the Official Opposition, we certainly want to extend our sympathy to the victims' families.

We're learning that the accused, now in police custody, was on an unescorted leave from the East Coast Forensic Facility but never returned. I'm wondering, could the Minister of Justice provide this House with any further details surrounding this very unfortunate incident?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I, too, and our government extend our condolences to the family. Any loss or violence in this society is traumatic and has its price it pays on society.

On the particular case that the member brings to attention, I don't want to elaborate on that, we'll wait to see what the actual facts are. The police are conducting their investigation, and I trust their investigation will reveal the details and allow us to make decisions and determine what actually did happen and what the facts are.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as I've raised so many times in this House before with the minister, as Justice Critic, Nova Scotians are looking for assurances from this government regarding their safety. We are once again hearing of such a violent assault and a death take place, and it is clearly unacceptable, especially knowing this individual was previously in custody. We are told the accused had a history of violence and was, in fact, awaiting a review hearing, yet somehow was allowed to leave the facility unescorted on a pass.

My question to the Minister of Justice is, could he advise the House who makes such decisions to allow someone who is in custody to go on an unescorted pass when they have such a history of violence?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, the assurances to Nova Scotians - I want to assure all Nova Scotians that this minister, that this government and the Department of Justice take all matters of violence seriously and that we have a well-managed, well-functioning police service in this province that carries out and conducts those services. As to whether the individual at hand - I'm not going to elaborate on that case, we've got to determine the facts.

The honourable member has made some assumptions and I think it's inappropriate for this House to speak any further with regard to the facts of that particular case. If he wants to re-frame his question about unescorted or escorted matters from the facility, I will be glad to answer any questions with regard to that, but not in particular to a hypothetical situation until somebody is charged and allegations that are put forth are established - that is when I'll comment on those matters.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, there are two options: one can be proactive and try to prevent such events from happening; or one can be reactive and wait, and wait, and wait.

If the minister disputes some of the details that I have provided, then by all means - Nova Scotians are the ones who are looking for answers here, more importantly, looking for assurances. Such a violent assault and violent death is clearly unacceptable. When it's random, it's even worse. But when we find out that the accused was apparently under the custody of the Minister of Justice and his department and was allowed to go out on an

unescorted pass, that is clearly unacceptable - whether it is the Department of Justice or the Department of Health and Wellness, it was under the custody of this government.

Nova Scotians deserve to know that their safety is always top priority and that individuals with violent histories are not being allowed out, unescorted, unless absolutely necessary. My question to the minister is - media reports are that the individual did not return to the facility as he was supposed to - will the minister advise whether any sort of advisory went out to the police or to the media to advise that an individual was out, unescorted, beyond their allotted time?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, there are a number of points that are made in there, and what seems to be a common thread is the number of digs and allegations and fears and assumptions that are created that aren't true. That seems to be a common thread with the Opposition: they don't have the facts and they want to create fear in society.

This government has put forth, and made available to the Opposition, a crime prevention strategy that starts to address this. In fact, the member for Dartmouth East made comment about the good work in this House with regard to the chief of police on the crime prevention. He mentioned that yesterday.

I want to just compliment - when you talk about being proactive, this government is working in a collaborative manner with all stakeholders, including the various police departments. Rather than being reactive, what we have here is a situation where the member is once again making some assumptions. When the individual left the institution yesterday, within 15 minutes of being made aware, police were already in action doing the patrols and conducting their investigation. I compliment the police on that good work.

On the issue of violence in society, violence occurs, and this government takes it seriously and will look at and examine each and every incident.

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

#### **NAT. RES.: WHOLE TREE HARVESTING REGS. - RELEASE**

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you will be to the Minister of Natural Resources. I don't think I have to say to anybody in this House that we live in the most beautiful province in this country, with lots of great natural resources. One of those resources is our forestry industry, which creates a \$1 billion industry here. Yet this government still hasn't come up with their whole-tree harvesting for the province. Their regulations are late. We see the NDP can't even meet the targets that it has set in its own Natural Resources Strategy, which was also eight months late.

My question to the Minister of Natural Resources is, when will the minister stop his attack on this vital industry and release the whole-tree harvesting regulations?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the honourable member. Yes, we do have a beautiful province. I guess we all recognize that.

The forest industry is certainly a very important part of our rural infrastructure throughout the province. Our Natural Resources Strategy, *The Path We Share*, came out last August, and we are working hard on our definition of whole-tree harvesting. We've been consulting with a number of stakeholders in the industry, and you'll expect to see the definition this Spring.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the one thing that I can say about this minister is that he is consistent. He hasn't got one strategy on time yet since he took that office. In an allNovaScotia.com story - I will table it - the new director of forestry says a map may earmark some parts of the province where nutrient levels are so weak nothing can be harvested. This is causing confusion and concern for the industry that has been in disarray, I might say, since this NDP Government took office.

My question to the minister is, will the minister tell industry groups today where these regions are, where the nutrient levels are deemed to be so weak that nothing can be harvested there?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, yes, we are working on an ecosystem management plan for the province. It looks at soils. Under that ecosystem management plan, water load in an area or wind direction or the number of species that are on the land - those are all important factors in determining the type of woodlot management that can be carried out.

You asked about whole-tree harvesting. Absolutely, we are committed not to allow whole-tree harvesting in Nova Scotia.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it's good to hear that they're committed to whole-tree harvesting not taking place in this province. The only thing is, how long do we have to wait? People in industry are going out of business because of the inaction of this minister and this government. The NDP has also planned to clarify the use of forest biomass. (Interruptions) It's interesting how the Minister of Agriculture has answers now, but when he was Minister of Natural Resources he didn't know what to say. (Interruptions) When I have the floor, I'll ask my question. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP had also planned to clarify the use of forest biomass for generating electricity by mid-February, and I know it's a surprise to a lot of you here, but that's late too. This NDP Government is pushing anything that's controversial as far away as possible without making any commitments before the next election. The turmoil is causing serious distress. (Interruption) You're darn right this is a speech because you guys won't listen to anything else. This turmoil is causing serious distress on a very vital industry.

Now, Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, when will the minister provide clarity around the use of forest biomass for generating electricity or is he too afraid to set another deadline that he can't meet?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, I'll try not to be as long-winded as the questioner but in reality we are working very hard, consulting with industry, working with woodlot owners, really working with all Nova Scotians. There has been on-the-ground consultation. There has been classroom consultation and we're getting the input from those most directly impacted by industry and again, as I mentioned, this Spring, in Code of Forest Practices, we'll have rules around clear-cutting, poultry harvesting and biomass.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

### **ENERGY - FRACTURING REVIEW: DELAY - EXPLAIN**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy. Speaking of late studies, the NDP like to talk about being leaders but yesterday we learned yet another study has been delayed - but this time to wait while other jurisdictions make a decision on what Nova Scotia should do - the fracking study.

Now, Mr. Speaker, at this time last year the NDP said they would absolutely have the fracking study done by this Spring and they knew that the EPA, Quebec and others were doing studies that would take much longer to complete and they knew that because the Liberal caucus tabled those documents to show the minister at the time. He said it doesn't matter - the study in Nova Scotia will still be done by the Spring of 2011.

So, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Environment explain why, other than the pending election, the NDP have pushed the deadline for a hydraulic fracturing review to 2014?

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to go back and check Hansard, I will, but I think that the member opposite is confused. I'll answer the question - he relayed to another minister - but I'll answer the question. Definitely this is something that's very serious, hydraulic fracking. It is something that we want to take very seriously and we listened to Nova Scotians. We extended this particular review. We want to listen to other jurisdictions and I'll give the Opposition member an opportunity to clarify who he wants to address the question.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Environment - I mean either one of them, they have both put their names on the press release, so either one of them could have answered, and I appreciate the Minister of Environment. He is right that I said Minister of Energy first because it was the Minister of Energy who made that commitment last year in this House.

Mr. Speaker, last year the Minister of Energy admitted during Question Period that fracking had occurred in Hants County, as was reported by Triangle Petroleum in their annual report to the SEC. They also admitted that fracking was continuing to occur, periodically, for coal-bed methane in Pictou County but he tried to suggest that maybe that's something different than fracking for natural gas. It has also been reported that sites near Truro are disposing of fracking waste fluids for New Brunswick operations.

So, Mr. Speaker, does the minister intend to permit fracking in Nova Scotia for things other than natural gas and does he intend to allow fracking waste from other provinces to continue to be disposed of in Nova Scotia while the review continues - to the Minister of Energy?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: This is for me, is it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to be clear on that.

This government has never approved of hydraulic fracturing anywhere in Nova Scotia. The only hydraulic fracking that has been approved in the past was in 2008-09 under a previous government in Hants County and no other hydraulic fracturing is occurring at this time. It has not occurred since this government came to power and we are taking the concerns of the residents of Nova Scotia very seriously. The last thing we want to see is harm to our environment or to our drinking water. Under the period of this review, there will be no hydraulic fracturing.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal caucus told the NDP last year that a moratorium on fracking permits was needed during the review period. The NDP said it wasn't; now they say it is. Obviously we're pleased that they've come around to the Liberal position, but they've already wasted a year on this issue. It's interesting that the minister sent out a note to his Party members at 9:46 this morning that says, "The NDP is in no hurry to make the wrong decisions."

Mr. Speaker, I don't think the NDP is in any hurry to make any decision on this issue, frankly. Even the Alberta oil review, in their recent edition, has expressed concern over issues over fracking. Other jurisdictions have demanded that chemicals in well drilling and fracking be publicly identified.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister agree to an immediate order requiring all onshore drilling companies to disclose all chemicals in any operations for onshore drilling?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, during the period of this review we're using the expertise of our best geologists and hydro-geologists, environmental engineers, policy analysts, and so on. They are qualified people, but we are also looking at best practices in other jurisdictions - looking to the EPA in the United States, looking to Environment Canada studies, jurisdictions like Quebec and New Brunswick and New York State and others that have . . .



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

### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

### **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

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

MS. KELLY REGAN: As we move into budget deliberations, I thought I would take a few minutes today to talk about Talbot House and the issues surrounding what has been going on at Talbot House. It's key to remember, when we discuss this particular issue, that addiction services are at a premium in this province. Line-ups are long. We need those services - families need those services - and it is key to remember that fact in all of this big mess.

There are a number of questions around Talbot House. First of all, we have to ask, why did the Department of Community Services compel the Board of Directors of Talbot House to make a complaint against its executive director to the Cape Breton Regional Police? It was DCS that claimed to have allegations about the conduct of the executive director. They did not share the details of those allegations with the board of Talbot House, yet they told that board to make the complaint.

Why didn't DCS do it? DCS had the information, and to this day they have not shared the details of that information. So why would they make a board that had no knowledge of this make the complaint? It really makes you wonder.

You contrast their very careful behaviour around the levelling of accusations regarding the employee at the East Preston Day Care - DCS refused to do anything more than refer that particular complaint to the police to investigate. But here they forced a board, with no knowledge of the claim, to go to police. Why did DCS not make the complaint itself, and why did they keep this board in the dark?

Then we look at the people who are on that board. What I keep hearing from people in Cape Breton is that the people who are on the board of Talbot House are very well-respected professionals and they have no desire except to help people with addictions. They are not in it for the money. They are not doing it for the glory or anything like that. They are just there to help out.

The minister has maligned this board and misrepresented their conduct, and the minister owes them an apology. I've been hearing from people saying that this is having a chilling effect on volunteers. Imagine - the government has just come out with their ABCs list of all the agencies, boards, and commissions which have vacancies. After looking at the way the people who are on the board of Talbot House have been treated, why would you want to go join a board, why would you open yourself up to that if this is how people of goodwill are going to be treated? Ironically, this is Volunteer Week.

If we look at the report that the department did on Talbot House, there is a disclaimer right off the bat, and I'll find that disclaimer here. It says:

“It is strongly recommended that the Board of Talbot House consult with legal counsel before disclosing this report beyond the intended audience, or making any use of the report or its contents other than for the purpose outlined above.”

The purpose, by the way, was to improve the organization and operation of Talbot House. So why all of a sudden does DCS post the report? They warned the board of Talbot not to do anything like that, but it's okay for them to do it. It's a completely different standard - one standard for a volunteer board and the other for the department.

On Friday, the Cape Breton Regional Police cleared the executive director of the claims that had been made against him by DCS. At that point, a responsible minister would have contacted the board and begun to work with them to restore Talbot House's service to the community, but that didn't happen because Talbot House's board had called the minister's bluff and pointed out the errors on the DCS report.

This government did what it always does whenever you criticize them - they kneecapped the board because they had been embarrassed. It's the same story as the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board, CFIB, the South Shore board - this is an NDP Government that shoots firsts and asks questions later. They don't like being embarrassed and they - I guess I'm not allowed to say that word so I won't.

The summary of the report says, “There is no evidence the Board has been actively overseeing the operation of Talbot House.” Similarly I would point out there is no evidence the DCS has been overseeing the operation of Talbot House. Standards of care came into being in 2008. Why did they not move to do a routine review of services of Talbot House

until December 2011? Only after there was a complaint about the executive director. You have to ask, what took the minister so long?

Madam Speaker, I have been hearing from people who run all kinds of different volunteer organizations and they say there is no way that they would have been allowed to get away with what DCS is alleging was happening at Talbot House. Either DCS was negligent in not overseeing Talbot and helping them to move along to the standard they expected - which was clearly laid out in 2008 - or there is no standard.

It's one or the other. Either the DCS didn't do their job or there is no standard, because quite frankly they've gone through this huge list of all these things that they say the board didn't do. Did they help the board meet these standards? Not by anything that we can find out. I also wonder whether DCS, in all of this, bothered to talk to any former clients of Talbot House except for the people who made the complaints, and remember those complaints about the executive director were investigated and found baseless.

I've been hearing from people who have had relatives at Talbot House and they all tell me what an invaluable service Talbot House provided to their loved one. I heard from a woman the other day whose son had been addicted for 20 years and that son is now working, gainfully employed, has moved to another part of Canada - no doubt to find work - but that son had been a worry to that mother for 20 years. He had tried all kinds of different treatment programs and nothing helped until he went to Talbot House. The way that Talbot House functioned made it possible for him to get his life together. This isn't a one-size-fits-all kind of program - it's tailored to each person's individual need. It is really quite interesting that for many people, the atmosphere that you get at Talbot House that you may not get in another kind of treatment centre is the key to them getting better.

What I'm hearing is that the people who are on the board of Talbot House are professionals, they are extremely well-respected in Cape Breton and they're very shocked and hurt by their treatment at the hands of DCS. You have to ask, why would anybody bother to do that?

At the end of the day, Talbot House is about treatment. We need more long-term residential treatment for addicts. We need to have an array of services for addicts and we need facilities that do this. Come July 1, 2012, we won't have a 28-day addiction treatment program in the Capital District anymore. Recovery House funding has been discontinued and there's a shadow over Talbot House. These people are working in the absence of any kind of mental health strategy at all.

The Minister of Community Services owes the board an apology, she owes the staff of Talbot House an apology and she owes the clients or the former clients of Talbot House an apology. Talbot House was providing a service that the department isn't and that department needs to come clean on why they didn't help Talbot House bring itself up to the standards they were expecting long before this, because they have programs that do that for

other groups. Why they didn't do that, why they never bothered to oversee - and now suddenly they march in and say, we're going to oversee and you're not doing this, this and this and pulled the rug out from underneath the board.

Madam Speaker, with those brief thoughts I will take my seat. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Madam Speaker, I was just ready to step in there and I was glad that there was still time to do so. It's my pleasure to speak going into Supply today and I wanted to speak on the subject of condominiums and condominium ownership in Nova Scotia. This, as the members will know, is an increasingly popular form of housing in our city.

The very first condominium that was registered in the province is condominium No. 1 in Clayton Park and, in fact, it was a townhouse condominium. We had some of the early ones in the beginning of the Clayton Park subdivision, really, as it got developed, so some of the earliest townhouse and condominium concept ownership are in my area.

As members will know the development in Clayton Park and Clayton Park West has been very fast and furious and we have a lot of condominiums there now and a lot of multi-unit buildings. It's interesting to note that when a builder puts up an apartment building or a large multi-unit building, they often haven't decided in advance if it's condominium or it will be rental. They often just wait to see what the market is like when the building is complete, and then they will decide. What we're finding today is more and more of the apartment buildings are being built to a condominium style or with the finishes of a condominium and really, having some features that are very nice and could be condominium or rental properties.

As this has continued, some problems have arisen. Certainly, the problems that I have recognized and first really came across as an MLA, are in the multi-unit buildings, they're not in the townhouses, although there were issues of governance in the townhouse condominiums that also caused trouble and were noted by many complaints to the Registrar of Condominiums that we have in the province. This is managed through Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations and there was an office where the registration would take place of any condominium building that was being put together. In that case a condominium isn't registered until 50 per cent of the units are sold - so up to that point there isn't a board and a management structure in place to look after the condominium, it's still in the hands of the builder until such time as the 50 per cent has been reached.

We left it to the condominium registrar and the small staff there to go over the details of each condominium application and to do their visual inspections and to ultimately register and give a number to that new condominium. That's an important step, Madam Speaker, because if there was a delay in doing so, if the condominium wasn't even

numbered and approved, the people living there were actually paying rent - and that still continues to this day, that you can buy a condominium and move in because it is ready to move in, but it hasn't yet been approved by the Registrar of Condominiums. Therefore, you'll pay a rent that you agree to with the builder until such time as the condominium is registered and your ownership can be registered. That has caused some people considerable problems because they've been almost held at ransom, having to pay a mortgage payment, which is outstanding, and also pay these monthly rents - which would be well over \$1,000 a month - so essentially two big payments in order to live in a place that you've just bought.

We've had complaints - that was probably one of the first ones that I have received, it was for somebody in that situation. They had actually bought a condominium, not in my riding, but in Liverpool, they bought one as a place to get away to the country. At that time, Madam Speaker, it came to light that there was a backlog in the department. That came to light that there was an issue there and that perhaps there weren't enough staff or they weren't able to move through the applications fast enough, as the demand was increasing, as more buildings were being registered as condominiums.

I mention that because that was one of the issues that I imagine many members have heard that complaint before. In fact, if you move in before it has been registered and in your name you do take some risk. So I would actually encourage people not to move in until the condominium is registered. I understand why they would be anxious to because often you put your own house on the market, it has sold and you are ready to move into that condominium building, so you feel it will only be a short period of time and, hopefully, it will only be a month or so before you can take full possession.

Madam Speaker, the reason I got more concerned about condominiums was actually in the 2006 election when I was going door-to-door, and knocking on the doors in condominium buildings, it came to light that a number of them had significant deficiencies in the buildings. Although they were literally brand new, they were all just a year or two old and problems had begun to exhibit themselves, particularly in terms of water - water penetrating the different units, coming in because there wasn't proper flashing on the windows or proper, really, building standards to ensure that they were watertight and that they were built to a high standard.

What I found was that this was in a number of different buildings and it was occurring with different builders. It didn't seem to be isolated to any one builder, that you could say that they weren't following the standards - it seemed to be across the board. I think it's significant that an organization actually was formed to represent the condominium owners because there were such concerns, and because when they raised their concerns with government it was found that the condominium registrar, although they would listen to your complaint or concern, didn't have any power to really act on them - their role was strictly to register the buildings, not to look after consumer protection after the fact.

It really is buyer beware in our marketplace when it comes to purchasing a home or a condominium. With homes there is much less worry, Madam Speaker, because with a house it is easier to get a home inspector in and you have the house looked at before you take possession. So it's easier to identify where there are deficiencies and to address them. So the government has actually said themselves, in doing a review of condominiums, that they weren't finding the same problems at all with households, with individual, single-family or a townhouse building - they are adequately covered under the Atlantic Home Warranty Program. People were not finding difficulty because they generally had a house inspected before they moved in and were able to do a holdback on any money they would have otherwise paid out if there were things that needed to be corrected. So that holdback gives, even to this day, the house buyer an advantage.

If you are buying into a condominium building, it is very difficult for an individual buyer, when there could be 100 units, to come in and have somebody who can inspect the whole building to see if the cladding is right, to see if the exterior is good throughout. You're not likely to find somebody who can do that, plus the cost would be very great for an individual to do that. If you knew all the buyers in advance, you could all together pool your money and have somebody inspect the whole building. That doesn't usually happen until after the building has its own condominium board and then they have a mechanism to do that kind of work. That's often a year into the building being built or further.

That's often when the deficiencies begin to exhibit themselves because any individual might think they have a little problem on their balcony or with their windows or they have some water penetration, but they may not know, until a board is formed, that's happening in different parts of the building and that it's a pervasive problem in their building.

There were a couple of cases that came up where people actually had to collectively pay for some very serious repairs in brand-new buildings. In buildings that were just a year or two old, they were being asked for special levies of \$20,000 and \$30,000 per unit in order to pool enough money to make a \$1 million repair to some of the exteriors of the building.

The previous Progressive Conservative Government did hear these calls in 2006 and 2007 and worked with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations office and that department to study the problem. I know there was consultation done around that problem as well. In fact, I have before me one of their consultation papers, which went over some of the options and asked for input from condominium owners and others, to start addressing them. We did pass some legislation here in the last five, six years that began to address some of the problems about governance and having a proper voice, if you disagreed with the board as an individual owner what were your options, how could you proceed. Some of that had been very cumbersome in the past and you had to go to arbitration. Your board would be represented by a lawyer and you would be, as a single owner, at a disadvantage if you tried to represent yourself in those circumstances.

Quite a few changes have come in to help individual owners and the governance of the boards to be stronger and to have other mechanisms aside from what could be an expensive and very difficult arbitration process.

I know some of the problems were addressed in the legislation that we had passed, but I think the biggest problem remains outstanding. I had a chance to ask the minister, in estimates, a few questions about the condominium issue and I know that his staff are very aware of it, that this has been a long-standing file for the department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

I was pleased to see the registrar has a stronger role. I think more time has been dedicated to that role as the Registrar of Condominiums, although I heard that registrar, today, on the news - with a different file, so he's the registrar of something else as well, I can't remember just what. At least there has been a greater attention within the department to the needs of condominium owners and as I mentioned earlier, an organization was formed - around 2006 would be its genesis - it's called Condominium Owners of Nova Scotia and I think they took some pleasure in the acronym, CONS only because they were really disgruntled people who felt they had not had adequate protection as consumers in Nova Scotia.

They've been very eloquent in bringing their issues and they've been very diplomatic too, I might say. I think the minister would agree, they're a very diplomatic group. They've tried to go through the right channels to raise their issues and explain what the problems are that people are experiencing. I think some of them are very compelling, when you look back and see that some people have had up to \$1 million repairs in their buildings and the only mechanism to get that done is to go back to each and every one of the unit holders and say, you have to pay in your share in order for us to fix this building, otherwise, everybody's investment is at risk.

You can't have that either because your home, or in this case if you choose condominium ownership, that's probably your biggest investment, your biggest asset that you own. It's a big problem for the owners of those buildings.

What I wanted to really hone in on today is that with this history of a good relationship between CONS and the government, working on different issues, there's still the problem of not having adequate inspection of the buildings before people move in. I know the owners were shocked to find out that nobody comes and physically inspects things like the heating system, the air circulation, the exterior cladding - those things are not inspected. The city inspectors just use a checklist and they check the plans against that checklist. They don't go to the site and actually approve and say that it's adequately built. Again, it's buyer beware.

The Atlantic Home Insurance - I guess the Home Warranty program is what it's called, Atlantic Home Warranty - which homeowners have as well, hasn't proven to be

effective for condominium owners. It has not provided them - it just doesn't have enough insurance benefit to the individual owners, and therefore it has been inadequate. The province acknowledges that. The previous government and the department and the current government acknowledge that it's inadequate in this instance.

But what we found is that there has been no replacement brought forward, no legislation to improve the protection of people who are buying a brand-new condominium, and I think all of this points to a real shortcoming right now in the laws of this province, that we haven't provided adequate protection to condominium owners.

Madam Speaker, that is the crux of what I wanted to raise today: this remains a very big problem, and nobody has addressed it adequately. Many years ago now - probably 2008; it was before the last election - I brought in a bill as a Private Member's Bill asking that the government consider a holdback as part of the legislation. Perhaps a 5 per cent holdback on every condominium sold, of the new ones, so that you would have a pool of money for each and every condominium corporation to draw on if in the first five years of that building's existence they have any major deficiencies that would be found in the actual building standard. That would cover them for things like brickwork that isn't done properly.

One building in my area had an entire face of the building that had to be re-bricked because it wasn't done at the right time of year and it didn't set properly. So the new owners, with only a couple of years of ownership, had to then pay for an entire wall to be redone. That was in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. There are many, many stories like this.

A holdback from individual owners would have made a big difference, and I want to propose it again. I know that it's been looked at by the department and it was not moved forward with, but I do think it would be a mechanism that we could quickly put into place that would provide some measure of comfort to the people who are buying the buildings. If it drove up the price by 5 per cent, I think that people would understand that, because they would actually be paying for that insurance up front.

That was really what I'd like to leave with the members of the House today: the suggestion that a holdback on new condominium buyers, being allowed to hold back a percentage from the builder, would provide the adequate consumer protection that we need now. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

[2:24 p.m. The House resolved itself into CWH on Supply with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]



[5:56 p.m. CWH on Supply rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Gordon Gosse, resumed the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and made considerable progress and begs leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

We have reached the moment of interruption. The topic for tonight's late debate was submitted by the honourable member for Glace Bay:

“Therefore be it resolved that the Minister of Community Services admit she mishandled the issues around Talbot House and resolve the situation as soon as possible so that staff and the Board can continue to provide valuable services to the community.”

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

### **COM. SRV. - TALBOT HOUSE: MIN. MISHANDLING - ADMIT**

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in my place this evening to speak on the issue of Talbot House. We've seen this issue unfold over the past several weeks. A couple of weeks ago in the House I did ask the minister what had gone on there and she assured us that it was the board's decision to close Talbot House.

As the story has unfolded, it appears there was much more than meets the eye. Certainly the information we were given that first day was not complete. One of the things I would like to underline is that in this whole issue we have to remember who is important here, and it is the people who need the services of Talbot House - not just the people who are addicted, but their families, their friends, their loved ones, their caregivers. Line-ups to access addiction treatment are long in this province. We need the services, as do the families who access those services when they have a family member in need.

So there are a number of questions around the government's handling of Talbot House. Again, I come back to what is a central issue for us: why did the Department of Community Services compel the board of directors of Talbot House to make a complaint about its executive director to the Cape Breton Regional Police? The board did not have

knowledge of any issue with the executive director. It was the Department of Community Services that decided they had received a complaint and that this complaint must be acted upon. Instead of going to the police themselves, they compelled the board to do it. It is like the board was made to do DCS's dirty work. For some reason DCS didn't want to do it and when you contrast, you look at the way that DCS behaved here, where they were only too eager to force a board to go and make a complaint to police, contrast their behaviour around the issue of the East Preston Day Care where, in fact, they refused to do anything more than refer the issue to the police.

So, we all keep wondering what the difference is here - why two different standards? Here they forced a board, with no knowledge of the issue, to make the claim and it was a claim that ultimately was found to have no merit. You have to ask yourself why is that and why did it keep the board in the dark? The board indicated to me today that to this day they have not received any details of why there was a complaint or what the issue was with their executive director.

Another issue that we have around Talbot House is the issue of the volunteers on that board. The people who are on the board of Talbot House are quality people. They're highly qualified. Someone referred to me, when speaking about them, as the cream of the crop in terms of volunteers in Cape Breton and they said, you know, most boards could only wish to get those people on their board. They're highly qualified and well-respected.

Yesterday the minister claimed that DCS offered to help Talbot House with money to hire extra staff while the investigation is underway - and this is true - but the board says that when they asked for an actual person to come in and help to run Talbot House when their executive director suddenly resigned, they got no help. They asked for someone from DCS or the Cape Breton District Health Authority to come in and run it and none was forthcoming and that is why they closed Talbot House temporarily, as the minister well knew or should have known and declined to disclose to this House.

So there's a little more to this story than the minister indicated to this House and in doing so, in failing to disclose the whole story of why they had to shut down because they didn't have anyone to act as executive director, the minister maligned the board, met and misrepresented their conduct, and she owes them an apology.

What I've heard from other board members throughout the province is that this action taken by DCS has had a chilling effect on volunteers. Right now we have a list of ABCs, agencies, boards and commissions, out there asking for people to serve on their boards and you have to ask - why would anyone come in if this is the treatment they're going to get from their own minister? And the irony of all this is that it's actually Volunteer Week.

When we look at the disclaimer that was listed in the DCS report on Talbot House organizational review that was given to Talbot House, there's a disclaimer on the third

page, which reads, "It is strongly recommended that the Board of Talbot House consult with legal counsel before disclosing this report beyond the intended audience, or making any use of the report or its contents other than for the purpose outlined above."

So what does DCS do? It posts that same report that it has just warned Talbot House not to disseminate anywhere. It posts it publicly and it doesn't post Talbot House's response. It just puts it up there for everybody to see. So there was one standard for Talbot House and another one for DCS.

On Friday, the Cape Breton police cleared the executive director. At that point the minister should have contacted the board, begun to work with them to restore Talbot House's service to the community, but that's not what happened. What happened was that they posted this report, which the Talbot House board has called inaccurate and unfair. Once again, we come back to how this government behaves when people tell it things it doesn't like. When people force the government to look at inconvenient truths, what does it do? It kneecaps those people.

It's the same story with Chignecto Central School Board, with the CFIB. Remember when the Finance Minister said they should get rid of their executive director here in the Atlantic, the South Shore board - any time a group points out the fallacies that this government tries to perpetuate, the NDP Government shuts them down, or kneecaps them. They shoot first and ask questions later.

Many of DCS's concerns in this report are around issues of paperwork. What goes on there? There are six staff, they offer 24/7 care, there are up to 18 men in there, they have a \$400,000 budget - I don't know, but maybe they're so busy actually working with the folks who are trying to get better that they don't have time to fill out all the forms and the reports. I'm not saying that reports and forms aren't important, but that is not their core business; that's not why they're there.

The DCS summary says there is no evidence that the board has been actively overseeing operation of Talbot House; conversely, there's no evidence DCS has been overseeing the operation of Talbot House. Standards of care came in 2008 - what has DCS been doing with this board to help them reach that? Why have they not helped the Talbot House board reach the goals that DCS has for them before now - why did it take until December 2011?

Other groups that offer services, I've heard from them, and they tell me they're subject to rigorous controls and rigorous standards. Why was this case any different? If you look at the Talbot House response on Page 3 it says that although the Board of Directors acknowledges, ". . . Talbot House was not in full compliance with the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services Standards for Recovery Houses established in 2008, there is ample evidence that the board was addressing these policy and operational issues in a systemic fashion."

They were working on it. Did they get any help from DCS? Not that we've seen. Did DCS bother to talk to any former members of Talbot House other than those who made the complaints? I can tell you we've heard from people who say that Talbot House saved their lives or their son's lives.

I believe this minister owes an apology to the board, to the clients, and to the people of Cape Breton. They are offering a service that the department isn't, and they need to come clean on why they didn't help Talbot House long before now. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, as we all know, this is a difficult and emotional issue for many of the former residents, the staff, the board, and the community. However, I do appreciate the opportunity to clear up some of the misunderstandings and the misinformation that the Opposition likes to present.

We understand the importance of having recovery services in Cape Breton to assist residents with their well-being during a difficult time in their lives. We have heard from our partners that a recovery house is needed in Cape Breton. We agree and we intend to be there for the people who may require our help.

Community Services provides funding to a number of recovery houses around the province. We do not run these recovery houses; the boards do. We fund them - the goal is to provide financial support so these facilities can help people recovering from addiction to transition back to independence.

In 2008, the province did a comprehensive review of recovery houses and brought in standards of care. These standards were discussed with all recovery houses to explain compliance. As a funder we have the authority to review the organization if there are concerns the services we provide funding for are not being provided adequately. Funding for Talbot House was provided by Community Services through a service agreement. Again, this service agreement allowed us to do an organizational review at any time to ensure the facility was providing the services we were giving them funding to provide.

The review of Talbot House followed a complaint that involved current allegations about the executive director and the services being provided by the house. As soon as we got the complaint we advised the board and made arrangements to meet with them at their first available meeting time, which was last November. We have been clear from the beginning that the goal of these reviews is to examine organizations to ensure that they are able to provide the services that they are receiving funding to deliver according to standards.

For example, the review would look at an organization's governance model, programs and services, policies, financial oversight practices, and board and management

practices. Again, the review examines whether services are being delivered according to those standards. This was an internal review conducted by professional staff at the Department of Community Services. The review has been completed and was presented to the board of directors on April 4, 2012.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize that this was an organizational review. It was not a review of an individual, nor was it an inquiry into specific allegations. It was a review that looked at whether the organization as a whole was providing adequate services. The public discussion may have focused on other, more personal aspects, but our review was very much looking at the organization. The board agreed to the organizational review.

Throughout the process, DCS maintained communications with the board. It has been suggested that information was withheld from the board. That is not true. The board had an opportunity to actually get more information. The complainant agreed to meet with the board. The board of directors did not take advantage of this offer. We made every effort to work with them to ensure the residents of Talbot House were getting the support they required.

I would like to take this opportunity to clear up a few incorrect facts that are swirling around on this issue. Number one, DCS did not remove the executive director of the facility as part of the review. The Board of Directors of Talbot House is responsible for the operational decisions, including staffing matters, and they made that decision.

Number two, in terms of supporting Talbot House during this time when the executive director was placed on leave by the board, Community Services offered to provide additional funding for an interim acting executive director and to bring in additional support staff as needed. That offer was still available when the interim director resigned.

Number three, DCS did not close Talbot House, Mr. Speaker. The board announced their decision to close on March 7, 2012.

Number four, DCS did not pull or cut funding because of the review. We were more than willing to continue to work with the organization throughout the review - again, because we recognize the need for a recovery house in Cape Breton. The board discharged the residents in early March, and the result was that they were no longer providing a service. When their funding expired at the end of March there was no longer anything to fund. We continued to provide funding for the former residents who wished to continue with their recovery elsewhere in the province. We assisted the residents who chose to transition into the community with a variety of supports.

Following the closure of the house we maintained our commitment to providing the board with the review. With regard to identified areas of concerns, our first approach is always to continue working with an organization to see how those could be addressed.

Understandably, there was quite a bit of public interest in making the DCS organizational review public. We had a number of requests for the documents.

We made the review public on April 16, 2012, after the board had had an opportunity to review the document. It is not unusual for the department to post reviews on-line. For instance, a recent example is the Braemore review. It is available for anyone to read and it is clearly focused on the organization's policies and practices and not on individuals.

I will focus for a moment on the aspects of the report that have been discussed publicly. The budget: the Talbot House Board of Directors filled out Schedule B in the service agreement document. This is a very high-level summary which describes how an organization intends to use funding, but it does not replace an organizational budget, which has more detailed budget line items that can be tracked on a monthly basis. There was no evidence of a formal process to track expenditures on a monthly basis, to ensure they were spending the funding in accordance to how it was proposed.

The complaint: Community Services has not discussed, in public, the nature of the complaint that was received; however, Community Services consulted with the complainant and, as a result, he agreed to meet with the board. The board of directors did not take action when that specific opportunity was presented to them, which would have provided the board with more information.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, this review is not about individuals, it's about the organization and how it is running. We value all Nova Scotians who donate their time to be on boards of organizations like this around the province. We appreciate the time they dedicate and the challenges that can come with this role.

Reviews are designed to identify challenges so that the department can work with boards to provide the best service possible and make improvements where necessary. The well-being of the residents is our common concern and priority. While there are concerns with Talbot House at the moment, if these were addressed, we would look at working with them again.

Community Services will be assessing the options that are available for services in the coming weeks. Mr. Speaker. We have heard from our partners that services are needed in Cape Breton and we are committed to making that happen. Thank you.

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

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, as many in this House know, for many years Talbot House has provided guidance for men suffering from addiction. The board and staff at Talbot House have been devoted to facilitating recovery and rehabilitation of people across Nova Scotia and, indeed, Atlantic Canada. The actions of the Minister of

Community Services surrounding her review of Talbot House have been reckless and irresponsible. Her handling of her department is not up to the level expected of a minister.

Mr. Speaker, the minister has created a double standard with regard to allegations of abuse. In the case of East Preston Day Care, she felt no responsibility to alert the board of directors about an alleged abuser who was working in direct contact with small children. When the board found out from the media - Frank magazine - employment ended. The board acted in a responsible manner and did what was in the best interest of the little girls and boys they care for.

Parents have spoken out against the minister's actions. The people of Nova Scotia do not believe she did the right thing but yet, Mr. Speaker, in the case of Talbot House, the minister went forward, without a second thought, to publish the nature of the allegations against the executive director, despite them being false and discredited. The minister is hopelessly reckless in her decision making.

Mr. Speaker, the minister says that regardless of whether the allegations were true or false, they were following their due diligence. It's abhorrent that she didn't follow due diligence when it came to the well-being of preschoolers.

Mr. Speaker, the minister launched a full-fledged organizational review of Talbot House when concerns were brought forward but the minister kept accusations of pedophilia a secret with East Preston. She launched no full-scale review of whether the children there faced a current and real risk in 2010. Instead, she mis-describes the problem as historic.

It isn't that simple, Mr. Speaker. While the abuse allegations are historic, the risk was 100 per cent current. The best predictor of behaviour is past behaviour. If there are serious allegations of serious harm to children, backed by evidence, in whatever form, and the government is aware, it knows about a real, current risk of that behaviour being repeated. If our most vulnerable, our children, are exposed to the possibility that that harm be revisited, that is a major and current danger. This minister utterly failed to do her job to protect children, as is her duty under the law.

Today the minister, Mr. Speaker, counted her commitments to boards. She said "it's our duty to go to the board of directors." History shows in the words of government that this is simply not true. She defends her decision to keep an alleged child abuser safe and fails to go - in her duty to go - to the board. She defends her decision to spread false allegations against Father Paul Abbass, executive director at Talbot House. She failed in her duty to go to both boards by not telling them the nature of the allegations.

The minister's messaging today, Mr. Speaker, finally contains an accurate statement. She does have a duty to go to the boards. However, the minister doesn't understand what that duty means or to whom she's responsible. How can we accept that the

minister understands her duty when she applies a double standard? Her actions suggest that maybe the minister doesn't believe these boards have the capability to do the right thing.

This minister is working in a silo, Mr. Speaker, in an ivory tower. She has a clear aversion to disclosure. The board of directors of any organization deserves to know all details about any allegations made against an employee, because they have a responsibility. What has unfolded as a result of the minister's reckless behaviour is tragic. The minister mishandled the situation at Talbot House, has questioned the ability of the executive director, has discredited a board of well-known dedicated individuals, and she must account for her actions.

Each day the minister lets another contradicting detail come out about the protocol followed by her department. Let's be clear - there is no protocol for what happened at East Preston. If there was, it would have been tabled by now. There is nothing, Mr. Speaker, nothing that says she could not pick up the phone and do the right thing; there is nothing that says that the most basic thing she could do to protect the children could not be done, but suddenly for Talbot House, it's her duty to notify the board. She says it's a "duty."

Well, what protocol is she following in this case, Mr. Speaker, an imaginary protocol that changes to protect the minister? It's okay not to call the board when she has information, presumably from another department, that might protect vulnerable children, but she has to call the board when she has false information about a priest in a home serving adult men.

The whole notion of a protocol is what the minister wants it to be when it defends a really bad decision - for that is what it's all about. Mr. Speaker, the minister made horrible, indefensible decisions, decisions that in both situations maximize the possible risk, the most possible harm to the most vulnerable people. The minister cannot justify the mistakes she has made any longer. The minister must admit that she failed in her duty to the boards.

The pattern cannot be ignored. The minister is not up to the job, and it's time to recognize that. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: With no other speakers remaining, the time for late debate now is over. I thank all the honourable members for an excellent debate.

We will now take a short recess as we get the Minister of Health and Wellness back, with her staff.

[6:24 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Supply with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

[7:12 p.m. CWH on Supply rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Gordon Gosse, resumed the Chair.]



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

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

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 5.

#### **Bill No. 5 - Municipal Government Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the other evening I had the opportunity to say a few brief remarks on Bill No. 5, expressing some of the concerns there. We're certainly hoping that the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations may be able to address some of those concerns.

Just highlighting them again, the question becomes as to why this is not being offered by Efficiency Nova Scotia. One would suspect that that agency, which has its own staff and everything that are already being paid for by ratepayers of Nova Scotia who use electricity through Nova Scotia Power - that there's already infrastructure in place to do this. We're already hearing from UNSM and from our own municipal units about the issue of downloading and the fact that this is going to be another level of administration that they're going to have to be able to put in place.

The other question which I raised is - and I look forward to the minister responding to it - will the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations provide a template to the municipalities as to how they can implement such a program to allow their ratepayers to be able to purchase solar panels and have it charged back against their property taxes, or are we leaving it to each municipal unit to come up with its own system? Which begs the question of why would we have a system that may be offered in Yarmouth

but not offered in Shelburne, that may be offered by CBRM but not offered by Inverness, and so on. I think this is an initiative that we would like all Nova Scotians who wish to do so to be able to take advantage of, regardless of where they live. But when you have this piecemeal type of approach, it raises the concern that not every Nova Scotian may be able to benefit from this.

Again, Mr. Speaker, one of the issues which I raised - and again hopefully the minister might be able to address - is, previously, the Department of Energy had a rebate program that was offered prior to the creation of Efficiency Nova Scotia, and solar panels were eligible for a certain rebate but it was only a certain type of solar panel. In fact, they were the ones that would be used to heat hot water. It did not apply to solar panels used to produce electricity and that was a concern which, as I mentioned before, was raised by a local company in my constituency, Appleseed Energy, which saw a tremendous opportunity and a great interest from Nova Scotians who wanted to install solar panels for the generation of electricity but there were no rebates or incentives offered by the province to do so.

They did provide me with literature, which I believe other Canadian provinces and a number of states in the United States offer, some very generous incentives, currently, for these. The question was, why would we not join in that, especially since we are a province like so many other areas that enjoy the sun and could benefit from this new means of reducing our carbon footprint and reducing our over-reliance on Nova Scotia Power?

So those were some of the concerns which I did raise. Again, as I mentioned, these are troubling times in the Strait area when we talk about the Municipal Government Act and municipalities and, as you're probably aware, Mr. Speaker, right now the members of the union from the former NewPage mill are voting. In fact, I believe they ended voting around six o'clock and we are awaiting the results as to whether they've accepted the contract offer put forward by the Stern Group. So these are trying times. That is a facility which pays a significant part of the tax revenues for my own municipality in Richmond. As well, it has an impact on the municipal revenues through property taxes of the employees and the suppliers in municipalities throughout the entire Strait area, whether it be Inverness, whether it be Victoria, whether it be Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Antigonish, Guysborough, and even further.

So these are challenging times and worrisome times, and tonight we wait for the news as to whether that contract offer has been accepted. As well, we'll be looking for updates from the Minister of Natural Resources as to where the negotiations for Crown land leases will be, as well, and then certainly hoping that the negotiations with Nova Scotia Power are productive at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, this is a bill which I believe has good intentions. I believe there's more information that we would like to see from it and certainly better guarantees - either from the minister or through UNSM - that this is a program that will be

offered in all municipal units throughout the province so that all Nova Scotians can benefit from that. So I am looking forward to more information on this but certainly happy that the minister did bring it forward for debate here in the House. I do thank you and the House for the opportunity to make those brief comments on Bill No. 5, the Municipal Government Act. Merci.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise tonight to speak on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus. I understand this legislation is something that's being asked for by municipalities. That's a sign that there's interest out there by the municipalities to do this and the government is enabling them to do that. That is a good thing.

I've done a little research myself, Mr. Speaker, and I've heard that some of the councillors here in HRM, when similar legislation was passed to enable HRM to offer solar panels, that the councillors have been swamped with requests from people who want to add these solar panels to their homes. As I understand, there has been a bit of a delay in getting the process in order, but the interest seems to be there on the part of the public to add these solar panels to their homes.

I think people believe in the philosophy. There seems to be some question in terms of the payback on these panels; at least that's what I've been told by the councillors I've spoken with. I think it would be beneficial for the government, in the passing of this legislation, to come forward and table some background numbers on how this actually works. Perhaps a case study, if you will, that would show that if somebody agrees to add a panel to their home that it shows the number of years - at the rate the municipality is going to charge for it - it will take for revenue to come in to pay for the panel and pay for the financing of it. We understand that is going to be an accepted responsibility by the municipality to finance the purchase of these devices and to pay for them over time.

I'm sure that no member in the Legislature here would like to see solar panels for whatever reason after so many years come to the end of their useful life and a municipality be required to take off a panel, which had lived beyond its useful life, before it had actually been paid for. In this Legislature, I'm sure no member would want to put municipalities in a position where they would have to shoulder the cost to pay for a solar panel that was no longer of any use to the public.

I know municipalities have asked for this legislation, so that is a risk they are taking on. If they have the information, that's great. I do think we would benefit in this House from seeing the minister table information; I think that would be helpful. If the case is there for it, there should not be any push-back to tabling such information.

The question that comes to mind is why is the government choosing this method to encourage the use of solar panels? I know we have primarily a monopoly in this province on the supply of energy through Nova Scotia Power, and obviously Nova Scotia Power has no interest in this form of energy. That leads me to question why - I don't have that answer, but I guess I'm left to prognosticate here tonight.

But I think it's a question that should be answered as well. If Nova Scotia Power does not see these devices as something it wants to be involved with, I guess I'm hoping that still they make economic sense and environmental sense. Certainly if we were to assume they would make sense, we're harvesting energy from natural sources through the sun and providing it to consumers - we can't assume the cost is free, but I think there again it brings us back to the need to have numbers tabled to show that the solar panels make sense.

I guess that's why if nobody else wants to do this, it's left to the municipalities. I can see why they would be suitable from a billing perspective when it comes to paying for it, if they're willing to accept financing of it. They have the mechanisms through property taxes and through water billing; they have a system of accounting set up and a system of billing set up that they could provide another utility, being solar panels, to consumers. I can see from a billing perspective why they may be appropriate.

The other thing is why isn't something like this, if it makes so much sense, why hasn't it just happened by way of the private sector? If there's a compelling case to have solar panels on your home, why isn't that able to be made through the private sector? I know there are companies that offer solar panels. I've met with them myself. They seem to present a good case, but at the end of the day consumers, like anybody else, consumers are going to purchase things that make economic sense. So I guess it kind of concerns me that solar panels have to go through financing with municipalities because it may suggest they not be the most efficient form of energy that consumers could purchase.

Mr. Speaker, I think the main question that I would ask in looking at this legislation to enable municipalities to put these solar panels in place is if municipalities are required to give a breakdown of the actual cost-effectiveness of the solar panel over time so the consumers can be assured that they have all the information they need to make a decision on whether or not they want to become a purchaser of this form of energy.

I respect if municipalities are owning the asset and charging the consumer, then perhaps the municipalities are accepting that risk. Again, Mr. Speaker, that is the heart of this matter. If it can be easily answered then I know myself, personally, I would have no problem supporting this legislation but I guess I wonder if the numbers were actually presented to us here in the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, it is up to consumers to decide if they want to use these solar panels but I would hope that there's a full, transparent disclosure of the numbers behind the solar

panels and so the consumers can compare the cost-effectiveness of using the solar panel to, say, using electricity from Nova Scotia Power. If they have that information, I think that would allow them to make a fair comparison and an informed decision.

I think, Mr. Speaker, all members of this Legislature should strive to ensure that Nova Scotians have all the information they need to make decisions. I think we can do that in this Legislature by way of having the minister perhaps table a case study that shows a typical example of somebody adding a solar panel, however many number of them they would add to their home, the monthly cost for that, and showing the projected lifespan of the asset to ensure that the cost is covered for the asset.

I think we owe that to municipalities, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that before we pass legislation here in this Legislature that we're not just looking out for our own interests, for provincial interests, but we're looking out for the interests of our municipal governments because we are all representing the same people: Nova Scotians.

So I would encourage the minister to table the information so that this is transparent and that we have all the information. I will conclude my remarks with that this evening, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it's with pleasure I stand and discuss some concerns I have regarding Bill No. 5. I'll start off by saying, to begin with, that I think solar panels and solar energy, renewable energy is a wonderful thing and we haven't done enough in this province to embrace it and to ensure that we can remove ourselves from fossil fuel someday - at all levels, hopefully - and we can rely on renewable energy such as solar panels, wind turbines, or whatever the case may be as technology advances and improves over time.

I do have some problems though with the municipalities doing this type of activity. I know the Halifax Regional Municipality does it now, but this type of activity really should be left to financial institutions to finance these types of acquisitions or, indeed, it should be through Efficiency Nova Scotia. Efficiency Nova Scotia is set up to do this; they're absolutely set up to do it. They were at our Public Accounts Committee the other day and gave a very interesting discussion on how they can provide loans, they can provide forgiveness on loan interest, they can provide loans that are forgivable, they can generate grants that they can give to people to do things; indeed, all of us are paying for the ability of that organization on our power bills, and the province is also kicking in some money for that, as well, to the tune of \$60 million a year at the present time. So that's a substantial amount of money.

So why would municipalities want to do this? Well, number one, if a municipality does this, there is going to be a cost to the municipal taxpayers. As far as I am personally

concerned, and most of the people I talk to, we - the municipality - are over-taxed now as it is. They're struggling. As critic, I've talked to many of the municipal councillors and wardens and mayors, and indeed, they're having a difficult time providing the infrastructure services that they should be providing.

This renewable energy is a great thing. It's a wonderful thing, but when you really look at the whole picture here, it's the responsibility of the province to do this, through Efficiency Nova Scotia or through Economic and Rural Development or whatever the case may be. That is who should be doing this. The people who can provide forgivable loans, interest-free loans, forgivable interest on loans, all kinds of different ways this could be tackled - that would be a lot more efficient than the municipalities doing it.

To start with, the municipality's going to have to set up a bureaucratic structure to handle this, so immediately there are extra costs. Now who is going to pay for that? Is that going to be on your general tax rate? Probably some of the municipalities will do that, and if that's the case, in some way your taxes are going to go up to cover that. So if you go through this process, and you find that it costs more to do it this way, how are they going to buy these things? Are they going to go to selected suppliers and purchase these things and sell them back to the consumer? Is the consumer going to be able to pick out the ones they want and then finance it through the municipality? If that's the case, that's what banks are for. That's what credit unions are for. That's what the people like Efficiency Nova Scotia are for.

We have really got to put an effort into renewable energy. As you look and wonder what type of renewable energy this is going to be - is this going to be electric solar panels? Is it going to be hot water solar panels? Is it going to be heating solar panels? What is it going to be? It leaves it wide open.

I can tell you that I just recently renovated my home - well, not recently. Over the last several years I have been working and renovating my home. Seven years ago, when I first bought my home that I'm in now, if I'd put solar panels on it for heating I would have absolutely wasted my money, because there's no way possible they would even partially help to heat my home. Now that I've spent several thousand dollars insulating my home properly, getting solar panels in place makes sense, but it was awfully expensive getting from where I was to where I am today and making sure that home was energy efficient.

I still have more work to do to make it more energy efficient, but I believe that once I am done the insulating and the work that has to be done - and I've talked to many other people going through the same process I've been going through - solar panels will probably heat my home. I heat with wood now, and when I heat with wood at night I let the fire go out in the evening, probably 9:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. I don't have a fire on all evening. In the morning I get up at 6:00 a.m. and the temperature in the house has gone down one or two degrees. It doesn't matter how windy it is outside or how cold it is, that's all the temperature loss is in the house.

If you had a solar panel to heat it up through the day in the wintertime, it makes sense with that kind of temperature drop. It used to be I'd go to bed in the evening, let the fire go out the same way, and it would be up to 20 or 24 degrees, and I'd get up in the morning and it would be 12 degrees in the house. That's how important insulation is.

So you just set off a municipality to provide solar panels and the ability to do this, it's got to go hand in hand with energy conservation that makes it worthwhile. Efficiency Nova Scotia is the organization that has been set up by this government to make that happen, and they are actually working on making homes more efficient. I will say that they've done a very good job so far. I've had some constituents in my riding who have taken advantage of some of the programs, and in the coming years it will help them heat their homes and make them more efficient and more cost-effective. That's where we all need to go - less use of fossil fuel power, less use of electricity, whatever the case may be.

This stand-alone to do this does not make sense. The way it is written, it doesn't make sense. The municipalities shouldn't be in the business of providing this type of loan to individuals. They shouldn't. Now, it's really a dilemma because you want people to get more and more off the grid, as everyone says, less and less dependence on fossil fuel power. The municipalities recognize this and they realize if this is going to happen - the province hasn't done it, they haven't made this available, made it sensible for someone to get a loan to get this equipment properly - they've decided to step up and say, let's see if we can help individuals do it.

I don't blame them for coming forward and requesting this kind of legislation. As this moves forward, one of the arguments I've heard from individuals is if someone can't afford to get a loan to buy this equipment, the municipality can do it, they can put it on a local improvement charge. For anyone who doesn't know what a local improvement charge is, basically it's that people are given so long to pay for a service they provided from the municipality. An example of that would be a sewer improvement charge, a local improvement charge, where sewer or water has been installed in an area. That happened in my area for water and I have people now having very great difficulty paying for this.

To make it affordable for people doesn't make sense under this program. The way the municipalities do it, they generally set it up for five or 10 years for local improvement charge. The local improvement charge then is applied the same as property taxes. It comes on your property tax bill and it usually takes about a year after this is done and now with these it will probably be quicker than that. Then the first year, you pay principal only. So if you owe \$10,000, you would pay \$1,000 the first year.

The problem comes in the second year. When you get the second year's bill, instead of being \$1,000 in principal, it's \$1,000 in principal and \$1,000 in interest. So you have a \$2,000 bill on your property tax bill to cover the next year. And the interest goes down a little bit each year until the 10 years is done.

However, if you do not pay this local improvement charge for three years, it's the same as not paying your property taxes and under legislation that was passed in this House, the municipality has no choice but to sell that person's property and redeem the money for taxes and the local improvement charges - in other words, putting people out of their homes.

As you go through this whole process and see how it possibly could work, it doesn't make sense for the municipalities to do this. The municipalities are struggling now and it's just another thing they have to try to do. As they try to do this, it puts more and more strain on their finances, more and more strain on their staff and it's complex. Putting solar panels of any type on your property is pretty complex. You have to have people that know what they're doing to do this and put it in place so it will work. If you're going to use an electric one with storage batteries, there's a huge expense for the batteries. They do work well if they're set up right, but it's a huge expense.

You have to consider all this before you make a decision to do it. If it sounds easy and say okay, here's the package the municipality offers and it's \$10,000 or \$20,000, we'll finance it, put it on your property tax bill and away you go. It's not like at the bank where you make payments every month and your payments on this might be \$100, \$150 or \$500 a month and you know what it's going to be and you have to pay that and if you don't pay it they very quickly notify you that it has not been paid.

With the municipalities, local improvement charges can drag on for a long time. You'll get notices, but then all of a sudden you find out you have a big bill, you may have a bill for \$15,000 or \$20,000 you have to pay immediately or your house goes for taxes. I see that every day in my riding. I see it every day. This is going to make it more complex for people to understand and realize what the consequences are if they don't pay these taxes - when I say taxes, the property tax and local improvement charges.

In the meantime if the municipality comes along and says, we're also going to put in curbs or sidewalks or whatever the case may be, and another local improvement charge after you already have solar panels in place, then your local improvement charge could double, triple or quadruple. It's a huge thing; this thing can sneak up on people and I've seen it happen over and over again. I talked to some people the other day and their son got a \$20,000 local improvement charge they have to pay right now. It's due now. If they don't pay it their property is going for sale.

Think about that. Think about the options. If you go to the bank or if you go to another lending organization - whatever it may be - or a leasing company, typically if you finance it properly and you can't pay for it, they will come and remove it and you'll have a bad debt and you'll have bad credit, of course, but you won't lose your house. You shouldn't lose your house. But with this setup you can lose your house. So when people think this is a great idea, it's good in theory, but if you look at the thing and you look at it in detail, it's not a really wise idea.



You know, we've seen the municipalities get involved in more and more things and when you look and you talk to the municipalities and they talk about the MOU being cancelled - the minister told me the other day in Question Period there are no property tax increases. Well, that's odd. I got a letter from Queens that said they're going up 3.6 cents on the tax rate per \$100 - strange. The municipality here, HRM has said the taxes went down. They went down on the residential properties. Business properties went way up to cover for this MOU. That's a tax increase. So the minister wants to check his notes. I've got letters from several other municipalities, the same sort of thing - 2.5 cents is the rate increase, and more increases residentially to cover for this. It's the towns, the municipalities, and it goes on and on.

So if they get this geared up, it means that they're going to have to hire more staff to look after this. They're going to have to hire the expertise that knows what goes on with these things to make sure they do. And how are they going to do the purchasing? Are they going to do the purchasing in a way that is fair and open, that someone can actually go and negotiate the best possible deal they can with a supplier, or a series of different suppliers, and get the product that they really want, or is the municipality going to say there are the people we've put the standing offer with and you only can buy from them? That doesn't make sense. That may not suit your building and what you have to deal with.

How is that going to tie into what I've already talked about? If it's a heating system you're putting in, the municipality doesn't care if your place is not insulated properly. They don't care. They're going to let you buy this thing. It will be absolutely useless, absolutely useless. It would be better to spend that same amount of money and insulate your home first before you install a solar heating system, to make sure it will work when you get there.

So what kind of an assessment system are they going to have? None. None according to this bill, but Efficiency Nova Scotia has all that in place. They have it in place. They're the organization that should be doing this. They have the funding to do it. They have the expertise to do it. They have the people. They have everything in place to do it. They have the assessment process they put in place when they start. They have the assessment put in place when they're done and over time they could evaluate the different systems to ensure that the systems are being sold and actually, number one, they work; number two, they're the most efficient you can buy; and number three, the most cost-efficient ones you can possibly get.

This subject is very complex. Most people don't understand it and they don't really have the time to find out all about it. They say, well, okay, I'm going to go buy this item and it will work well. The experience I've had, recently, is several of my friends went out and bought pellet stoves. They went to the local hardware store and they bought one. It sounds great. They did work pretty well, pretty well. Within a year, problems started with these. They would jam up. The motors quit on them and they spent \$1,500 to \$2,000 on these pellet stoves. They work well when they work but when they don't work, you've got a major problem. Then I find out, when I talked to the people who've successfully put them

in place, there are some very high-quality ones you can get that cost \$4,000 to \$5,000. They've run them for eight to 10 years with absolutely no repairs, no problems at all, they run every day.

So when you look at the capital costs, it's prohibitive for a lot of people, but in the long run it's cheaper than buying a \$1,500 one that doesn't work after a year and you're going to replace it with another \$1,500 one that doesn't work after another year. So you really have to look at the cost saving and the ability of something to perform over time.

It's the same with the solar panels. There are all kinds of different ones on the market. What are the best ones? I have no idea, I have no idea. I've never done the research on it. I wouldn't mind having one for my home now that I've got it insulated properly and when I finish insulating it properly, it will work, but until then it won't work. It simply will not work because as fast as the heat is generated by this solar panel, it dissipates out of the building if it's not insulated. So why give the municipalities the opportunity to do this, tie up people's capital, if the building isn't built to suit the solar panel? And the people who sell the solar panels want them to work, of course, but if someone comes in their door and says, I want to put one in my house, they'll go and install them. They will. They want to sell it. They want to make money.

How is the municipality going to know? That's why it's important that someone like Efficiency Nova Scotia does this and says, okay, if you're going to install a solar panel, you've got to make sure for heating that your home is efficient enough to install this unit in that you're going to get a return on it. That's what has to happen - if you don't get a return on it, don't buy it.

When you look at the cost analysis for these things, even a municipality put in these hot water heating and solar heating systems, and from what I can understand from a lot of the people and the costs of them, I believe they are around \$4,000. Their payback on these things is like 25 years. At the end of 25 years you've got to replace the pumps; you may have to replace the solar panel itself, hot water tank, plumbing, all kinds of things, so then you've got more expense. Is it really cost-effective to do it?

If you ask anyone who has run a business, you've got to make sure that it's cost-effective, short term and long term. You have to make sure you're going to get your money back in your investment. If the municipality comes along and makes it easier for people, people who don't understand this say, well, I'm going to get a solar panel to heat my house. My house is going to be heated and it is going to work great and you don't have to worry anymore. You pay this one time to us and get free energy from then on.

Then they find out that, no, they don't quite do that, and maybe they have an oil furnace in their house and the oil bill goes from \$2,000 a year to \$1,800 a year, because you've got a solar panel, because you are not insulated well, and then you've got this bill

that you've got to pay \$1,000 or \$2,000 year for the solar system you've got - you're going backward quickly, and people have to understand this.

The municipal government really doesn't have the expertise to put this in place without hiring a substantial number of staff who are trained to understand this equipment and what they need to do to make it efficient and work efficiently. So I think this bill, even though it was asked for by the municipalities, is not the answer to solar heating panels - or solar panels of any kind, electric or otherwise, or the heating ones in homes. It has to be a combination of things that happens. If you are not prepared to provide this combination of things, they won't work.

It's an investment. It's the same as buying a car that is electric, and if it doesn't work well, if you've got nowhere to plug it in and make it work, it is no good. It's very efficient when it runs, but if you can't recharge it, it's no good.

It's the same sort of thing with a system like this. These systems are expensive and the financing through the municipality is expensive, and again, it goes on your tax bill. People have to understand that it goes on their tax bill.

What makes up that cost of that? Well, it's the installation of the unit, the purchase of the unit, the financing costs for the municipality. You can guarantee you can get a cheaper financing rate at a bank, if you've got good credit, or a credit union or anywhere besides the municipality. Then you've got a bureaucracy that's got to run this in the municipality, which costs a lot of money in the province, and we've already got too many people working for government and not enough people working in business. So it just builds this bureaucracy bigger and bigger, more and more expensive. That has to fuel itself, and they want to put more and more of these out here.

At the end of the day, I don't think this is a good investment or a business that the municipality should be in. Now the province, as I say - we're going to work with the municipalities and Efficiency Nova Scotia, and the only way the municipality can have one of these installed is if Efficiency Nova Scotia goes in or Clean Nova Scotia does an energy audit on the home and says, okay, we're going to work it. Use this for heating. This will work. This will save you so many dollars a year, and your payback is so many years; after taking all the costs into consideration, it will work. If that was the case, it would make sense, but I don't see this in this bill. It just gives the opportunity for municipalities to provide this and it just doesn't make any sense without doing the whole picture on this, to see how it's going to affect everybody who has it.

If you don't do that, if you don't do the whole picture of this and look at the whole cost, then the payback on it doesn't make any sense. I don't know how we can say that any more simply than that, but that's the fact, and it goes back to everything. (Interruption) I think I should probably repeat that again, to make it very clear.

It's the same as buying a wood stove, you put a wood stove in your home; a wood stove will heat a house if it's poorly insulated or whatever it is. If you get the right size wood stove, if it's efficient enough and it's installed properly, it will do its job. However, if you don't have a supply of wood yourself, by the time you pay for the woodstove, the chimney, all the insulation, all the other things you need to do, it may be more expensive to put that wood stove in and buy firewood than it is to heat your house in a traditional way and insulate your home better for the same amount of money.

It's all these cost factors you have to look at and Efficiency Nova Scotia is doing exactly that. They are going in and they say it makes sense if you insulate and if you over-insulate - which you can't do, if it's done properly, if it's done properly you can't over-insulate - you've got to make sure you've got ventilation - it will ensure that the people are getting a return on the investment, that's what this is all about. It's no good making everything very efficient if you don't have a return on your investment.

As we look at this on the surface, it does make sense. We've got to move away from dependence on fossil fuel power and all the cost we've had. Our government has a commitment that I don't think they will make, at the present rate they're going, to a renewable energy goal. At the rate they're going, it's not going to happen. It is just simply not going to happen. We've got to make it easier for people to do things and until we get the renewable energy suppliers off the grid, so they can sell to the end customers, it doesn't make sense.

We go through this whole energy debate - this bill is actually an energy debate. It doesn't sound that way when you say, under the bill, allow an amendment to the municipality to sell solar panels, that's what it's coming down to. They're not in the business of making them; they're in the business of providing service to customers. The municipality should be looking after the streets that they own and maintain, their sidewalks, their curbs, the sewer, the water, all those sorts of things. Municipalities are drifting away from that cost and you see huge tax bills, particularly here in the Halifax Regional Municipality. You get an average home here and a modest home here, and you're paying up to \$3,000 or \$4,000 a year in property taxes, \$3,000 or \$4,000 a year. People on fixed income are paying taxes like that. You know, anyone who doesn't live here in the regional municipality doesn't understand this. You're paying, lots of times, for services you don't receive.

I live in a rural area. I pay as much tax on my property, for a house the same size in downtown Halifax, same tax. My streets are plowed by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. I have a composite fire department with regular and volunteer firemen, only in the rural areas do we have that, so only half of our firemen are paid. I have no sidewalks, no curbs, no hope of water and sewer. I have street lights but only on every second pole - we don't get them on every pole like you do in the city and only in some areas are you allowed to have them, so we don't have many street lights.

We've got garbage collection, though, but not the same service as the city. We've got the green bins, green bins are always smelly and a problem - right? They're always a problem and every two weeks, in the rural areas, your green bin is cleaned out, and every two weeks your blue bags get picked up, in the rural areas. But if you live in the city, it's every week - two levels of service. (Interruption) Exactly, makes us second-class citizens. But yet the municipality justifies it and say it's too expensive to pick up every week. We don't want it picked up every week - let the rest of the city pick it up every two weeks like we have to do.

There are ways to look after this material. There is no problem with the blue bag because it is totally clean. If you're careful with green bin, in the summertime you can put some of this stuff and seal it up and put it in your freezer and put it in the day before it's collected and it's not a problem. It's not a problem. There's really not a lot of stuff that goes in the green bin if you do things efficiently.

As you go through this whole process and you see what the municipalities are doing now, I'm going to have to pay for someone getting solar panels on a home that's not properly insulated, that won't work, probably - they'll work but they won't do the job they are designed to do because the house wasn't investigated to make sure it was done properly. They're just going to provide money to put solar panels in place. In the meantime, my taxes are going to go up because they're building a new bureaucracy to run all this, so that doesn't make any sense.

As you go through this whole process, it doesn't make any sense for the municipalities to do this, and we should never, ever have passed the bill to start with for the regional municipality here in Halifax to do it, because the bureaucracy there is getting so big and so expensive that we just can't afford it anymore. It's really, really getting difficult.

As you go through this very mundane, simple request from the municipalities saying we want to be able to finance - "finance" is the word, I guess - solar panels, it's really not that simple. Let's do a worst-case scenario. Let's say we have a small municipality in rural Nova Scotia with a declining population, reduced revenue from property taxes because the value of the properties are going down - and I've talked to some of the mayors and the wardens who are saying exactly that scenario . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: High power rates.

MR. COLWELL: High power rates - and they get into this scenario, so all of a sudden they have a whole pile of houses that have solar panels on them. People can't pay the taxes anymore, they're on fixed incomes, or maybe an industry moves, whatever the case is going to be, now the municipality has a financial problem. This is real. This is real; this is happening today. They have a financial problem - who do they turn to? Do they come to the province? No, they can't get money from the province; they're not allowed to raise any money except for property taxes, so the people who are left to pay for this, their

taxes go up again, and it's less affordable to live in rural Nova Scotia. What do the people do then? They move to Halifax. Just the out-migration, we're seeing thousands of jobs lost already.

So this all comes together. People may laugh and say, no, that won't happen, it won't happen. But it's happening already, for other reasons. You add more of these things onto the burden that happens to the people in the rural areas. And it's going to be more difficult in HRM. At least HRM has a huge tax base at the present time and it's growing so they may be able to afford to do this, but some of the rural areas may not.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have left?

MR. SPEAKER: About 1 minute and 20 seconds.

MR. COLWELL: So as you go on with this debate on this bill, when you look at how simple it looks and makes good sense - I'm all in favour of getting more solar panels in place, more renewable energy in place, but it has to be done in an affordable way. It has to be done in a cost-effective way besides being affordable, because it's two different things - and it has to be in a way that we don't have more burden on government at any level to do this. This is what this is. That's why this government set up Efficiency Nova Scotia and they've brought this bill forward. Not putting the two things together - it doesn't make any sense.

If you do that, you'll see what happens when government gets involved in anything - number one, the cost goes through the roof immediately, probably the cost of the solar panels would go through the roof because they got it financed. It's a problem.

Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate and continue this at the next opportunity.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. The hours for tomorrow will be from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. I will now turn it over to the Progressive Conservative House Leader.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Progressive Conservative House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, after the daily routine and Question Period, we will be calling Bill No. 26, which is the Cyberbullying Intervention Act, and Bill No. 29, which is the Child Protection Intervention Act.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn.

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 8:00 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 248**

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

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

Whereas mixed martial artist Justin Bourgeois celebrated a triumphant return to the winner's circle in January 2012 in front of a Moncton audience at Casino New Brunswick; and

Whereas the former Elite 1 Mixed Martial Arts featherweight champion squared off against Mississauga's Remi Chabot, who, despite having a significant height and reach advantage over Bourgeois, lost to Bourgeois one minute and 58 seconds into the first round; and

Whereas Justin Bourgeois trains out of Springhill Mixed Martial Arts, where he is a trainer;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Justin Bourgeois on this outstanding win and wish him continued success in the future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 249**

By: Mr. Leo Glavine (Kings West)

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

Whereas the Black Rock Jolly Workers have been in existence for 80 years and have contributed greatly to their small community in so many ways; and

Whereas the Black Rock Jolly Workers have always kept busy with benefits, breakfast, suppers, and other fundraising activities, with all monies going back into the community; and

Whereas the Black Rock Jolly Workers will hold an Anniversary Tea on May 19<sup>th</sup> to commemorate 80 years in existence and will honour their founding members at that time;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the Black Rock Jolly Workers for being so successful over 80 years of fundraising projects.