



## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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**HALIFAX, TUESDAY, MAY 1, 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, which I will now read:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly urge the NDP to stop dismissing recommendations and impoverishing our province.

This was submitted by the honourable member for Argyle.



**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

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

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition signed by over 400 constituents of Cape Breton West. The operative clause is:

“On behalf of the parents and community involved with Riverside Elementary School, we hereby would like to submit this petition to show our concern and disapproval about the upcoming NSTU position cuts. We are losing [sic] one full time teaching position from our school for the upcoming and future years which is resulting in split grades.”

There are over 400 people who have signed that and we would request that the government put in more funding to the school board in Cape Breton-Victoria district.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act.

**RESOLUTION NO. 659**

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

Whereas sexual assault is a violent crime that disproportionately victimizes women, and is a form of violence against women; and

Whereas in 2010, 682 courageous victims of sexual violence reported the crime to the police in Nova Scotia, although statistically only one in 10 assaults are ever reported to authorities; and

Whereas addressing sexual assault and violence against women more generally requires collaborative partnerships between women and men, individuals and families, communities, governments, and law enforcement agencies;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House acknowledge the month of May as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the Province of Nova Scotia, and recognize the need for collaboration among government, community, organizations, and individual Nova Scotians to reduce violence against women.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 660**

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

Whereas the Premier has proclaimed May to be Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas at the start of 2012, there were almost 26,000 motorcycles registered in our province; and

Whereas it is important that Nova Scotians be aware of motorcycles on the streets and highways of our province, and understand the importance of motorcycle safety;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join together and encourage all road users to be extra cautious as motorcycles return to Nova Scotia's roadways.

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. 661**

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

Whereas Healthy Eating Nova Scotia (HENS) is part of a coordinated movement for good nutrition to reduce provincial rates of obesity and chronic disease such as diabetes, which is among the highest in Canada; and

Whereas Healthy Eating Nova Scotia was awarded the 2012 Diabetes Association's Outstanding Regional Partnership Award for working to improve health outcomes and nutritional health in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Healthy Eating Nova Scotia works with other health and wellness organizations such as the Diabetes Association to address the importance of healthy eating to prevent the rise of chronic disease in communities across Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House congratulate Healthy Eating Nova Scotia on the award and commend their dedication to improving nutritional health for all Nova Scotians.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs.

**RESOLUTION NO. 662**

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

Whereas the Harry Jerome Awards marked a milestone anniversary in Toronto, Ontario, on April 28, 2012, with this year's annual national event recognizing and honouring excellence in the African Canadian community; and

Whereas Sgt. Craig Smith grew up in the north end of Halifax and while serving as a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has written four books, the latest entitled *The Journey Continues: An Atlantic Canadian Black Experience*; and

Whereas this year Sgt. Craig Smith was awarded a Harry Jerome Award for his contributions and achievements as a writer and author;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Sgt. Craig Smith on receiving this prestigious award, and wish him well as he continues to serve with the RCMP and write about the history of people of African descent.

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 Gaelic Affairs.

**RESOLUTION NO. 663**

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

Whereas this year the province held a launch for Gaelic Awareness Month on Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, in the Red Room of the Legislative Assembly and May 1<sup>st</sup> marks the beginning of Gaelic Awareness Month, celebrated throughout the province every May since 1996; and

Whereas the mandate of the Office of Gaelic Affairs is to assist Nova Scotians in the acquisition and use of Gaelic, so that the culture, wisdom, heritage, and traditions of Gaels are valued, practised, and passed on to future generations; and

Whereas through communities, Gaelic's presence contributes culturally, educationally, socially, and economically to that which constitutes the broader Nova Scotian experience;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize May as Gaelic Awareness Month in the province, where respect and support are extended to the Gaelic language and Gaelic expression, a valuable, renewable, and sustainable asset that makes Nova Scotia such a wonderful place to live and work in and visit.

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.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 70 - Entitled an Act to Require Clinical Trials Respecting Multiple Sclerosis Liberation Therapy. (Mr. Alfie MacLeod)**

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

#### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 664**

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

Whereas May marks Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and

Whereas sexual assault is the most under-reported crime, with 88 per cent of sexual assaults not being reported to the police and only 1 per cent of date sexual assaults being reported; and

Whereas Nova Scotia has the highest rate of sexual assault and some of the lowest charge, conviction, and sentencing rates in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House mark Sexual Assault Awareness Month by committing to ending violence against women, and taking a stand to promote equality and the full enjoyment of human rights for women and girls.

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. 665**

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

Whereas the junior high girls basketball team in Eskasoni won very few games in their first season; and

Whereas after just three short years, they have demonstrated hard work and perseverance and earned a bronze medal in the playoffs; and

Whereas these young ladies from Eskasoni are learning life skills such as fitness, self-confidence, and the ability to work together for a common purpose with the guidance and the dedication of their coaches, Sandra Linklater and Margaret MacRae;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the coaches and players of the Eskasoni team for winning their bronze medal, and wish them further success as they move forward.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 666**

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

Whereas Joe Walsh recently retired after working as a financial advisor for 43 years with the TD Bank; and

Whereas Joe Walsh was a dedicated volunteer with Steubenville Atlantic, and was recently fundraising with the youth of Immaculate Conception Church to raise funds to attend World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro in 2013; and

Whereas Mr. Walsh was in Guatemala doing missionary work with the Immaculate Conception Church when he suddenly passed away;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature extend condolences to the family of Mr. Walsh, and acknowledge his many years of work and service to his community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**RESOLUTION NO. 667**

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

Whereas on April 18, 2012, Claudia Jahn, director of Community Action on Homelessness, was recognized and honoured by the Rotary Club of Halifax Northwest with the Paul Harris Fellowship; and

Whereas this recognition, named in honour of the Rotary movement founder Paul Harris, is the highest honour that the club can award; and

Whereas this fellowship is awarded to those who have shown outstanding service in their community within the principles of the Rotary International;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Claudia Jahn for her passion, leadership, and outstanding work on the homelessness initiative, and congratulate her on receiving this well-deserved award.

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. 668**

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

Attendu que le 25 février, l'Église Sainte-Famille, située à Buttes-Amirault, a tenu le dévoilement officiel d'une exposition très spécial contenant des vêtements et autres articles qui appartenaient à feu Monseigneur Austin Burke, ancien évêque de Yarmouth et archevêque d'Halifax; et



Attendu que l'exposition sera permanente dans l'église grâce à un don de la famille de feu Florence Landry à la paroisse permettant la fabrication d'une armoire en chêne avec vitrine par Nelson Surette un charpentier local; et

Attendu que les objets exposés incluent des soutanes, une cape, une mitre, une bague, une croix pectorale et un rituel, qui appartenait à feu Monseigneur Austin Burke;

Par conséquent, qu'il soit résolu que tous les membres de cette Assemblée félicitent l'Église Sainte-Famille et la congrégation sur l'acquisition des ces objets précieux et remercient ceux qui ont donné de leur temps et fonds monétaires pour honorer la mémoire de leurs proches.

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

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

Whereas on February 25<sup>th</sup>, Holy Family Church in Amirault's Hill was the setting for the official unveiling for a very special exhibit containing vestments and other items belonging to the late Most Rev. Austin Burke, Bishop of Yarmouth and Archbishop of Halifax; and

Whereas the exhibit will be on permanent display in the church and is encased in a beautiful oak cabinet constructed by local carpenter Nelson Surette and donated to the church by the family of the late Florence Landry; and

Whereas the display includes robes, headpieces, a ring, a cross and a handmade staff belonging to the late Most Rev. Austin Burke;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Holy Family Church and the congregation on acquiring these precious items and thank those who donated their time and funds to honour the memories of their loved ones.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

MS. BECKY KENT: Mr. Speaker, with your permission I'd like to do an introduction first.

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MS. BECKY KENT: It's my pleasure today to introduce some visitors in our Gallery, in the east side today, residents of Cow Bay, part of the beautiful riding of Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage, and I ask them stand as I introduce them. We have today Phil Kempton Sr. and his wife Paulette Kempton; their daughter Michelle Kempton; Michelle's husband and a man of his own right, Gordon Crooks; and a life-long friend, Sarah Austin. I ask the House to give a warm welcome to our visitors today.

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

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 669**

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

Whereas Michelle Kempton of Cow Bay is the co-founder of the Heart and Soul Running Club, the president of United By Running, founder and organizer of the only all women's run/walk event called Sole Sisters, and co-founder of the free, not-for-profit, all girls running club, Girls Gone Gazelle; and

Whereas Michelle's personal journey to the running world has inspired her to put her energy to motivating, encouraging and supporting women to take up walking and running as active, healthy lifestyle choices, which foster a celebration of health and friendships; and

Whereas Michelle was recently honoured at the Halifax Dress for Success Tea Party event as the Women of Spirit Recipient for 2012, recognizing ordinary women doing extraordinary things;

Therefore be it resolved that this Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulates Dress for Success Women of Spirit recipient Michelle Kempton, for her outstanding commitment and passion to motivate and support women learning to run and celebrate

health and friendships through active living, and wishes her great success in her journey to empower women.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 670**

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

Whereas May 1<sup>st</sup> is World Asthma Day; and

Whereas World Asthma Day is organized by the Global Initiative for Asthma and this year's theme, You Can Control Your Asthma, focuses on the importance of both awareness and education in reducing the burden of asthma; and

Whereas according to 2010's Statistics Canada, over 75 thousand Nova Scotians have asthma making this a health condition for which management and education requires some attention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly acknowledge today, May 1<sup>st</sup>, as World Asthma Day, and commend the Lung Association of Nova Scotia for using World Asthma Day as a day to educate Nova Scotians with asthma about the proper use of puffers, inhalers and other devices in the management of their disease.

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. 671**

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

Whereas the Spartrons robotics team from Dr. T.L. Sullivan Junior High School will travel to Acadia University in Wolfville to compete in the FIRST Lego League championship competition; and

Whereas this year's competition theme is food factor, keeping food safe and included the science surrounding local food supply and how bacteria affects food and developing possible natural solutions as well as a robotic solution; and

Whereas this competition gets youth ages 9 to 14 involved in playful and meaningful learning while helping them discover the fun of science and technology while developing leadership and problem solving skills;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly join me in wishing the Spartrons robotics team success in the competition.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Premier.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 672**

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

Whereas last year, Joseph Giles Elementary School on Gregory Drive in Dartmouth started a bi-monthly recycling program where every other month the classes compete with one another to see which can bring in the most recyclables; and

Whereas the winning class is awarded with a pizza party and they get to keep the money collected from the recyclables to help build its classroom library; and

Whereas since the program began, the classes have raised an average of \$400 every two months for a total of about \$2,500;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House commend the students and staff at Joseph Giles Elementary School for taking an active interest in recycling and the environment and wish them all the best in their fun recycling efforts 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 member for Colchester North.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 673**

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia Agricultural College has gained international fame for the excellent academic standards it maintains; and

Whereas students must be enrolled in four or more courses per semester, must be in the top 10 per cent of their program of study, and must have an average of 80 per cent or higher to be included on the president's list; and

Whereas Nova Scotians can be proud of the academic excellence of these students and should look to them as skilled, creative, well-prepared future leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Carling Gratto of Debert, Colchester North, a second year engineering student, for being named to the Nova Scotia Agricultural College's president's list.

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. 674**

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

Whereas the Minister of Community Services allowed a report containing unfounded allegations about the executive director of Talbot House to be published on her department's Web site; and

Whereas one of the greatest offences a minister can commit is the revelation of private or personal details about a person; and

Whereas under Nova Scotia's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, disclosing personal information about a person is deemed to be an offence;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly confirm that the Minister of Community Services broke the law and demand that she resign.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Preston.

**RESOLUTION NO. 675**

HON. KEITH COLWELL: We've got a really ambitious bunch over here.

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

Whereas Shirley Muzzerall of Lake Echo spent the 1970s volunteering at the library at Lake Echo Elementary School and then moved to Bell Park Academic Centre where she helped to develop the library and continues to volunteer at least one day a week; and

Whereas Shirley has lived in Lake Echo since the early 1970s and she together with her husband Robert raised three children; and

Whereas Shirley also volunteers at St. Ann's Church as an organizer for the hospitality committee as well as helps out at the CAP site when it was getting started;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House recognize Shirley Muzzerall for her hard work and dedication for over 30 years to her community and to Nova Scotians.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Argyle.

**RESOLUTION NO. 676**

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

Whereas birthdays are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of an individual; and

Whereas on December 3, 2011, M. Bernard Bourque celebrated his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday; and

Whereas to reach 95 years of age and to continue to be active and share all memories gathered over your lifetime with your loved ones is a wonderful reason to celebrate;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bernard Bourque on reaching this milestone in his life and wish him many more happy birthdays and continued good health.

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. 677**

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

Whereas more than 11,000 Nova Scotians volunteer their time with the Canadian Cancer Society in the fight against cancer; and

Whereas in 2012 one volunteer will be awarded the Medal of Courage for showing exceptional bravery in the face of their own battle with cancer; and

Whereas Florence Stackhouse, a three-time breast cancer survivor and volunteer through the Reach to Recovery and CancerConnection programs, offers support and encouragement to cancer patients from the perspective of a survivor;



Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Florence Stackhouse for her very important work with the Canadian Cancer Society and her achievement in being honoured with the Medal of Courage.

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. 678**

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

Whereas the Johnny Miles Festival honours the late Johnny Miles, winner of the Boston Marathon in 1926 and 1929, who won his first marathon wearing a pair of 95-cent sneakers and a homemade jersey featuring a red maple leaf; and

Whereas this is the 10<sup>th</sup> year and the summer festival has grown from five days to seven days; and

Whereas in the month of March local bands are featured at the Ice Jam fundraiser, hosted by the Johnny Miles Community Festival Society along with the Sydney Mines Legion, and all profits go to support the summer festival;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate coordinator Kim Rideout and volunteers like Eugene Ramsay for the many hours of hard work with Ice Jam for the Johnny Miles Festival.

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. 679**

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 Cape Breton Sport Hall of Fame has been honouring teams and individuals who have made a contribution to our rich sports heritage since its inception in 1997; and

Whereas Roddie “Yogi” Boutilier, a native of Port Caledonia, will join the 2012 class of inductees into the hall for his performance as a baseball player with several great ball teams, including the Number 11 Junior Antonians, the Glace Bay Senior Miners, the Sydney Steel Kings, and the Sydney Mines Ramblers, and as a fastball player with the Caledonia Aces; and

Whereas Roddie exemplified leadership and athleticism, as well as being an ultimate team player who played the game with class while earning the praise and admiration of teammates, opponents, and fans alike;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating the great Roddie “Yogi” Boutilier for his upcoming induction into the Cape Breton Sport Hall of Fame and wish him well 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 member for Digby-Annapolis.

**RESOLUTION NO. 680**

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

Whereas last month three Digby high school students boarded a plane and flew halfway around the world to dig a hole in a field; and

Whereas Karlee Perry, Zane Lynch, and Sophie Amirault went to Kenya to help dig out a foundation for a new school; and

Whereas this opportunity has opened the eyes of these students and has inspired them to take on more of these challenges in the future;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House commend Karlee Perry, Zane Lynch, and Sophie Amirault for finding it in their hearts to give back to those less fortunate.

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.

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to do an introduction, if I might, before I read a resolution?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MS. WHALEN: Thank you very much. I'd like to draw the members' attention to the west gallery, where all of us are joined by two guests from the Clayton Park area. One is Lauren Munro-Cape, who is an active member of the Halifax Clayton Park Liberal Association and also an active volunteer in the community. Second, with Lauren today is Matt Andrews, who began working yesterday in my constituency office for the summer. He has been very interested in politics for a long time, so I know he will learn a lot, I am sure, here today and over the summer. Please give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

**RESOLUTION NO. 681**

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

Whereas Matthew Arab, also known by his performance name, Quake, has been writing and performing original rap music since his years at Fairview Junior High and at Halifax West High School; and

Whereas Quake was voted winner of The Coast magazine's Best Local Album in 2011 for his first album release, and is making a name for himself on the Halifax music scene and throughout the Maritimes; and

Whereas Matthew was joined by an enthusiastic gathering of family and friends on April 5, 2012, at Winston's Pub in Clayton Park for the official launch of his second album of original hip hop music, entitled *The Book of Matthew*;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize Matthew Arab (Quake) on the release of his second album and wish him every success in the future as he pursues his career in music.

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. 682**

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 month of May is Caregiver Awareness and Recognition Month in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas caregivers provide an invaluable service by providing loving care for their family members and friends who have chronic, physical, mental or cognitive disabilities, thereby saving government a significant amount of money; and

Whereas to celebrate families and friends giving care, Caregivers Nova Scotia has organized Caregiver Appreciation Teas to be held throughout the month of May in Port Hawkesbury, Halifax, Yarmouth, North Sydney, and Lunenburg County;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature extend our appreciation to Caregivers Nova Scotia for all of their efforts in supporting caregivers throughout our province and acknowledge the extraordinary caregivers across Nova Scotia who make such a difference in the lives 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 Dartmouth East.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 683**

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

Whereas Nova Scotia has the highest incidence of arthritis in Canada; and

Whereas the Arthritis Society will be hosting its third annual Walk to Fight Arthritis on June 10, 2012, in Halifax; and

Whereas Nikolas Harris of Dartmouth, who was diagnosed with juvenile arthritis at the age of 22 months, recently placed first in the Arthritis Society's nationwide "Know JA" video contest with his video titled *My Life With Juvenile Arthritis*;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Nikolas Harris for placing first in the video contest and being named Arthritis Hero for the Walk to Fight Arthritis in Halifax.

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. 684**

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

Whereas Charles P. Allen High School in Bedford presented the classic musical *Little Shop of Horrors* April 26-28, 2012, at Alderney Landing Theatre; and

Whereas this stellar production showcased the considerable talents of Rachel Moore as Audrey, Matt Zwicker as Seymour, Liam MacDonald as Mr. Mushnik, and Joseph Murphy as the voice of Audrey II; and

Whereas Jacob Wilson was properly demented as Orin, and Jacqueline Miller, Chelsea Yeo, and Adelle Dixon were delightfully saucy as Crystal, Ronnette, and Chiffon;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate director Brennan MacDonald, music director Nathan Beeler, producer April Cross, and the entire cast and crew on a thoroughly enjoyable production, and wish them well in all their 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. 685**

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

Whereas Wayne (Woody) Woodworth of Onslow, Colchester North, has worked at the Colchester Legion Stadium for nearly 45 years and has been manager since the 1970s; and

Whereas Woody is known for his excellent rapport with stadium users, his hard work and his sense of humor; and

Whereas Woody quietly retired on April 20, 2012;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Woody for his 45 years of service at the Colchester Legion Stadium, and wish him a healthy and happy retirement.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Preston.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 686**

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

Whereas Terry Thomas, a resident of East Preston, Nova Scotia, is currently attending St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish in the second year of a Bachelor of Arts program; and

Whereas he made the team's AUS All-Star Rookie for the years 2010-11, averaging 25 points each game; and

Whereas he was named in the Canadian Interuniversity Sport as the most outstanding player in CIS Men's Basketball Second Team, wearing jersey number 13 and playing the following positions - guard, centre, and forward;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House recognize and acknowledge Terry Thomas, Jr.'s contributions to this game of basketball and wish him all the best as he continues to pursue his education.

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. 687**

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

Whereas Henry Boutilier Jr. has been instrumental in developing the Glace Bay Little League program for more than 30 years and has established a reputation for winning on the local, provincial, and national level; and

Whereas Henry has been building a program of excellence for Little League baseball in Glace Bay, coaching the Glace Bay Colonels to five Canadian National Little League Championships and five Little League World Series appearances in 1987, 1988, 1991 - which featured the current MLA for Glace Bay - 1994 and 2003, in addition to coaching the Cape Breton Dodgers to the Cape Breton Big League Championships in 2009-10 - you can check the record, Mr. Speaker; and



Whereas the selfless efforts of volunteering his time building ball players and creating championship teams in our community has resulted in Henry's much-deserved induction into the builder category of the Cape Breton Sport Hall of Fame later this month;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House join me in congratulating Coach Henry Boutilier, Jr. and his family for his induction into the Cape Breton Sport Hall of Fame, and we thank him for his efforts in putting our small community on the Canadian baseball map.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 688**

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

Whereas moving the Department of Fisheries out into the coastal communities of Nova Scotia is a good move because putting the department where the fisheries is makes good sense; and

Whereas the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture is not responsible for the fisheries in our coastal community waters, it may not make any difference whether it's in Halifax or in coastal areas other than it may make it easier to get a licence to fish in a rural coastal lake; and

Whereas coastal communities don't really need easier access to lakes, they really need more access to a bigger share of our coastal waters quota of groundfish, where the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans has full control;

Therefore be it resolved that if this provincial government wants to help our rural coastal communities in creating jobs then they should demand that DFO in Ottawa give the inshore fleet of this province a greater share of the total allowable catch of groundfish, and

in doing so, I believe this government's job creation for rural Nova Scotia will turn into hundreds fold.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 689**

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

Whereas Gary Walker, principal of Halifax West High School since 2003, has provided outstanding leadership to this diverse dynamic school through his tremendous ability to connect with students and his commitment to support all facets of school life and foster a great sense of school spirit and pride; and

Whereas The Learning Partnership, a national organization dedicated to advocating for a strong public education system in Canada, has recognized Gary Walker with one of this year's Outstanding Principal Awards, which recognize the unique and crucial contributions of principals; and

Whereas at a gala event in Toronto in February 2012, Gary Walker joined other principals from across Canada to receive his award, which also included being welcomed into the National Academy of Canada's Outstanding Principals;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House congratulate Gary Walker, principal of Halifax West High School, on being named one of Canada's Outstanding Principals 2012 and thank him for his years of leadership and commitment to public education in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

MR. SPEAKER: The time is now 12:51 p.m., we will finish at 1:51 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

### **PREM. - RENEWABLE ENERGY: RETAIL SALES - ALLOW**

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, renewable energy producers are still waiting for the green light from this government to allow them to be able to sell directly to customers. This was first promised under the former Progressive Conservative Government, in 2003, following the Electricity Marketplace Governance Committee recommendation. That is nine years and seven ministers later.

My question to the Premier is, why does government refuse to allow renewable to retail in Nova Scotia?

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, we have outlined for all Nova Scotians the electricity plan for the province. It sets out the potential for some \$1.5 billion of investment in our province through renewable projects. There are many different streams for that. It provides the best opportunity for the development of renewables into the grid.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, it allows the monopoly with the only access in this province and does not allow Nova Scotians to have a choice when it comes to purchasing their power. The Electricity Marketplace Governance Committee made Recommendation 51. It was accepted, applauded throughout the energy sector, except by Nova Scotia Power.

This government, like the previous Progressive Conservative Government before them, has stalled implementation of this recommendation for a decade. Businesses want renewable energy, residents want renewable energy, Nova Scotians want renewable energy but this government simply won't supply it.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is, why is the Premier refusing Nova Scotians the opportunity to buy green, renewable energy from other sources besides Nova Scotia Power?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, there has been no broader application of renewable energy guidelines than those put in place by this government. We have brought on more renewable energy than any government before us.

Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago on a Saturday night, 30 per cent of all the electricity in Nova Scotia came from wind power.

MR. MCNEIL: And it came through Nova Scotia Power, Mr. Speaker, and Nova Scotians are paying through the nose to receive that energy from Nova Scotia Power.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier doesn't get it, it's quite simple, all we are asking is to allow it to open up the market, to allow renewable energy producers to sell directly to customers. It's called breaking the monopoly and giving consumers choice.

My final question to the Premier, will the Premier move the Liberal bill - which has been tabled six times in this House - which will allow renewable to retail in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we have seen attempts at deregulation take place across this province. This is what the Liberal Party wants to see, they want to see what happened in Ontario where bills went up by 30 per cent. They want to see what happened in Alberta. So for the information of the Leader of the Official Opposition, I want to read to him what his colleague said in Hansard back in November 2002. This is now Premier Dalton McGuinty said, ". . . now that there is a broad consensus right across the country that this has been one of the most glaring examples of gross mismanagement and incompetence, why not admit it? Deregulation is dead; the market is dead; your experiment has been an abject failure." That is what the Liberal Party wants for Nova Scotians.

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

#### **PREM.: CAPITAL HEALTH LOC. 42 AGREEMENT - COSTS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, last Friday Capital Health Local 42 ratified their agreement with the government so there is now an agreement. The Premier has either calculated the full cost of that agreement to the government or he has not and if he has not, then we have a bigger problem than him refusing to share the cost of that agreement with all Nova Scotians. So I'll ask the Premier today, now that there is an agreement in place, now that the vote is over, now that the agreement has been ratified by the local, will he now commit to sharing with Nova Scotians the full cost of that agreement, including all benefits, pensions and other concessions that may have been made to reach this point?

THE PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party would know, it is still in the hands of an arbitrator and that decision will actually affect the cost to the province, but I can tell him in general terms, I didn't do that last week because the matter was still up for ratification and if there was no ratification, then

everything would have been out the window and we would be essentially starting again, but the cost in that local will range anywhere between \$3.3 million and \$4.9 million depending on the decision that the arbitrator makes on the positioning of those percentages.

MR. BAILLIE: Well, Mr. Speaker, we're making some progress and I want to thank the Premier for sharing those numbers, finally, with all Nova Scotians. Of course, he's speaking only about that one particular local but, as he would know from his own experience, that will be multiplied across many other bargaining units because that is the lead bargaining unit that sets the pattern for these kind of arrangements, but in the case of this particular local in Capital Health, the negotiation was led by David Collins. It was assisted by a provincial conciliator, John Greer. The negotiations continued right up until the end and over 500 surgeries were cancelled and many other procedures were either scrapped or postponed.

All eyes were on the negotiating team right up until the last minute as the pressure was on to reach an agreement to avoid a strike but what we don't know, Mr. Speaker, is what involvement the Premier or his office may have had in other discussions with Local 42 that got us to this point. So I would like to ask the Premier to share with this House and all Nova Scotians what discussions may have gone on outside of the official negotiations between his office and Local 42?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, negotiations take place on the basis of confidentiality, as was pointed out over the course of the negotiations, with a blackout. Frequently things like the negotiating mandate, those kinds of things come back to the government for commentary and support, if necessary. What I want Nova Scotians to know is that the management of the health negotiations were carried out in a very professional manner. They were done with purpose. They followed a predictable course and we have a result which is satisfactory to the government.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, all Nova Scotians know what happened at the official negotiating table. They followed it very closely. They followed the actions of Mr. Collins and the conciliator in this example. What they don't know is what other discussions behind the scenes might have been going on between the Premier's Office and Local 42 and, with respect, with answers like that, I guess we'll never know.

Mr. Speaker, Capital Health has budgeted for a 1 per cent increase as the pattern had previously been set under the direction of the government but we now know the settlement is going to be many multiples of that. The CEO of Capital Health has said that they expect the government to fund any increase beyond the 1 per cent as we know there now will be. So my question to the Premier, my final question, will the government be providing the extra funding, as a result of the extra concessions to Local 42, to Capital Health and if not, what programs does he expect them to cut to pay for the difference?

THE PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that the district health authorities have made their budget proposals on the basis of a 1 per cent cost to them of new contracts. They, of course, will expect that that will be supported, and it will be, but we will be in conversation with the district health authorities on this matter. This depends on the decision of the arbitrator, as you would know, we anticipate these matters in advance, we set aside money to fund contract negotiations and before those kinds of decisions can be fully made we would have to know what the extent of the cost would be.

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

**PREM.: POWER RATES - GOV'T. INACTION**

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, power rates have soared. People are struggling, businesses are closing and the NDP continue to pass the buck to the Utility and Review Board. Government's lack of action is forcing Nova Scotians to decide between keeping the heat on or feeding their families and government is clearly out of touch with reality of Nova Scotia families. My question to the Premier is, why is government content to hide behind the URB as Nova Scotians struggle to pay their power bills?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, far from it. This government has been as active, or more active, than governments over the last 20 years. We have put in place a comprehensive renewable energy strategy that is designed to create stability in energy pricing. We have taken the HST off of home energy, something that was voted against by the Liberal Party, if they had their way home energy costs would be even higher.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, he has been active all right, power bills have gone up more than 20 per cent under his leadership. Not to mention the NDP electricity tax. The government is not fond of discussing their NDP electricity tax, a tax, quite frankly, they opposed before coming into office. Government's demand side management fee is costing Nova Scotians \$40 million. That's \$40 million directly attached to the NDP electricity tax that's coming out of the pockets of Nova Scotians. This government is clearly directly responsible for those increases in the power bills. My question to the Premier is, why does he continue to sit idly by as Nova Scotians struggle to pay their power bills by adding the electricity tax?

THE PREMIER: First of all there is no NDP electricity tax, it was the NDP that took the tax off of electricity, he has got to get that right. Now, Mr. Speaker, what he is talking about, though, is the demand side management charge, and as a result of the demand side management charge there has been an investment in Nova Scotia that has saved tens of millions of dollars for consumers. It has resulted in a \$40 million investment in the economy that allowed companies to create jobs in the province, this has been very successful. I cannot believe the Liberal Party that used to be - at one time, long ago - champions of conservation, and now don't want it to happen.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I can understand why the Premier doesn't want to talk about the NDP electricity tax because it is a direct charge on every power bill in the Province of Nova Scotia that is directly responsible by the Premier of Nova Scotia. As a matter of fact, in 2009 a letter to the Utility and Review Board the NDP wrote it "... places the burden of DSM-related improvements too heavily on residential users and other rates classes." Later in the letter it went on, "... this surcharge on their power bills at this juncture would add unneeded and counter-productive costs to residential and business users." And I want to add, since then power rates have gone up by more than 20 per cent since that crew got into power. This is a tax on the poor, middle class in this province, so my question to the Premier, why does the Premier believe that Nova Scotians should pay the NDP electricity tax instead of Nova Scotia Power shareholders?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I just keep reminding the Leader of the Opposition that it's the NDP that took the tax off of electricity, it was something that they opposed. If they had their choice Nova Scotians would be paying even more for electricity than they are. The reason why electricity costs have gone up is because we have a utility that over the years has been shackled to the price of fossil fuels. As a result of that, as a result of bad decisions made by former governments, both Liberals and Tories, we are stuck with the utility that we have. But they are changing, they are changing with a better portfolio mix, with more renewables so that we can have stable power rates into the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

### **ENERGY: POWER RATE INCREASES - GOV'T. INACTION**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy. Of course we've just heard the Premier, as usual the government line - let's stand behind the URB and allow power rates to cripple this province and cripple Nova Scotians. Power rates are up almost 50 per cent in the last 10 years and over 20 per cent since these guys took power, yet this government still stands idly by while the power monopoly gouges Nova Scotians, despite the fact that in Opposition they opposed it.

In October 2006 the Premier spoke out against Nova Scotia Power and the URB taking these controls, saying, "The URB has to ensure Nova Scotians are being given accurate information (and) that they aren't being asked to pay for mistakes that have been made by Nova Scotia Power." He is fine for us paying for the mistakes of Nova Scotia Power today.

So, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Energy please tell us why his government is not taking action to prevent power rate increases when the NDP demanded such action repeatedly in Opposition?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Mr. Speaker, certainly we're all concerned about the rising costs of doing business, about the rising cost of electricity for consumers. This

government has taken considerable action to work to keep it down to as reasonable as possible. We've got the Keep the Heat program, we've reduced the provincial portion of the HST off electricity, we have the COMFIT program, we have the REA plan for renewables, we're working through the Good Neighbour Energy Fund. There are a whole lot of initiatives that this government has brought in and we'll continue it in chapter two, I'm sure.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the record of this government is record profits for Emera being taken out of the pocketbooks of Nova Scotians. The record of this government is a tax on every Nova Scotian for conservation, instead of having shareholders pay that. That is the record of this government on power and it is a poor record.

Mr. Speaker, in October 2008 the NDP were concerned about rate increases. They said, ". . . it will soon make a real difference in the standard of living for most hard-working families from one end of this province to the other." They then added, "The board" - this being the Utility and Review Board - "should ensure that every cent of higher profit should be used to help moderate rate increases." I'll table that.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister of Energy is, the NDP demanded that Nova Scotia Power's profits be used to lower power bills in 2008 - what has changed?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my first answer, we have taken a number of initiatives, including taking the HST off electricity, which this member's Party supported at the time. We've worked hard to get off fossil fuels, it's gone down from more than 80 per cent use under the previous government; today it's getting closer to 50 per cent. We're working hard on getting renewables. Through Efficiency Nova Scotia we're working on a number of good programs that will save Nova Scotians money.

There are a number of good initiatives, including savings to Nova Scotians under the demand-side management of somewhere around \$100 million is what Nova Scotians will save under the auspices of that program.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, it's pretty clear that the NDP doesn't even understand how energy in this province works. Earlier we heard the Premier claim that we were for deregulation when, in fact, opening the renewable energy market is not deregulation and already exists in other provinces that are regulated. The Premier doesn't even understand it, it's hilarious.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that in 2008 the man who is now the Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister, accused the URB of being cozy with Nova Scotia Power and the major players in the province's energy market. Let me table his quote, where he said, "The URB will look at this, they'll probably listen to the interveners, but I'm thinking they'll say, 'The major players have done their homework . . . let's kiss this deal goodbye and move onto the next issue.'"



Mr. Speaker, my question for the Energy Minister is, why are you hiding behind the regulatory body of the Utility and Review Board when the NDP once said, that review board was in bed with Nova Scotia Power?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, we all know that deregulation doesn't work, we've seen that happen in Alberta and Ontario and California in Maryland and elsewhere. (Interruptions) It's done nothing but drive up the price of electricity. But I mentioned earlier the great programs that are being implemented under Efficiency Nova Scotia and even one of your colleagues agrees with that. I want to read this quote from the honourable member for Preston. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'm having a hard time hearing the minister.

MR. PARKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm trying to figure out where the Liberal Party is coming from because we're getting good support from the honourable member for Preston at the Public Accounts Committee, he says "I want to thank you and your staff for the fantastic job you are doing working with Nova Scotians, to make life more affordable here while at the same time other factors are creating a great deal of financial grief for people. I want to commend you and your staff and the work you've done with my constituency office, too, to help local constituents."

So, where is the Liberal Party coming from?

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

**COM. SERV. - TALBOT HOUSE/BRAEMORE HOUSE:  
REVIEWS - COMPARABILITY**

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you will be to the Minister of Community Services. On April 26<sup>th</sup>, the Minister of Community Services told reporters that the review of Talbot House was no different than that of the Braemore Home. The minister said that: This report is no different than any other organizational review. You can go back to the Braemore review and you'll have specific questions asked there of specific staff members, identifying them in their roles.

The fact is, that's not true. The report on the Braemore Home does not contain one single statement identifying specific people. My question through you to the minister: Will the minister admit that there was no comparison between the two, and that she broke the law and it's time for her to resign?

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, no matter how many ways that member and the Party twists the facts, we did the right thing. We received advice and that advice was that we were able to take that review and put it on the Web site. That is no different than what has happened in the past. We review those very carefully.

Obviously, once again, they're not reading that review. It does not say anything on an individual, it talks about the executive director and the staff and the shareholders and the board. That's it. It's an organizational review.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, although he may not be named by name, there is only one executive director, and I don't think it's a far reach to figure out who the person is that minister and that Party and that government keep talking about time after time. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order, please.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, last February the minister informed Nova Scotians that the review of the Braemore Home would be made public. I will table that document. As a result, terms of reference were laid out on April 1, 2011, between the department and Deloitte. In those terms of reference, Deloitte agreed to "... receive, collect, use, hold, and disclose Personal Information (as defined in the FOIPOP Act and PIPEDACT), in compliance with all laws applicable to such Personal Information."

Mr. Speaker, I will table a copy of the references that I've just made. Deloitte followed this agreement; they did not disclose any identifiable traits that could be directly linked to one single staff or board member. The minister claims a FOIPOP prompted her to publicize Talbot House review, yet she did not ensure that the personal information was redacted.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, my question to her is, why was the minister so careless in her decision to release the report without redacting all identifying information? Will she finally admit she has broken the law and that it is time for her to resign?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I'll say it over and over again. It is not personal information, it's organizational information.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, there is no comparison between the review on the Braemore Home and the review at Talbot House. The minister has been comparing apples and oranges. Both reviews were brought on by an incident or an allegation. At the Braemore an investigation was conducted by the department, followed by a report that was kept confidential, and then Deloitte did their public review, which contained no personal information. At Talbot House a confidential review was conducted and then released to the public.

The terms of reference laid out for Deloitte clearly indicate they could not release any personal information and must follow the FOIPOP Act, and they did. The disclaimer of the Talbot House report states, "The report contains confidential and identifiable personal information." This release violates the FOIPOP Act.

My final question is, will the minister finally admit that her department had no business breaking the law to publish the report on Talbot House, and will she resign and do the right thing?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to remind the member opposite that when his Party was in government the member for Argyle, as Minister of Community Services, released a review on Cheticamp. That particular review was an internal review. That particular review references the executive director, and I will table this. It was done in January 2009, when he was Minister of Community Services.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay.

### **PSC: JOB RELOCATIONS - COSTS**

MR. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, the NDP Government has announced that they are moving 93 jobs across the province: 34 from Agriculture, 22 from Fisheries, and 12 from Aquaculture, along with 25 from Justice. Of course, there is support for the decentralization of these 93 jobs. As we all know, that's 93 jobs, but more importantly, it is 93 families. The communities that are impacted will appreciate the centralization of these jobs, no question, but many would wonder about the cost to the taxpayers.

My question to the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission is, will he give Nova Scotians the entire cost projection of the relocation plan?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, there will be some implications, but we will not know the real costs until we find out how many employees are going to move and how many will decide to stay here in the area and bump locally. When we have that number I'll be more than happy to give it to the member and all members of this House.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, moving civil servants across the province cannot come without a cost, so it's hard to imagine that these 93 jobs will be cost-neutral. There are obligations involved with posting families to new communities, and it's important that Nova Scotians have a full view of what the financial obligations will be. In addition to the costs of posting families, consolidating maintenance enforcement officers in a single location could result in increased travel obligations, as these officers are often required to appear in courts across the province.

My question to the Minister of Justice is, will the minister table in the House all financial information and projections regarding the transfer of personnel from his department to the community of New Waterford? (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, the essence of this move is to get better accountability within the MEP, improve the service. I listened to the members across the floor and their advice that they give us and the recommendations they make, and they very clearly said to this minister and to this government they wanted to see improvement and a better streamline of service. That's exactly what advice I took and moved forward.

On the issue of the overall costing, when we determine as to who is actually going to move and from what distances and what impacts, we'll be able to make those costings. Just for the record I'm not totally clear as to which members would appear in court for what reasons, but the member may have some information that I don't possess.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, included in the various costs around posting is the important question regarding the willingness of those personnel to actually accept the move and the provisions around that issue. For the government to indicate that these moves will be cost neutral is not entirely forthcoming. These additional costs could include staffing requirements if personnel decline to relocate instead of accepting positions elsewhere in government.

So my question to the Minister of the Public Service Commission is, will the minister explain what happens when a civil servant says they do not want to move, will this restructuring exercise result in new personnel being hired to cover the moves?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, this is a cost-neutral move. There will be costs in the front end when people are moving and so on but I'll tell you what's not cost neutral, when the Liberals closed the pits in Cape Breton and sent them out to Alberta and points further. That wasn't cost neutral; that darn near killed our island. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

#### **COM. SERV.: PRIVATE DAYCARE FUNDING - MIN. POSITION**

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, it seems things are quite testy in here today. So I (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Geoff is standing up hollering. So I mean let's just take a short little deep breath - relax, okay? (Interruptions) It's becoming a bit heated in here so I'd ask the members to take a deep breath so we can continue a good debate in the Chamber in a nice parliamentary way, all right? So can I now recognize the honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes in a nice parliamentary way?

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

MR. BAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, you most certainly can. Last week we asked the Minister of Community Services to clarify her position on funding for private daycares. When asked about her department's decision to review early learning in Nova Scotia, she told this House that, "We have not said that profit wouldn't be part of that; they're the ones who keep saying that." I'll table that.

Well, we have three news articles here where the minister clearly states that phasing out funding for private child-care facilities is on the table, and I'll table that as well. So, Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the Minister of Community Services is, can the minister give Nova Scotians a definitive answer about the future of private daycare facilities?

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I'll be clear, we never said that. All along we have said we are working together with both the profit and the non-profit. It's another fabricated story by the Tories.

MR. BAIN: Today is Worthy Wage Day in many daycares across the province. Child care facilities, both private and non-profit, have access to wage enhancement grants for their staff. If the minister cannot clarify for certain whether funding will be available for the private sector, then the future of wage equality for those working in private daycare facilities is threatened. So, Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the minister is, does the minister understand that phasing out the funding for private daycare centres would make them ineligible to receive enhancement grants? Is it her intention to make the owners and staff at 228 daycare centres uneasy?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I don't know how I can be any more clear than what I've been saying, that we are working with both of those sectors. I have said in this House before that both of them are very valuable to us and that we need to have them as part of our future, as we go forward and plan with respect to daycares and child development in this province.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, the minister has gone back and forth on her responses at least seven times. She has indicated that the government will be consulting both the private and the non-profit sector as they try to formulate a plan for early learning in the province. We've seen this government's approach to the consultation process. First contract arbitration was put in motion long before the LMRC was created. Needless to say, small-business owners in the province have little reason to put their faith in this government.

Mr. Speaker, my final question through you to the minister is, will the minister make the framework for their consultation process public, before proceeding with any plans? Will she stop scaring daycares and parents with erratic flip-flopping?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, they're the ones who are scaring the daycares. We've been on the same page all along. I've met with both organizations. We're talking about consultation. I know that Party over there does not even know the definition of consultation and we are not going back and forth. We are opening up the doors to all people of Nova Scotia in the future to talk to us about early childhood development and where the province and the people of Nova Scotia would like to see that go. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**ENERGY - NSP EXECS.: BONUSES - RATEPAYER PMT.**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy. Does the Minister of Energy believe that ratepayers in Nova Scotia should be responsible for paying the bonuses of Nova Scotia Power executives?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly we're all concerned about the cost of electricity and the demands on consumers and small businesses and industrials. There are many factors that go in to determine that cost and the rate of return. The cost to executives is only a small part of what is considered by the URB in determining what's fair and what's right and the best possible price for Nova Scotians.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, since there wasn't a "no" I'll take that as a "yes", he does think ratepayers should pay for it.

Mr. Speaker, the minister well knows - and if he doesn't know this, he should come to Public Accounts tomorrow where the URB will be happy to clarify this for him - that the URB determines what is in rates based on what is in provincial legislation which means, of course, that this minister has the ability to ensure that bonuses are never covered by ratepayers of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, given that the minister has the legislative power to determine what the review board can even consider when it comes to rates, will the minister introduce legislation to ensure that ratepayers never cover executive bonuses in the future?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, again through the process in the Department of Energy and this government, we worked hard to bring down prices or hold them stable. We've taken the provincial portion of the HST off electricity and we've had the Keep the Heat program. We're working on conservation programs through Efficiency Nova Scotia, we have built a strong portfolio of renewables in this province around wind and biomass and hydroelectricity, and we've introduced natural gas. Unlike previous governments that relied on only one thing - coal was all they looked at - we've got a great diversity in this government.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that also as a "no". You know this isn't complicated, the minister said they've been working hard to reduce rates. They've gone up more than 20 per cent since they took office. I would hate to see the rates in this province if they weren't working hard then.

Mr. Speaker, it's absolutely ridiculous. There are all kinds of steps, legislatively, that this government could have taken to ensure that rates had not gone up by 20 per cent, all kinds of steps. They could have ensured that the conservation programs and Efficiency Nova Scotia were paid by shareholders, just like they promised during the election, instead of downloading it to ratepayers.

I've asked the minister twice, Mr. Speaker, and I'll give him a third chance to answer this very simple question. Does the minister believe that ratepayers in Nova Scotia should have to pay for the executive bonuses of Nova Scotia Power executives?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, certainly standing still like previous governments have done is not an option for this government. We've taken in many good programs to help Nova Scotians stabilize energy prices. We're working with our partners in Newfoundland and Labrador to bring stable electricity prices from the Muskrat Falls project. We'll continue to work with Efficiency Nova Scotia, continue to keep the HST portion off electricity, and again, work for the best possible prices for Nova Scotians.

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

### **CNS: NDP PROPAGANDA PLAN - END**

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is for the Minister of Communications Nova Scotia. We all know that this government has a love affair with advertising. For months Nova Scotians have been treated to slick NDP television and radio ads at the taxpayers' expense. Nova Scotians aren't fooled by these ads. They know that they are worse off now than they were when this government was elected.

My question to the minister is, when will the Minister of Communications Nova Scotia stop trying to hoodwink Nova Scotians with their own money and put an end to the NDP propaganda plan?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, we're not trying to hoodwink anybody. I think the fact is that when you try to tell - and the Opposition Parties have said to us, they want us to tell Nova Scotians what programs are out there and so on. I guess if they're against telling people to get immunized and so on, then we're hoodwinking, but I think not.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I find myself at an odd place here. I'm kind of lost for words after hearing the likes of that. Almost all of these ads are political in nature and could just as easily come from the New Democratic Party rather than the Government of

Nova Scotia. Nova Scotians pay taxes to pay for services (Interruptions) Pardon me? There you go. It appears that the ministers that aren't asking questions have all kinds of answers, but the ones that do don't know how to give an answer.

Nova Scotians pay taxes to pay for services they need, not to pay for the NDP political advertising. My question to the minister is, will the minister produce the protocol his department uses to determine the line between political advertising and public service announcements?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, we don't have that protocol because we don't do political advertising. We do advertising to inform the people of Nova Scotia of services that are provided by this great government. That's what we do: we provide information to Nova Scotians so they'll know where to get services. But the quote from a famous movie is, they can't handle the truth.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I can't really agree with that statement. We've never heard the truth come from that government, so we wouldn't know what it was. Advertising on television, radio, and Internet - it's clear there is no limit to what this NDP Government will do and what their propaganda machine will do to get their message out - on the taxpayers' dime, I might add.

The question is, will the minister commit today to ensuring that the government will not use wireless technology to assault Nova Scotians with more blatantly political advertising?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, let's start with a quote then I'll delve in, a quote from the member for Argyle, "I don't think government as a whole does a good job of (promotion). Not enough Nova Scotians know what kind of programs are out there. . . I don't think we spend enough time explaining or advertising or getting those programs out there." I will table that, Mr. Speaker.

You want to talk about informing Nova Scotians, they go on about the amount of money we spend. It's 27 per cent less than when those culprits or those bad guys, those very, very bad people - and I take back the word, culprit, I take that back - those bad guys over there, that's what they spent, 27 per cent more.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay.

### **ENERGY - COSTS: SM. BUS. - PROTECTION**

MR. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, data released by Statistics Canada shows that Nova Scotia had yet another dismal year last year. The province's GDP grew by 0.3 per cent last year under this great government. We can't wait to hear how the Liberals and the Tories are responsible for last year's failures in economic development. I'm



looking forward to it. Not only were we the second worst performing province, we are far behind the national economy, which posted at 2.6 per cent growth.

Month after month businesses in the province indicate that the ever-rising cost of power is one of their largest concerns and our poor economic performance shows that result. My question is, what measures has the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism taken to protect businesses from the increasing cost of electricity in the Province of Nova Scotia?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I would refer that question to the Minister of Energy.

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Mr. Speaker, certainly we, as a department, have worked with Efficiency Nova Scotia and a number of good programs there that help small and large businesses. We're constantly working with businesses of various sizes in the province to find the best possible energy rates for our businesses in Nova Scotia.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, businesses are having to deal with rising power costs far too frequently. It's another cost pressure that is making our economy uncompetitive and the proof is no further than our dismal economic growth last year. Manufacturing output dropped by \$5.6 million, construction declined by 6.5 per cent. Small- and medium-sized businesses are being squeezed by an overall uncompetitive environment, however, business after business points to power as their very top concern. My question to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, or whatever minister wants to read the bullets, why has the minister ignored the detrimental effects that rising power rates have had on our businesses and on the economy of Nova Scotia?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, again, I would refer that question to the Minister of Energy.

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, we certainly know the pressures that are faced by small businesses in this province and the rising costs of volatile fuel prices is certainly one of them. Coal prices have been up 75 per cent in the last six years. This government has taken action to get away from that, to do something different than previous governments with a whole portfolio of renewables and conservation and natural gas and other initiatives. It is because of years of inaction by previous governments that we are in the situation that we're in right now.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, 0.3 per cent growth in GDP is the result of a lack of understanding by the minister on what businesses face in this province. While the national economy expanded by 2.6 per cent, our province was virtually flat at 0.3 per cent GDP growth. The minister must now realize the importance of setting targets and

outcomes because the only measurable outcome of his performance is flat growth and the second worst economy in our country.

My question to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism is, when will the minister have a real strategy for economic growth, one with real targets, measurable outcomes and a plan to address rising power rates in Nova Scotia?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I am more than pleased to rise in my place and address that question. It's unfortunate and I've made a couple of invites to the member opposite to come to my office. He could sit down with staff because what we wanted to do and what we're still willing to do, if he's willing to take us up, we want him to know what the jobsHere strategy is all about. He doesn't fully understand the context of the jobsHere strategy.

We inherited 20 years of non-productivity in the Province of Nova Scotia. Mr. Speaker, we are on the right course, we are going to stay the course. We have turned this province around and he's more than welcome to come over so that he can get a full understanding and an appreciation of the jobsHere strategy. We want to take him out of the dark and into the light.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

#### **ENERGY - EMERA/N.S. POWER: RETURN RATES - DETAILS**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: My question is for the Minister of Energy. The Premier and the minister, his government generally, have been very good at following the bullet points on the Lower Churchill project as a beacon of hope for energy costs in this province. In fact, some of the ministers have even said it would lower power rates and, as good a project as it is, we know that that's certainly not going to happen.

We know that the Lower Churchill project has benefits. We know that the member for Annapolis was one of the people leading the charge before it seemed the Premier had even heard of Lower Churchill. However, what's strange is the Premier and the Minister of Energy have been unable to answer basic questions about the project. Now Nalcor has recently been quoted as saying that they will get a guaranteed rate of return of 8.4 per cent from their ratepayers on the project. Mr. Speaker, an 8.4 per cent rate of return is something many people would love to have on their investments. Would the Minister of Energy please tell us whether he plans to allow Emera and Nova Scotia Power to have a similar guaranteed rate of return on their portion of the project paid on the backs of ratepayers?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Certainly this government is always looking at a portfolio approach to find different ways to bring electricity to consumers in this province at reasonable rates. As I mentioned in my previous answer, getting off of fossil fuels and getting off of coal. Certainly the Muskrat Falls project provides Nova Scotians with access

to reliable power for 35 years, it will help to stabilize prices here for that length of time. It's a real vision of how to get off of fossil fuels and do something completely different that will help Nova Scotians in the long run.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, it strikes me the minister just proved my point that all they can use is talking points and can't answer basic questions about the project. It's the same talking points they've been using for a year on this without answering very basic questions. That was about whether they would allow a rate of return.

Mr. Speaker, during Budget Estimates, and I'll table the transcript from estimates on this. I asked the minister repeatedly whether his department had actually done any cost analysis on the project in terms of the rate impact on Nova Scotians, even an approximate one, the minister said no, and I table that. My question is for the Premier, why hasn't the Premier or his government taken the time to figure out the ultimate impact to ratepayers from this project.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I would think the member opposite would know, the cost associated with the project goes through a number of decision gates where information comes in so that they have the cost of everything from the construction to the cost of the line, all of those things. Of course, it very much depends on the overall structure of the cost. In order to be able to determine the overall cost for ratepayers you have to be able to determine the overall cost structure to begin with. Since that hasn't happened yet it's very difficult to be able to provide him with the information that he requires.

However, I would indicate to him that at the appropriate time when that information is fully available, then of course we would be more than happy to give him that information. These projects, especially extraordinarily large projects, are going to have diverse economic benefits, not just for this province but for the entire region. They do take time and they move along a rather measured and predictable course.

MR. YOUNGER: Well, Mr. Speaker, here's the problem with the Premier's statement. In his news release of November 18, 2010 - which I will table, of course - the Premier repeatedly talks about how the Lower Churchill project will deliver power at a rate that is initially higher than coal but will then balance out. He makes all kinds of statements about how the cost will be good for Nova Scotians, and yet he doesn't know that. He doesn't know how it will compare to other elements, and these are important elements for Nova Scotians to understand.

It's one of the reasons why we've advocated for balancing this with energy from Hydro-Québec, and here's why Nova Scotians are concerned: in Newfoundland and Labrador, we've recently heard, the price might be as high as 23.5 cents a kilowatt hour. The only price that has been floated in Nova Scotia is over 17 cents, and maybe that's right or maybe that's wrong, but the fact is that Nova Scotians are relying on the Premier to provide information about this important project.

So, Mr. Speaker, would the Premier please tell Nova Scotians why his government did not analyze the potential cost to ratepayers before making the statements that he made in his own press release?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, what we do know is that the long-term benefits of the fixed price for 35 years for energy is something that we can only wish we had access to today. Can you imagine paying for energy prices at 1998 levels? That's what Lower Churchill is going to bring to ratepayers in Nova Scotia - stable energy prices for a percentage of the portfolio over the long term.

Now, in addition to that, because of the upgrades for transmission, it will also open up the regional energy market, which will allow the energy utility here to buy electricity on the open market and to get it at the lowest possible price and then underwrite the cost of the power to Nova Scotians. In fact, they can do it now - and they do.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

#### **ENERGY: KWH COSTS - AFFORDABILITY LEVEL**

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy and I'll get right to it. How much per kilowatt hour does the Minister of Energy think Nova Scotia families can afford to pay for their electricity bill?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Mr. Speaker, certainly the cost of electricity to ratepayers, to consumers, to small businesses, and to industry is a concern to all of us. This government is working very hard to find a mechanism that will, through a portfolio approach - whether it's taking the HST off of electricity or working with Efficiency Nova Scotia on programs that will reduce the cost to ratepayers and small businesses, whether it's switching from coal to natural gas, or looking at hydro electricity or biofuels. We have our COMFIT program, we have the REA initiative. There are just many varieties of issues that we're working very hard to get the lowest possible cost of electricity to Nova Scotians.

MR. PORTER: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia Power has submitted its capital expenditure plan to the URB and it has come under some serious scrutiny for consumer advocates and interveners. The Avon Group, representing industrial users of electricity, said, "When evaluating NSP's capital plan, there is nothing evident . . . which demonstrates NSPI's recognition of the economic burden on its ratepayers . . ." She went on to say, "The question of affordability is a critical one for Nova Scotians." I'll table that, as I referred to it.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the Minister of Energy is, how much longer is the minister going to refuse to study the affordability of his "bite the bullet" electricity plan and Nova Scotia families' ability to pay for it?

MR. PARKER: Certainly, affordability is what this government is all about, finding a suite of energy alternatives that will allow the lowest possible cost to a homeowner or to somebody who rents an apartment or a very small business in this province, maybe a large industrial company like a pulp mill or a sawmill.

We have a plan, we're working that plan. It's really through a whole portfolio of issues, whether it's taking the tax off, whether it's looking to get away from coal, getting on to natural gas or to renewables. This government has a plan and we're working it hard and we are working in the best interests of Nova Scotians. I think that in the end we'll have a plan that is most affordable for Nova Scotia consumers, for small business and for large industrial complexes in Nova Scotia.

We have a plan and we're going to stick to it.

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

Before I finish today on this very rambunctious Question Period, I always remind the honourable members in this Chamber that the use of BlackBerrys, laptops, and other electronic devices are not permitted during Question Period. Today during Question Period I observed at least six members of the Chamber playing with their BlackBerrys during Question Period.

Now, as of tomorrow, I will be asking the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove those BlackBerrys from the members in this Chamber. I suggest that as of tomorrow, if you don't want to be embarrassed, you will shut your BlackBerrys off.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park on an introduction.

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, last week I had the opportunity to speak at the political science class at Halifax West High School. I'm delighted that they've joined us today, just at the tail end of Question Period but still, they're with us today, in the west gallery. They are accompanied by their teacher, Christine Bullock. I would ask that you rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all our guests to the gallery, especially young people who are learning today's parliamentary procedures.

### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

**PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 34.

**Bill No. 34 - Matrimonial Statutes Repeal Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 34 now be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to talk about Bill No. 34, the Matrimonial Statutes Repeal Act. The Matrimonial Statutes Repeal Act will repeal the Alimony Act, the Married Women's Deeds Act, the Married Women's Property Act, and the Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act, Nos. 1, 2 and 3.

Mr. Speaker, these Statutes are clearly outdated and unnecessary. This legislation has been superseded by other legislation, or the common law has changed. For example, the Married Women's Property Act and the Married Women's Deeds Act allow a married woman to solely own property or enter into contracts, just like an unmarried woman could. Common law has evolved to make this unnecessary.

The Alimony Act and Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act have both been superseded by newer, more modern Statutes. Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that a repeal is necessary to streamline our Statutes.

With these remarks, I now take my place and look forward to the comments of my colleagues.

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

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, the Matrimonial Statutes Repeal Bill is going to repeal the Alimony Act, Married Women's Deeds Act, Married Women's Property Act, and the Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act, Nos. 1, 2 and 3.

I just have to say that as a married woman, I'm ever so thrilled to know that I can own property without my husband. (Interruption) Actually he's a little concerned about that. The fact is that these have already been superseded by other laws, this is a housekeeping bill. Despite my favour of this, it really is a bill that really these Acts have already taken place so, Mr. Speaker, I will take my seat. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my colleague for her very insightful comments and I hope she buys much property, if that's her choice. These Statutes are archaic, they're outdated and unnecessary, and they should be repealed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 34. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 37.

**Bill No. 37 - Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 37.

It is my pleasure today to talk about Bill No. 37, the Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act. Many Nova Scotians rely on court ordered child and spousal payments to support themselves and their families. It is vital that these Nova Scotians receive these payments in a timely manner. This legislation is intended to help those families when the payer lives in another province.

We have been working with our colleagues across Canada to improve the speed and efficiency of support payments when the two parties live in different provinces. The changes to the Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act come out of those discussions; they are the recommendations of the federal-provincial-territorial working group. Some of the 15 amendments are largely housekeeping, while others are aimed at making the ISO process more efficient and effective. As I said, the amendments will improve the speed and effectiveness of interjurisdictional support orders, by streamlining and harmonizing the process.

If Bill No. 37 passes, we will be the third province to enact the recommended changes. With these remarks, I now take my place and look forward to the comments of my colleagues.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise as the Justice Critic for the Official Opposition, to say a few remarks on Bill No. 37.

As you know, the issue of maintenance enforcement and the concerns over their caseload and the many families that continue to find themselves in arrears of support payments is one that I brought to the floor of this House. I also want to recognize my colleagues, the members for Halifax Clayton Park and Bedford-Birch Cove, who as well have been very vocal on behalf of families who are finding themselves in difficult financial need because of the lack of support payments being made on a consistent basis.

While we are pleased to see that the government is bringing changes that will hopefully help streamline this process, I would have liked to have heard from the minister that the government has made additional investments in the Maintenance Enforcement Program, which unfortunately does not appear to have taken place. This is an issue we have raised. I know the Maintenance Enforcement Program was before the Public Accounts Committee and other committees where concerns were raised over the caseloads that they were going to be faced with. At the same time, I would have hoped the minister would have given some assurances that the recently announced changes to staff of the Maintenance Enforcement Program will not in any way have a detrimental effect on the work that they carry out for their families and clients throughout the entire province.

This also gives me the opportunity to express my dismay that the government, under this NDP administration, has once again this year chosen to cut funding to the legal aid program. It's interesting, I'm curious as to what input the member for Antigonish may have had in this because this is now two years in a row that cuts have been made to a program which is in dire need of additional funding.

One of the means by which families, especially low-income families, are able to get support orders in place is through the legal aid program. More and more are being told that they make too much money. I believe the cap, which hasn't moved in a number of years now, is somewhere around \$22,000. To tell a single mother or a mother who is looking to separate from a spouse that she can't access legal aid because she makes too much money, if she's in the low-20s, is clearly unacceptable.

If we're going to talk about maintenance enforcement, let's also talk about how we get to these maintenance enforcement orders. I would submit to you this NDP Government has made it that much more difficult for the working poor to be able to access government representation through legal aid for custody arrangements, for separation agreements or divorce, and the maintenance orders that come with them.

Again, this is an opportunity, when the minister talks about streamlining the system, I think it's important to point out that at the same time this government has made it that much more difficult for the working poor in our province to be able to achieve the representation they need through the legal aid program. There's no question that the fact is,



in this day and age, many of the parties involved in these pay arrangements live in separate provinces. Certainly being from Cape Breton, we see that more and more where people are having to leave because of the economy, because of this government's lack of an economic plan. People are leaving to go outside of their province to obtain employment.

As a result of that, having the proper interjurisdictional agreements in place is essential in order to be able to make these payments enforceable. Just to give Nova Scotians a sense of what exactly the Maintenance Enforcement Program carries for a caseload, there are approximately 9,000 cases that are currently in arrears. Of those, almost 2,200 are in excess of \$10,000 and 231 of these cases are in arrears in excess of \$50,000 or more. Until we are able to get these numbers at more appropriate levels, we have much more work to do.

Bill No. 37 may be a start, but I would submit to you that this government certainly has much more effort to put in to help out these families and these children that rely upon the government to make these maintenance orders enforceable. With that, I was pleased to speak on Bill No. 37 and I look forward to it moving to second reading, but certainly hope the government, especially the Minister of Justice, will be announcing new initiatives in regard to this most important issue. Merci.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Madam Speaker, I'm going to keep my remarks very brief. We're supportive of these changes and the importance of holding people accountable to look after those who should be in their care. I will conclude with that. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

MR. TREVOR ZINCK: Madam Speaker, my comments will be brief as well. I just want to make a few points. I think over the last number of years the MEP has definitely taken some positive steps. We've seen some families be positively impacted by some recovery of funds. I think Bill No. 37 takes some very important steps.

In years past, the onus has always been on the individual to locate the partner that is in arrears when they skip out of province for either job loss or just simply merely to vacate their responsibilities to their family. I think any strengthening that we can do with this Bill No. 37 will help those families. I also want to make a point to the minister to keep in mind in future that I'm currently working on a number of cases that are also out of country, which is quite frustrating for those families that are affected by it and perhaps will take some co-operation with the federal government as well, but I am supporting Bill No. 37.

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

MS. KELLY REGAN: Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to this bill today. As the minister knows, this has been a particular focus of mine over the past couple of years. In fact, when we came to the Public Accounts Committee, it was last year about this time, we did ask a lot of questions about the Maintenance Enforcement Program and one of the things I asked was for a complete list of all the cases that were in arrears.

So we sat down and we went through pages and pages of documents - for the people at home, we just sat there and highlighted every time we saw a number over \$10,000 or more. What we came up with was 2,200 in arrears; 231 of those were owed arrears of \$50,000 or more. There were quite a few - dozens of cases - that were above the \$100,000 mark and even some above the \$250,000 mark.

When you stop and you think about the kids who are affected by that because the vast majority, over 95 per cent of cases, involve children - there may be a spouse involved as well but most of the cases involved a parent not paying their maintenance - you have to ask yourself what is the effect on children growing up without enough money to fund the basic necessities of life, to enable them to take music lessons, to let them be involved in sports programs, to buy running shoes when their feet grow. Because those of us who are parents would know about that period when their feet seem to grow about every 15 minutes, and how that child grows up knowing that their parent didn't care enough for them.

At that particular Public Accounts Committee meeting I know the member for Inverness offered solutions to the government, I offered solutions to the government, tools that the government could employ to increase the amount of money being collected by delinquent parents. I do want to say, because I do try to make this point every time I speak on this issue, the vast majority of people pay their child maintenance on time and we do appreciate that. But for the people who try to evade it, this is what we're focusing on today.

So we know there's \$80 million that's owed. The government talked about - not today but previously - the new public investigative unit and how one person from this unit was going to be devoted to dealing with maintenance enforcement, or the equivalent of one person; it might be a couple of people working part-time. But to clear the backlog, if that one person, that full-time person, cleared a case every single day for 50 weeks out of the year, every single work day, it would take them over 30 years to clear the backlog if we looked at the cases in arrears and the cold cases.

So I would encourage the minister, that this is a good start, but what maintenance enforcement really needs is some more staff to track down people. We can't leave it up to the custodial parents - chiefly mothers - to track their delinquent spouses down. They need some help from our government.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for their comments on the debate of Bill No. 37. I wasn't going to make any comments in regard to it but I think I should. I want them to clearly understand that from where I sit as the Minister of Justice that I take this matter very seriously. I know that it impacts on our children and our families. I hear what they're saying, I've heard from the time that I've come into this House. I'm committed to this issue and moving it forward. I know that when they talk about the amount of monies in arrears, there are a couple of points I want to make: one, it didn't happen overnight; and the second is, it's a matter of changing behaviour within society to address this.

So this legislation, Madam Speaker, is one step towards meeting that end. It's part of the puzzle of trying to attack that very complex issue and I would hope that this will move things along quickly and make it more efficient and that the changes that we announced earlier this week will also help in that direction. We are moving in a positive direction and we want to keep that tone being positive. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 37. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 39.

**Bill No. 39 - Maintenance and Custody Act.**

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Madam Speaker, I move that Bill No. 39 now be read a second time.

It is my pleasure today to talk about Bill No. 39, amendments to the Maintenance and Custody Act. This bill makes a number of important changes to the Maintenance and Custody Act. These changes have come out of a review of our province's family law.

We began the review project last year and we expect it to take three more years. Our plan is to modernize and improve Nova Scotia's family law, to ensure that our justice system meets the needs of today's families. These laws often come into play during

difficult and challenging times of a family breakup. Outdated or inadequate family laws can make the demanding and emotional time more difficult for families.

Madam Speaker, the Maintenance and Custody Act deals with issues of custody, maintenance, and access between separating couples when divorce proceedings have not begun or are not relevant. It does not deal with divorce - divorce, of course, is governed by the federal Divorce Act.

As I've said earlier, Madam Speaker, this bill proposes a number of important amendments. First, I want to talk about some amendments that meet a commitment we made under the Domestic Violence Action Plan. We intend to add family violence as an explicit consideration when a court makes decisions on custody and access. The amendments also add the family violence factors the courts should consider. These changes will increase the safety of children and families by ensuring that family violence is always considered when custody or access matters are being determined.

Second, Madam Speaker, a series of amendments would explicitly add other factors for the court to consider; these are related to the principles of the best interest of the child. This is the legal standard used by courts across Canada in deciding custody and access arrangements. Most Canadian jurisdictions have included lists of factors in their legislation for courts to consider in assessing what is in the best interest of a child.

Madam Speaker, Nova Scotia is the only jurisdiction that does not list such factors in its legislation. The inclusion of detailed factors and legislation is a helpful guide to judges, separating parents and others involved in applications relating to parenting arrangements. Adding this amendment brings clarity to the Maintenance and Custody Act.

Third, Madam Speaker, the bill will add to the Maintenance and Custody Act, the principles that a child should have as much contact with each parent or guardian as is consistent with their best interest, subject to the court's assessment of family violence. I don't think anyone would disagree with that.

Fourthly, Madam Speaker, an amendment will permit the province to enter into an agreement with the federal government to allow us to administratively recalculate child support orders made under the Divorce Act. This will make it faster and easier for Nova Scotians to change support orders when there are changes in incomes.

The final amendment I would like to talk about amends the definition of dependent child, to remove the current age limit of 24. This will make the definition more consistent with the Divorce Act, so that Nova Scotian children and families are treated equally under the law, whether under provincial or federal jurisdiction. Instead of a definition based on age the court will be able to base a decision on dependent children using the particular facts and merits of each particular case.

Madam Speaker, with those remarks I will now take my place, and I look forward to comments from my colleagues.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure as the Justice Critic for the Official Opposition to say a few words on Bill No. 39 - an Act to Amend Chapter 160 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Maintenance and Custody Act, Respecting Dependent Children and Their Best Interests.

This bill defines the best interests of the child for making access determinations - the best interests of the child is a legal standard by which access applications are to be decided by our courts. The Law Commission of Nova Scotia recommended that because the best interests of the child test was too imprecise, it recommended that the Maintenance and Custody Act be amended to include legislative guidelines. These guidelines provide an important test for making access determinations.

The commission recommended that in order to help guide judges, parents, grandparents and other interested persons, the Maintenance and Custody Act be amended to provide a "best interests of the child" list of factors to consider, similar to provisions in the Children and Family Services Act as set out. Any improvements we can make to assist our courts and assist all parties involved with the care of children is certainly something that we can support.

I want to commend the Law Reform Commission for its continued work at addressing such matters and helping to either correct or modernize many of the laws that we have here in Nova Scotia. I'm interested and will be looking further as to the changes that are being suggested that will help speed up the process of changing maintenance orders. I can tell you there are two types of calls I get when it comes to maintenance enforcement - one is from the spouse who is not receiving payments, and the other is from the payer who is calling regarding concerns about the order and the fact that either they are a seasonal employee, their employment has been terminated, they have changed jobs and are now making less money and the frustrations of the extensive process required currently in order to get those orders changed.

Certainly, I do look forward to learning more as to how these changes are going to be implemented because, at the end of the day, we want to work on balance here of making sure both the individuals receiving payment are treated fairly and, at the same time, those who are expected to make payment are treated fairly as well - especially knowing the economic environment we find ourselves in. More and more Nova Scotians are not working 9 to 5, five days a week at regular employment, but instead are working shift work, are working on specific job sites of limited duration, or are working in seasonal employment where their income varies from the time they are working to the time where they may be drawing employment assistance.

I also am pleased to hear that we are going to be removing the age of 24 as a set amount for dependent children. I note with interest the minister's comments about the need to allow our courts to make determinations based on each individual case. I'm sure the minister will be aware that that flies completely in the face of what the federal government is proposing with these minimum sentences, where they're basically saying if you're charged with a specific crime regardless of the circumstances, this is your punishment.

I do want to say that I find it refreshing that in Nova Scotia, we still believe in our court system and still believe in allowing our judges to look at each case individually and make a determination in what's in the best interests. I think that's one of the hallmarks of our justice system here in Nova Scotia. It was one of the hallmarks of our federal justice system prior to Stephen Harper becoming Prime Minister, but hopefully that is something that the courts will overturn and will again put the authority back into the judges' hands of looking at each individual situation.

Certainly, in this case, any changes that we can make to allow our judges and everyone involved in the process to do what truly is in the best interests of the child, is what we want to create as legislators - to ensure that is the proper framework, and the best possible framework that is in place to be able to achieve that goal.

With those comments, Madam Speaker, I do thank the minister for bringing this change forward and look forward to moving on to second reading and any further debate that may arise at that stage. Merci.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Madam Speaker, we will be supporting this legislation as well. What is really more important than ensuring that children are looked after, especially when we consider the impact on young people as they are growing up? These kinds of situations they're placed in can have an impact on them and their development. So we will be supporting this legislation, and look forward to it moving through the House, thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

MR. TREVOR ZINCK: My comments will be brief, but I'd just like to concur with the member for Richmond. There are two types of cases that normally come to our office in Dartmouth North in regard to MEP payments - those, of course, of the payer and the payee. Frustration from a lot of individuals who also happen to be living out of province that have come to me and said, I'm not in the same job situation as I was in previous years when this court order was put in place. So the previous piece of legislation, Bill No. 37, the interjurisdictional one will play a role in this as well.

Frustration also comes from a lot of men who just don't know their basic rights, that they do have the opportunity to go back to court. However, when they are educated to that process, frustration then becomes confronted to them as to the timely fashion and their ability to get into court to have those court orders changed, which also in turn affect the children and the former spouses. I'm quite interested, as well as the member from Richmond, to see how this helps those cases, thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to thank my colleagues for their comments during the debate and I am glad to see I share something in common, or have common mind, meeting of the minds with my colleague, the member for Richmond on my views of the court independences.

This legislation makes a number of important changes to the Maintenance and Custody Act and I will take my place, Madam Speaker, with asking for the adoption of these changes.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 39. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 41.

**Bill No. 41 - Grandparents' Rights Affirmation Act.**

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Madam Speaker, I move that Bill No. 41 be now read a second time.

It is my pleasure today to talk about Bill No. 41, the Grandparents' Rights Affirmation Act. (Interruption) I know the member across is saying I can't possibly look like a grandparent, I don't look that old and I want to thank him for that kindness but my granddaughter on the weekend reminded me that I am getting old, so I know where I stand.

Madam Speaker, grandparents are an important part of our families. Grandparents make an important contribution to the lives of their grandchildren. They offer unconditional love, they provide a link to their family history and often they give the stability children want and need during a family breakup. I am a grandfather, as I said a moment ago, and I enjoy spending time with my granddaughter. I wish I had more time to be there with her but as a matter of fact, I value what I have. I believe that my time here is a learning opportunity, that I am helping her grow and that I also learn from her. That's why I encourage families who are going through a family breakup to include grandparents in the discussion of access and custody.

Sometimes things do not go as smoothly as that and grandparents have to go to court, asking for permission to get access. With this legislation we are affirming the rights of grandparents to ask the court for access and custody for all the reasons I stated.

Also, what if a child has another important family member in their life, someone who they have a special relationship with, maybe an aunt or a cousin? We are also including in this legislation an explicit reference to other family members of the child's family or other persons. Making life better for families is a goal of this government. A family breakup is a challenging and emotional one but no matter what, the decisions that need to be made during a family breakup must meet this high test - what is in the best interests of the child, that must be paramount.

I know that many people would like for grandparents to have access rights, to have the same rights that a parent or guardian has now. Placing a right of access into the legislation is not the way to go. The determination of who has access is best left to the court. It can best assess each case on its facts and merits. It can look closely at all factors, weighing them carefully, determining what is in the best interests of the child.

Madam Speaker, this issue has been examined by legal experts. The provisions of this bill are in accordance with recommendations made by the Nova Scotia Law Reform Commission in its final report on grandparent-grandchild access. This is what it said:

“The Commission is of the view that existing Nova Scotian legislation, when seen through the lens of the best interest of the child, currently strikes the right balance. As a result, the Commission is not in favour of creating an automatic right of access on the part of grandparents or other relatives.”

Its recommendation was to clarify the law by adding an explicit reference to grandparents and that is what this legislation will do.

This addition also echoes the advice we received during the expert stakeholder and public consultations we conducted last year. I would also add that no other jurisdiction in Canada gives the rights of access to grandparents. I want to reiterate that grandparents are



an important part of their grandchildren's lives. They offer them many benefits. This legislation affirms that.

Madam Speaker, with these remarks I will now take my place and look forward to the comments of my colleagues.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and say a few words on Bill No. 41, the Grandparents' Rights Affirmation Act. This bill adds an explicit reference to the ability of a grandparent or other member of a child's family, other than parent or guardian, to make an application for custody or access, with the leave of the court.

The Law Reform Commission of Nova Scotia's Family Law Advisory Group recommended that the Maintenance and Custody Act should be amended to provide explicit recognition to grandparents. This amendment does not change the law, it explicitly identifies grandparents as potential applicants, in order to make it clear that grandparents do enjoy the legal means of obtaining access. This amendment makes Nova Scotia's legislation similar to legislative provisions in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Alberta, British Columbia, the Yukon and Manitoba.

Now, Madam Speaker, I believe all members of this House will have had the opportunity to have met with representatives from the Grandparents' Rights group, which I know I believe I've met with them on at least two occasions, possibly more. I know they've met with representatives from the Progressive Conservative caucus as well as the NDP caucus, both before the last election and probably since.

This is not what they asked for, let's be clear. They asked for a specific right to access to children in custody matters. The government has explained that the Minister of Justice has chosen not to do that but instead to have them recognized through the courts, to leave it to the courts to make that determination.

This falls quite a bit short of what that group was asking for. I know that all of us have had a mix of both sympathy for the situation that group finds itself in, yet at the same time, reservations as to whether it was appropriate to impose such a standard on the court in determining access issues. That's certainly a debate that we can continue to have, but I think it's important to make it very clear that this does not give grandparents the absolute right to access in custody disputes. It comes nowhere near that. It simply allows the court to recognize them as having standing in regard to this.

Those of us who would have met with the representatives from the Grandparents' Rights group just heard heart-wrenching stories of these people who have been denied access to their grandchildren due to, for the most part, dispute with one of the parents. It's

extremely unfortunate, and I think all of us in this House who have had the pleasure and the privilege of knowing grandparents and the special bond that does exist with them - I certainly had that privilege and would never want to have seen the day where that would have been denied or somehow access would have been cut off for whatever reason.

It's a very emotional debate. Those who brought forward their stories - they were heart-wrenching and extremely difficult stories, yet at the same time, we have to walk that fine line of allowing our courts the independence of making these determinations. I'll be curious to hear what the Grandparents' Rights group has to say about this legislation, but as I indicated, it clearly is not what they had asked for. Instead, it is something much more watered down. At the end of the day, that's a debate which we'll probably be continuing to have here as we move forward, but if this somehow does assist those families in being able to have the court recognize their need and their desire to have access, then that will be a good thing.

Time will tell whether this is going to have the intended effect or whether we'll continue to have representations from grandparents who have been denied access for one reason or another. With that, I do look forward to this bill moving through second reading and the presentations that we may receive at that stage. Merci.

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

MR. KEITH BAIN: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in my place to speak on this bill today. Let me say up front that as far as the Progressive Conservative caucus is concerned, this is a totally meaningless bill. I certainly have to agree with the honourable member for Richmond. As one who has met with the Grandparents Rights group numerous times, this is definitely not what that group has been asking for.

It seems ironic that just yesterday the minister stood in his place presenting a bill and said he was pleased to bring forth recommendations that were presented to him. In this case, he's failed to address the recommendations and concerns that came from grandparents.

All this bill is trying to do is to appease grandparents by adding the word "grandparents." The word "others," that was in the existing bill, included grandparents at that time. All this bill is doing is naming grandparents. Instead of appeasing grandparents, I think all this bill does is insult the intelligence of the Grandparents' Rights group and indeed all grandparents in this province.

When the session began, the Progressive Conservative caucus presented a bill that, after listening to the Grandparents Rights group, we felt was in the best interest of the child, because it's important we put the best interest of the child first. As the minister has already alluded to, grandparents certainly play a big part in the lives of their grandchildren. We feel that the bill that we presented does that in that it provides that a person who had custody of

a child can't reasonably place obstacles to personal contact between that child and his or her grandparents. It seems only right that something like this should be coming forward in this bill, but, again, it seems that all the government and this minister wanted to do was add the word, grandparents, hoping that the grandparents' rights group would be satisfied with that.

Since we introduced our bill - actually we introduced a bill in the last sitting and we reintroduced it in this session - it's amazing the number of people who have contacted me and contacted our caucus office. They are not members of a grandparents' rights group, they are grandparents who have been refused the contact to see their grandchildren. There might even be a separation; it doesn't even have to go to a full divorce. If there is a separation it is still quite possible that grandparents are denied the right to have contact with their grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, that's just not fair. It is not fair to the child - we're supposed to be looking after their best interests - and it's definitely not fair to the grandparents. The bill we presented, in our opinion, has allowed for that, that no unreasonable obstacles can be put forward that are going to prevent that interaction between child and grandparent.

As other speakers have said, it will be interesting to see the reaction from the Grandparents' Rights group and to hear what might be presented at the Law Amendments Committee as this bill goes forward. With that, Madam Speaker, I'll take my seat.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

MR. TREVOR ZINCK: Madam Speaker, again, I will have to concur with the other members on the Opposition side, I think this bill is a good step, but it's not adequate enough. I think we're putting this in the hands of the courts and hopefully a judge will take into consideration attachment issues or potential attachment issues a child might have without the opportunity to see their grandparents.

I know there have been a number of cases that over the years have come through my office where we've seen the Department of Community Services remove children from their families only to see that child being placed with their grandparents and in the care of their grandparents. If we can give the grandparent that right and responsibility, I think it's only fair that we fully extend the rights of the grandparents to have access.

I think we're setting these folks up - and I know all members here over the years have met with grandparents' rights groups and grandparents, as the member for Victoria-The Lakes has said, we're setting these folks up for potential disappointment if it falls in the hands of the courts and to a judge to determine their rights to have actual access. I can only stress the point that when you have a situation where a child is going through a separation or a divorce there are traumatic situations that occur with that child. The

attachment component to family and other family members is crucial to that child's development.

I only hope that with this step and Bill No. 41, that judges will look at that key component of attachment issues and will indeed go forward, any time a case comes before the courts, to extend those rights to the grandparents. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in my place today and simply go on the record as stating that as part of the Community Services Committee for five or six years, having had the Grandparents' Rights group appear before that committee and hearing a series of heart-wrenching stories where it was absolutely critical for a child's well-being and welfare to be with a grandparent and to be with, possibly, another family member who could make an enormous difference in the life of the child.

This piece of legislation is at best a very hit and miss affair and this is not by any stretch what the grandparents' groups wanted who appeared before the standing committee. They came here to the Legislature when, on at least three occasions, I entered a bill that would have enabled grandparents to have the ability to take a child into their custody. We all know, as the other members here in Opposition have stated, we know full well why in many cases that should be the avenue that should be pursued. We know the emotion and the trauma that goes on within a family that can impede what is truly in the best interests of the child.

I certainly saw this on many occasions, as an educator for almost a full career, to see where this would have been the best course of action by the province to enable a grandparent to have custody of a child. On the other hand, I saw some remarkable outcomes where in fact a grandparent did have the ability to take a child due to a family situation where it was not in their ability to look after a child.

So I think this small measure is really not what the grandparents across this province have been telling us now for getting close to a decade. Perhaps when this bill goes to the Law Amendments Committee, we'll hear some of those voices and we'll hear once again why there needs to be a stronger piece of legislation to enable them to have a child in their care. So we look forward to seeing this bill move on to the Law Amendments Committee.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Madam Speaker, I wish to thank my colleagues for their comments during the debate on Bill No. 41. This legislation acknowledges that

grandparents are an important part of the lives of their grandchildren. It also acknowledges the power of the court to take and assess and evaluate each and every case on its own merits which is a critical element I think in our justice system. It explicitly adds a reference to grandparents as having the ability to apply for access or custody and allows the appropriate body to make that decision - our courts.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and with these remarks, I take my place.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 41. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 52.

**Bill No. 52 – Conservation Easements Act.**

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Madam Speaker, in my capacity as Minister of Natural Resources I'm pleased to move Bill No. 52 now for second reading.

Madam Speaker, this bill proposes amendments to the Conservation Easements Act and the bill really goes hand in hand with Bill No. 55 which we passed second reading on last evening, the Community Easements Act, which as you know, we established a mechanism to help community groups preserve, restore, enhance lands and a variety of interests in that land, interests that are not primarily focused on land protection and conservation, and for example, that new bill will help communities protect agricultural or working forest land.

The creation of the new Act allows the government to create new types of land use easements without diluting the legal protection of land under the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act. This point is emphasized by the amendments to the Conservation Easements Act, which we're dealing with here laid out in this particular bill. These amendments strengthen the legal protection of land offered by the Conservation Easements Act, and they clarify that its primary purpose is the protection of biodiversity and natural processes.

Madam Speaker, additional amendments to the Conservation Easements Act are housekeeping changes that will ensure that the processes for all types of land use

easements, whether for land protection and conservation or for community purposes, are similar. This will help us meet the province's land protection goals, and the province is certainly committed to legally protect the 12 per cent of the provincial landmass by the year 2015.

“Legally protected” is defined in the legislation as including land designated and protected under a number of Acts, including the Conservation Easements Act. The proposed amendments add clear language that the main purpose of the Conservation Easements Act is the protection of biodiversity and natural processes, and we have mirrored the language used in the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act to ensure that the land we are protecting is suitable for conservation.

Madam Speaker, protected areas are places where families can go and enjoy nature. They support research and education and are part of what makes Nova Scotia such a great place to live. Protecting land leaves a natural legacy for future generations, and when we protect our land, we keep it natural. Protected lands in Nova Scotia are areas for people to enjoy that are free from development. There are no homes, no factories, and no farms, and the trees are left to grow and die and feed the forest in a natural life cycle.

Conservation easements protect land in its natural state, whereas the new community easements being proposed under the Community Easements Bill will also allow forest land or agricultural land to be conserved. Protected areas are needed to help maintain biodiversity. They give us clean air and water and habitat for wildlife, and we want to protect the best natural areas in the Province of Nova Scotia. These amendments to the Conservation Easements Act will clarify the processes for legal protection of land.

Madam Speaker, I want to acknowledge the valuable input received in drafting these amendments from my colleagues in other departments, including our colleagues at the Department of Agriculture; Department of Environment; Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations; the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture; the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage; and also the Office of Aboriginal Affairs. We're very pleased to bring these amendments forward to clarify the land protection legislation for all Nova Scotians, so thank you. I look forward to hearing the input from various members here in the House.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I guess this, to some extent, is a continuation of the debate last night on Bill No. 55. I'm not sure why - as the minister himself said, a number of these amendments revolve around clarifications and the allowing of the transfers to the Conservation Easements Act, which passed second reading last night. I'm not sure why they wouldn't have been put together in one bill, because a lot of what the minister has been talking about - in fact, in his own remarks he referred interchangeably to the two different bills, just as he did yesterday.

Obviously, just as we supported the other one we support this. I think it probably would have been cleaner to do in a single bill, but the minister obviously has his own reasons for doing that - no different than the Motor Vehicle Act having a section on bikes and a section on sidewalks. It can have an easements Act that would have a section on different easements, but this is the way he would like to do this.

I will just reiterate my comment from last night that, while I recognize this in particular is not a new bill, that these are amendments, when the member for Halifax Atlantic stood up yesterday and talked about a particular subdivision in the land, the issue with that bill, as with this, is that you still need a willing seller and you need the money, and the government has not created a pool of funds to assist with people doing this.

My understanding, in most of those cases, is that still remains part of the issue with both Acts, that it's up to the community groups to find the willing seller and, moreover, the community group has to be able to have the funds in place to do so. In many cases, that is actually more a stumbling block than anything else.

Nonetheless, obviously these amendments are necessary in order to move the other bill along. Again, I would just reiterate that it would have made more sense to include it as one bill just generally on the different types of easements that would be available. Whether it's one bill or two bills, it's supportable, and I guess this helps get the government's numbers up for the session.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Madam Speaker, just a couple of moments on this one.

I still stick with my message from last night after hearing that second explanation from the minister. It's no slight to the minister, but I know the member for Halifax Chebucto explained it much better last night on exactly what was going on here, really what precipitated bringing this forward and the importance of it. I really enjoyed it; he did a very good job of explaining it last night.

Ultimately, again, the issue is here, the government is simply just trying to bring its numbers of bills up. These are two-line bills - you could have ultimately put them together and called it the "Easement Act" or "Adjustment to the Easement Act" in order to simplify and run all these things through the Legislature. We'll support what is going forward, but again we think it's just a big waste of paper - we could have saved at least four pieces of paper on this one by putting them together.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Madam Speaker, I just wanted to add a few words to the comments of my colleagues here today. This bill brings me to a point where I at least have to acknowledge that the minister does know what a definition is - and if he could ever come to that with that clear-cutting in mind, that would be a wonderful thing.

He put this bill in place to clarify some explanations and some meanings of what words are, so if he can do the same thing for clear-cutting, he would be doing a wonderful job for the people of the Province of Nova Scotia considering how late it is in getting here. And maybe if he's not up to the task, certainly the member for Halifax Chebucto would be. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable members for their interventions on Bill No. 52. It's good to know that it is very clear-cut, and as we move forward to the Committee on Law Amendments I look forward to it becoming legislation in this province. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 52. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 59.

**Bill No. 59 - Fish Harvesters Registration and Certification Board Act.**

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of Bill No. 59, the Fish Harvesters Registration and Certification Board Act.

It was with great pleasure that I introduced the Fish Harvesters Registration and Certification Board Act on April 26, 2012. I'm happy to now have the opportunity to speak of the merits of this bill at greater length. I believe all members of the House would agree that the fishery continues to be an important industry for the province and it is critical to the stability and the development of rural Nova Scotia - there are some 3,500 full-time inshore



fishers in the province who operate their own enterprise; there are also more than 10,000 Nova Scotians engaged part-time or seasonally in this industry.

In 2010, seafood for Nova Scotia's second largest export product valued approximately \$800 million. We are committed to our rural communities, ensuring Nova Scotia has a prosperous and sustainable fishing industry that helps create good jobs and grow the economy.

Madam Speaker, to achieve this, our fishery will need some changes. Government and industry members have been discussing the concept of organizing fishing since the 1990s and created a trading culture amongst fish harvesters. That said, Madam Speaker, there is a tremendous amount of support certainly within industry groups for the establishment of this type of board. We know that because government has been working very closely with the industry to bring this legislation forward.

The Fish Harvesters Registration and Certification Board Act will allow the establishment of a board that will register and certify fish harvesters, based on their knowledge and their experience. It will also support skills and safety training opportunities. This legislation is industry-led and will provide a tool to better meet future challenges.

Madam Speaker, this legislation has the support of the fishing organizations in this province and will help bring the traditional and important Nova Scotia industry into a new era of professionalism, safety, quality and sustainability. I look forward to the Opposition's comments. Thank you very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise as the Fisheries and Aquaculture Critic for the Liberal Opposition caucus to speak on Bill No. 59, the Fish Harvesters Registration and Certification Board Act.

I had the opportunity to attend a ministers' conference that was held at the Best Western Plus Chocolate Lake Hotel, I think is the official designation. It was back in February, where this specific piece of legislation was discussed and there were representatives from the various fisheries organizations throughout Nova Scotia.

Obviously, Madam Speaker, any attempts at trying to professionalize the fishery and to raise the standards and certainly the safety training is something that we can all support. But one cannot forget that the Nova Scotia fishery has had a history of being a bit of a difficult fishery to organize. While in law school doing my specialization in marine environmental law, I wrote a paper about the inability to unionize fishermen in Nova Scotia. It was a challenge that still exists today.

When we look at Newfoundland and Labrador, for example, they have a very powerful union that represents both the fish harvesters and the processors and plant workers as well. Almost nothing happens without the union being involved and everyone stands behind the union. Even in P.E.I. the Maritime Fishermen's Union is very active in P.E.I. and very active in New Brunswick, yet Nova Scotia was always unable to unionize. There were always the competing interests from one end of the province to the other. Maybe that turned out to be a good thing for the independence of our fisheries, maybe it could have led to improvements in our fisheries. One will never know.

With this bill it begs the question, will it truly pick up all those involved in our fishing industry? I know that even in my area we have the Richmond County Inshore Fishermen's Association, but there are some fishermen who participate, there are some who don't. One has to question whether this will be a voluntary participation, with Bill No. 59, or whether it will be mandatory. Certainly while we want to see professionalization in the industry, I think the last thing that fishermen want to see, or those who work in the processing facilities want to see, is more red tape. That's the last thing that anyone wants to see, so we'll be watching very carefully to see how this is rolled out by the department, to ensure that it is not adding an extra burden onto fishermen as it is.

One of the matters we were discussing just recently in Richmond County, the lobster fishermen had to send their notices down to the DFO - Department of Fisheries and Oceans - office in Sydney to say they wanted their lobster tags. Then they have to go and drive down to Sydney, which is about an hour and a half, to pick up their tags, bring them back, and then during the season, if they lose traps or traps are cut or damaged, they have to call Sydney again and travel back down to Sydney to pick up more tags.

I know that there is some discussion from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans about streamlining that old process and possibly even putting it on-line, which for many fishermen will be a benefit and for those who aren't overly familiar with that process, they may need some extra help, maybe even through CAP sites, Madam Speaker, if those still exist after the federal government changes.

So, Madam Speaker, what the challenge is here for our provincial Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture is that almost our entire fishing industry is controlled by the federal government. They are the ones that do the licensing. They are the ones that have the regulations, and the powers of our provincial minister are extremely limited, mostly to inland waters. It's a bit of a difficult situation to be in because it's hard for the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture to impose repercussions when it's the federal government that, in essence, is licensing the industry.

With that, Madam Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not once again raise the issue of the owner/operator policy, which I note the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture during estimates said he was disappointed that we didn't ask him about that. Well, I could turn around and say I'm disappointed he didn't mention it in his remarks today. If one can

play that same game, he has chosen to talk about an issue which is fundamental to this bill and fundamental to the future and didn't mention the owner/operator principle.

As the debate goes on, Madam Speaker, with the modernization of the Fisheries Act that's taking place by the Harper Government, more and more I'm questioning whether the omission of the owner/operator principle for discussion was not simply a smokescreen or an attempt to get the industry to look in the wrong direction because more and more it seems that the modernization of the Act seems to have more to do with relaxing environmental regulations than actually addressing the owner/operator principle. Only time will tell whether that was the case or not, whether they do maintain that principle or whether there are some changes that could take place, but I'm becoming more and more suspicious that it was a matter that the government threw out there to say here, look over here, don't pay attention to what we're actually doing, and time will tell.

I know the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture introduced a resolution in this House that was adopted unanimously - he sent out a press release - but certainly much more needs to be done which is why, as the minister expressed his disappointment, I'll have to express my disappointment that our caucus immediately asked representatives from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans here in Halifax to appear before the Resources Committee, which is a standing committee of this House. I have to say I'm disappointed that the government did not back up our request nor did members of the Progressive Conservative caucus back up our request to demand that they appear in front of that provincial committee to answer the specific questions that we had.

So I'm certainly happy that our caucus undertook measures to have them appear directly in front of a provincial committee to answer those very questions which, as you probably know, Madam Speaker, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' representatives outright refused our request to appear in front of the Resources Committee of the Nova Scotia Legislature.

One of the other issues which I note that the minister did not address in his comments, but is one of tremendous concern to the future of our fishing industry is the proposed changes that are coming to the employment insurance program. As the minister knows, in many Nova Scotia communities, both the owners of the fishing vessels and the licences, along with their crew, work seasonally. Any changes being made to the employment insurance system could have a drastic impact on their future. It is becoming more and more of a challenge in my community, and I'm sure in communities throughout Nova Scotia, to find individuals who are willing to work for 10 weeks of the year, or for 15 weeks, or for 20 weeks of the year, to draw EI for the remainder. It's a challenge now.

Any changes the federal government brings that are going to make that more difficult will make it almost impossible to find people who are able to work as deckhands. We're seeing it as an issue in my community and I have no doubt it's probably an issue in fishing communities throughout Nova Scotia. One has to ask what initiatives is the

Government of Nova Scotia doing in conjunction with the federal government to try to encourage Nova Scotians to participate in the fishing industry?

When you are a deckhand you are either paid by salary, by the hour, or you're paid by a percentage of the catch, and you have little or no control over the vessel or the fishing methods that are applied. It is becoming more of a challenge to find people who are willing to do that for such a limited period of time.

I know in the minister's riding the fishery lasts for over six months; in mine it lasts for two months - 10 weeks basically, or a little less than 10 weeks. Finding individuals willing to work for that short period of time, knowing the federal Harper Government wants to make EI, employment insurance, that much more difficult, is certainly going to have a dramatic impact on the future of our fishery.

When we did the estimates for the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, one of the issues was the issue of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board. It was during these estimates that we discovered the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture moved the loan board over to the Department of Agriculture to work alongside the Farm Loan Board. During estimates I asked the minister why that move was made and what did we expect to achieve? The minister's response basically was that we would be seeing efficiencies, so naturally, I asked the question, being it was Budget Estimates, can you identify what efficiencies you expect to see? Is it in administration, is it in personnel, is it in overall costs, where?

Unfortunately, I wasn't able to get any answer from the minister. It seemed to be more of a, let's wait and let's see and let's hope at the end of the day it creates some efficiencies. Needless to say, I don't believe that is the way Nova Scotians want to see our government run, and even to this day I'm still waiting for someone to explain why the Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board was moved over to Agriculture with the Farm Loan Board and what the benefit is to the people of Nova Scotia - especially to the many individuals who rely on the Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board to access capital, in order to purchase either licences or vessels.

I certainly know that program - and I do want to give credit to the former Progressive Conservative Government; in fact, the former Minister of Fisheries, the Honourable Ron Chisholm, the former member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour, did bring in changes to the Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board to allow for the purchasing of licences. For years at the Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board you could only buy vessels or gear; you were unable to buy licences. We've seen the cost of licences escalate in the Province of Nova Scotia. A lobster licence in Richmond County, 10 years ago, would have sold in the range of \$20,000 to \$50,000. Just recently that similar licence in the same district sold for \$0.5 million.

Needless to say, the ability of a deckhand, someone who has worked on a vessel - and usually in fishing communities it's often someone who has worked on the vessel with the captain, and when the captain retires will look to buy the captain's licence. It's one thing trying to access \$20,000 to \$50,000 to buy a licence; it's a whole other thing to try to access \$0.5 million. So we need to make sure that we continue to put in place the necessary funding to allow, not only young, but any age that wishes to get into the fishing industry, the ability to buy these licences.

One of the questions, as well, that is becoming more and more of an issue for us in our community - and I'm sure it's probably in other communities - is the requirement by DFO that you have to be a part-time fisherman for at least two years before you can purchase a licence. More and more you are seeing fewer and fewer individuals who are obtaining their full-time licence status without owning a licence and those who are working as deckhands, many of them do not have the financial means to be able to purchase enterprises or purchase licences.

I think it's time, especially here in Nova Scotia, especially in the rural communities, with our provincial Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, that we may want to ask through this new board that is going to be created, a certification board, as to whether it's time to ask the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to change the two-year requirement to be able to obtain your full-time status as a licence holder, a personal licence holder, before you can purchase an enterprise.

As I said, and I'm sure the minister knows, in the rural communities there are fewer and fewer people who are available, or have the interest, or have the financial means to be able to purchase licences and purchase enterprises. I would hate to see a situation where the two-year requirement by DFO is something that's going to hinder people's ability to invest in the fishery and become participants in our fishing industry here in Nova Scotia.

Madam Speaker, with those comments, I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to extend my best wishes to the lobster fishermen of Richmond County and their crews, who yesterday would have put out their traps and today will be their first haul, certainly to wish them a very safe, prosperous lobster season, with the hopes that the price at the shore will be very favourable because at the end of the day the lobster industry, as the crab industry in my riding, continues to play a major part of our economy. I certainly want to take the opportunity to wish them well, a safe season, and hopefully very good prices as well. With that I look forward to Bill No. 59 moving on through second reading and any changes or presentations that may be put in front of us at that stage. Merci.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: It's my pleasure to stand and speak for a few moments on Bill No. 59, the Fish Harvesters Registration and Certification Board Act - seems a really long handle on that one. I said this many times in this Legislature that

the best thing about our fishing industry in Nova Scotia is its independence. I've always said, too, that the worst thing about our fishing industry in Nova Scotia is, of course, its independence, because it has always been very difficult to get everybody to agree on something to move forward.

The ultimate thing that I see with this one is I see a number of organizations that are not necessarily the representative of fishermen in this particular case, so I worry a little bit that when this information starts to roll out to people who are on the boat working hard that they might not understand the implications of a certification issue or of a safety issue or of all those things. Madam Speaker, the issue when it came to the Fisheries Safety Association - and I know I've taken a number of phone calls on that that people are a little confused about exactly what it means. It was up to an extra \$400 on their fishing licences that they would have received - booked through their fishing licence - that many fishermen were unaware of. What we've seen over the last number of months is a few hundred of those fishermen have opted out of participating in that process so I just wonder how this is going to either mirror or learn from those mistakes to make this program that much more robust.

Madam Speaker, I do know the importance of having a professional, safe industry but it is the actions or the methods in which we get to that point that will be important. We can't just tell people you must be safe or you must be professional, we've got to provide them with methods to get there. At the same time we can't be hard-handed as well, twisting arms and saying this. I'm hoping that through the process that the minister does take all those issues in hand and tries to make some sense of it.

Down in southwestern Nova Scotia, in our districts, especially our lobster fishing districts, there is a move afoot to try to organize that, especially the lobster fishermen, with the 1688 Professional Lobster Fishermen's Association, which has had some success. There are still maybe some fishermen who do not belong to that association, and of course this association took it upon itself to basically go on strike, to take some time off from fishing and hope that the price of lobster would get better.

This walk-out, I guess is what you would call it, started on Thursday last week and went throughout the weekend. Yesterday, apparently there were a number of fishermen that decided they did want to go fishing, much to the chagrin of some of the other members of the 1688. There was a - I wouldn't call it a confrontation, but I think there were some words exchanged on the wharf in Shag Harbour and some other places; I think Meteghan was another one. I mean, quite to the fishermen themselves, that they have kept this at a higher level, making sure that we don't fall into a conflict base on this one.

I support fishermen. I think that they do deserve a good price, and I do believe we shouldn't be imposing too many more charges on top of them. The economics of going fishing continue to be eroded by energy costs and other issues that roll around.

As much as I understand what this bill is trying to do and what it's trying to build forward, I still feel there's a tremendous amount of work to be done on this one. I do support it going through second reading of the bill, but I hope there will be representation at the Committee on Law Amendments to understand the next steps of what this process is going to be, to see if it will be accepted by fishermen and fishing communities or not.

With those few words, I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to this bill.

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

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the members opposite for their engagement and their comments on this particular bill. I move second reading of Bill No. 59.

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

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 61.

**Bill No. 61 - Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act.**

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of Bill No. 61, amendments to the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act.

On April 26, 2012, I was certainly pleased to introduce an amendment to the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act. This Act was first passed in 1997 and provides a licensing framework for activities involving fish products in Nova Scotia. It has been identified that the current Act made enforcement difficult, expensive, and labour intensive.

Therefore, I am proposing a simple yet important amendment to clarify that it is illegal to market or process or possess fish beyond allowable limits or exemptions without a buyer's or processor's licence. This amendment will strengthen enforcement of the Act

and streamline the process for identifying and prosecuting offenders. The fishing industry is very important to the Nova Scotia economy, especially in rural areas. This amendment demonstrates the government's commitment to revitalize and develop the commercial fisheries and the stability and strength of rural communities throughout Nova Scotia. Thank you very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise as the Fisheries Critic for the Official Opposition to say a few words on Bill No. 61, the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act.

You know, Madam Speaker, the licensing side that involves the province mainly deals with buyers and processors. As I mentioned before, most of the fishing industry is regulated by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans but, again, there is some jurisdiction there for the province and a very important one at that. The minister will recall just a few years ago we had the issue of some of the protectionist policies that were being applied in Newfoundland and Labrador. For example, where they - and I believe they still - have the policy that no raw seafood product can leave Newfoundland and Labrador to be processed. That is something which when you say it fast sounds like a great thing for Newfoundland and Labrador in that the processing jobs stay there. On the other side, we started hearing from the fish harvesters and fishermen saying, hold on now, that means that a very select group of buyers have the power to set the price and it's affecting competition in our province.

We had the situation just a few years ago where a number of boats from Newfoundland and Labrador, when they couldn't get the price they wanted from the buyers, actually came to Cape Breton and off-loaded their catches in Cape Breton to get a better price which certainly started the discussion there about obtaining a better price. At the time I remember raising the concern with the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture whom, if I'm not mistaken, at the time was the member for Digby-Annapolis, Gordon Balser, and the fact of, how are we in Nova Scotia allowing crab to leave our province to go get processed in Newfoundland and Labrador when our buyers were not able to buy crab in Newfoundland and Labrador to bring to Nova Scotia for processing? I do want to commend him because at the time we put in this very same rule, that our raw product could not go to Newfoundland and Labrador for processing.

It's those types of trade barriers which really benefit no one, Madam Speaker, and I'm still convinced that Newfoundland and Labrador really have not benefited from those types of protectionist policies. But I think it's essential that we do everything that we can as a province, while maintaining free trade and open borders, to try to encourage the processing of raw products here in Nova Scotia. The last thing that we want to see is our product going to other provinces when we have processing facilities here in our province.



Certainly with the crab industry, I know myself the benefits that there have been of having a processing facility both in my riding and just outside of my riding in Aulds Cove. They have been major employers for our area. It seems that their season has become longer each and every year because of the abundance of crab and the increase in quotas that have taken place. It's essential that we do what we can as a province and with the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture to encourage that product to remain here. But I wouldn't want to suggest that we close our borders either because I know for a number of years when our season was late in opening because of an abundance of crab in New Brunswick, some of that crab was coming to Nova Scotia for processing. Then at the end of the year, or mid-season, when we had an abundance of crab because of an overcapacity, some of our crab was going to New Brunswick for processing.

So I think that system worked. I think it was to the benefit of both provinces and I would not suggest that we should put up walls. Newfoundland and Labrador is a whole different story. There's a price to pay for the protectionist measures that they have been putting in place and they're now starting to see their own disputes with vessels that are leaving Newfoundland and Labrador and landing in Nova Scotia. So, again, I don't believe that that has truly been of a benefit to their province.

I do want to encourage the minister, when you look at the statistic you gave us earlier, that \$800 million is what the seafood industry represents to Nova Scotia in exports, is a significant amount. I've certainly raised the concern over the years that as a province we spent too much time paying lip service to an industry which we've kind of allowed it on its own to operate. While I'm not suggesting in any way that we should be over-regulating it, I believe that our province has a role to play in encouraging value-added to our products and finding new means of being able to put our seafood products out there and try to attract a higher value for both the fishermen, the processors, the buyers and for our province.

I know in my own area, and the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture would be aware, that there is a project underway to try to keep snow crab live, for the purpose of shipping it overseas. We do that with lobster, but apparently with crab it is in much deeper waters and it's much more difficult, once they are brought up to the surface, the stress that places on them, to be able to maintain them for an extended period of time.

I would note, Madam Speaker, for those who may not have noticed, if you go to some of the larger grocery chains here in metro, you will notice that a number of them also have live snow crab in their lobster tanks that are being offered for sale. When one looks at the price that they're asking for live snow crab, compared to what is being paid at the wharf, one doesn't have to be an economist to realize that if that industry can take off in keeping the product live, the price at the wharf is obviously going to escalate, which will mean more money for the captain, for the crew and, at the end of the day, more money for our economy.

Those are some of the initiatives which I think, as a province, it's up to us to try to encourage the value-added, to ensure - I think as the minister indicated, lobster tails now have become a major attraction, I believe he said in the cruise industry. It's something that people are becoming more interested in.

We have a number of talented chefs here in our province and talented restaurants and I think we need to do everything we can to try to promote Nova Scotia seafood, not just to sell it raw but to also use value-added processing.

I did note that, for example, Clearwater recently announced they are going to be marketing bacon wrapped scallops which, again, is a value-added product. Certainly we'd love to have some here today to test out. That's another example of a company doing that and again, we need to let private industry do its own thing. I believe with the universities we have here, the research that's available, that whatever we can do as a province through the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, through economic development to encourage value-added here and try to increase the value of the product that we are getting and to try to keep some of that processing here in Nova Scotia, our province will certainly be benefited by that.

We'll be watching closely with interest as to who is given licences to buy products. I know we have some concerns in our communities about what we call the suitcase buyers who show up on the wharf with a suitcase of money, load the product and take off in an 18-wheeler and that product leaves the province and we see little or no benefit of that. So it's a fine line between encouraging competition while, at the same time, trying to encourage processing here in our province. There's nothing worse than seeing a truck pull onto a wharf, to load up with a product when you've got local processing facilities nearby and driving right by them to go outside our province for processing. No one in our province benefits when that happens.

What is the solution? I think that is a discussion we will have to have but I think the minister, hopefully, will be able to indicate to us exactly what criteria he will be applying in issuing these buyers' licences and the processors' licences, to try to ensure the greatest economic benefit for us in our province.

One of the other issues I wanted to raise, Madam Speaker, which was an issue which again came up a few years ago was there was a sudden push to try to get those who were selling lobster by the roadside to be licensed. It created a great deal of uproar and certainly I would hope the minister would be able to advise whether these changes are going to, in any way, affect that or put any added fees on those. Certainly that's something that especially in hard economic times, we've seen many of our fishermen resort to, to try to get a better price for their product. I would certainly hope that is not being negatively impacted by the changes being proposed under Bill No. 61.

With that, Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to make those comments on second reading and I look forward to this bill going on to the Law Amendments Committee and any changes that may be suggested at that stage. Merci beaucoup.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Merci beaucoup, Madame la Président, and I will echo a lot of the things that have been said by my Acadian colleague, the member for Richmond.

One of the things I learned quickly when I was Minister of Fisheries was the line that you would have to follow when it comes to value-added in the Province of Nova Scotia. When you had such a large amount of fish coming in, there's a balance of what can be shipped outside and, of course, what should be processed within - depending on who had licences and who can purchase it, of course, blurs that line just a little bit.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank a number of fishing organizations and fish plants in my constituency that have done everything that they possibly can to ensure employment in the area. You know, whether you're Acadian seafood processors, B. d'Entremont, or whether you're inshore fisheries with Claude and Yvon and Sean, and of course their sons who are now taking over the businesses there, or whether you're talking about Gibby, I won't say d'Entremont - well, he is a d'Entremont running his fish plant, you know, who have all found a way to purchase that raw product, add some value to it, whether they're filleting or packaging and getting that product to market, who have done a phenomenal job, but as the member for Richmond spoke to, the issue of people being issued permits or licences to purchase these things with sort of the suitcase of cash or in the back of a truck do create a bit of problem with it.

The lobster industry, of course, is probably the best example of sort of the fly-by-night issue, yet there's always a balance to that, too. Walter Surrette Fisheries, or W.S. Fisheries, in my constituency was probably one of the larger lobster buyers in West Pubnico that really has very little tankage because they flip a lot of their product. They had a tank and ultimately the upkeep on it didn't make any sense for the kind of business that they were doing. They've been in business for, I think it was like 60 years or something silly like that and, of course, the department was coming and saying, well, listen, you've got to have some kind of holding capacity, but their business model was built upon buying that product, shipping it off to, I believe, another company - I think it was Clearwater - and doing their business that way. Everybody has been very happy with it.

So, again, you know, it's trying to find that razor balance on how we're going to put those permits out and how we're going to make sure that we get the best bang for our buck, because the more people that we have working in our coastal communities, the better it's going to be.

Again, this is one of those pieces of legislation that, of course, we can support and one that we will look forward to going to the next stage of our process to listen to see if there are any concerns and, hopefully, the minister and the new government of course will listen to those concerns and make adjustments if necessary during the Law Amendments Committee. So I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to this one.

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

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the members opposite for their engagement and certainly for their comments and their knowledge of the industry, and I move that we close debate on Bill No. 61, the amendments to the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 61. Is the House ready for the question? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 65.

**Bill No. 65 – Consumer Protection Act.**

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

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Madam Speaker, I move that Bill No. 65 be now read a second time. (Interruption) Madam Speaker, thank you to my honourable colleague.

Concerns have come up that some consumers who enter into cell phone contracts may not have sufficient protection and feel that they may be the victims of unfair and unclear contracts with excessive cancellation fees and other business practices generally not favourable to them.

In short, many consumers feel trapped in their cellphone contracts. This legislation will ensure that Nova Scotians have access to cellphone contracts that clearly spell out the details of the agreement, and that will help them choose what's right for their families. We

have reviewed national and provincial research into consumer satisfaction with cellphone services, and are aware of the common problems that consumers have with them.

To date, Quebec has regulations in place governing cellphone contracts, and Manitoba's new legislation will take effect in the Fall. Newfoundland and Labrador passed amendments to its Consumer Protection Act on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Ontario is also moving forward with legislation. Nova Scotia's legislation is based somewhat on Manitoba, with some key differences. The province will not allow for automatic renewal or extension of contracts, and the other difference is the information to be provided on those who sign contracts - for them, around cyberbullying.

When a fixed-term contract ends, unless the consumer has advised the cellphone company to extend or renew the contract and terms have been agreed upon by both the cellphone service provider and the consumer, the contract will be terminated. However, if you do not have any prepaid minutes or a cellphone service plan, you will still be able to dial 911 in an emergency situation. Furthermore, cellphone service companies will need to provide more information about minimum monthly costs. For example, ads for cellphone plans will need to state the minimum or low monthly cost, not just the low introductory rate. Providers will not be able to change major parts of the contract without permission from the consumer. Any changes involving services, cost, fees, or locations where the phone can be used must be satisfactory to both the company and the consumer.

Consumers will be able to cancel their cellphone contracts at any time. There will be clear formulae for calculating cancellation fees, but the fee for cancelling a cellphone contract cannot exceed \$50. In addition, recommendation 77 in the recent report - well, I guess as I've stated around the task force on cyberbullying - Respectful and Responsible Relationships: There's No App for That - calls for cellphone service companies to provide consumer protection materials to accompany the contract. These materials will be developed in full consultation and partnership with industry, the Department of Education, and the task force. The cellphone service provider industry is aware of these changes, and we're working with them.

By amending the Consumer Protection Act to regulate cellphone contracts and to protect consumers who enter into them, the province will be able to respond to public concerns around long-term cellphone contracts, silent extensions, high cancellation, and other fees and concerns related to the use of cellphones and cyberbullying.

With those comments, Madam Speaker, I look forward to what my colleagues might have to add to this debate. Thank you very much.

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

MS. KELLY REGAN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As the minister knows, because we chatted about this on the day that he brought the bill in, we were actually

looking at the same piece of legislation, working away on that, so I congratulate the minister on moving quickly.

We did have one concern, and that was around the issue of some people having cellphone contracts that are quite inexpensive. They're about \$20 per month, and they automatically renew. So we would want to be sure that the language in 25L would not affect those particular ones. These are people who've had their cellphone contracts since the early 1990s. It may be that Section 25M, in fact, makes this concern moot, but if we could have a plain-language version of the bill explaining - we just want to clarify that that is not the case, that those particular contracts will continue, because I know of a number of people - or at least have the option to continue because we want to make sure that will happen.

I think all of us at one time or another, whether it's our own personal cellphones or our children's cellphones, have switched a phone and then all of a sudden discovered you have different features on there or the texting that was included with your previous cellphone package is suddenly not included with this one, even though you said that you wanted the same features. So anything that makes it a little easier for us when we're switching packages, or whatever, so that we don't get dinged because I can tell you I have personal experience with seeing this massive bill for texting when texting had been covered the month before, and it wasn't my own personal phone, it would be a child's phone.

I want to thank the minister for bringing this in and we would appreciate some clarification around that one issue. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. We would certainly support legislation that would improve competition because through competition we know that we get better services, better value for consumers. That's certainly something we believe in in our Party.

There are some things that have been raised as a concern with the legislation, one is that often in telecommunications, regulations are made at the federal level and I'm aware that the CRTC has begun a process which would affect jurisdictions across the country, including Nova Scotia, a process that would lead to a set of federal regulations for wireless contracts.

I can appreciate what the minister is doing. I am interested to see what's going to happen with the CRTC process and how that might affect legislation we may try to pass here. So that's something that is standing out to me right now.

Another thing is I think one of the intentions of this legislation is to help consumers so that they don't end up having to continue to pay for a service if they haven't asked for it to be renewed. As I understand the legislation, it would make Nova Scotia possibly the only jurisdiction in the world where a consumer's service would actually be cut off if they haven't responded to a renewal notice. So in a practical setting, somebody who may not have responded in time may end up waking up one morning without having use of their cellphone because of a law that required the company providing the services to cut them off because they hadn't replied to the renewal notice.

Madam Speaker, I know that the service providers can give their clients ample warning and certainly if this legislation includes this reality, I have no doubt that they will do everything they can to warn their customers but again, it's something that I think is well-intended but perhaps we'll hear more about it during Law Amendments Committee, if service providers come in to relay that concern.

Finally, one item that is intriguing is that service providers will now, with the passage of this legislation, be mandated to pass along government messaging. This is an area that, it would require by law that the service provider pass on specific government mandated messages.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. I just want to remind the member that the second reading is meant for discussing or debating the general principles of the bill, not the specific details. Thank you.

The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. MACMASTER: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for correcting me. I will speak to the more general elements of the bill. I guess generally speaking, if we're talking about government, if the goal is to pass along messages to the public by way of mandating a service provider to pass that message on, then that is something we might be concerned about. I think Nova Scotians should be concerned about government trying to pass on messaging through that channel.

Madam Speaker, I think we'll leave this for Law Amendments Committee and perhaps on third reading I can get up and speak more specifically about the intent of the legislation, as we perceive it. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments of members opposite. I will get a clarification for the member for Bedford-Birch Cove because I wasn't really clear on the question but I just want to make it clear it doesn't apply

to prepaid-use cards month to month. For my colleague, the member for Inverness, the companies would be required to give a 60 to 90 day notice of the end of your contract so if you want to renew it you can state that. So I thank members for their input.

Since we've had some days now since this bill was introduced I think they should be aware, if they're not already aware, that the response from the public has been significant, they like this bill and - so who you going to call? So with those few comments I look forward to this bill proceeding to Law Amendments Committee and move that debate on Bill No. 65 Consumer Protection Act cease.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 65. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 5.

**Bill No. 5 – Municipal Government Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to know how much time I have left on this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: Thirty minutes.

MR. COLWELL: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I don't believe today I'm going to take that long, I made a lot of points on this bill before. The only thing I would like to wrap up is this bill is not a bad bill by any stretch of the imagination, it's a good idea. It's a bill that will enable municipalities to provide financing for solar panels and some renewable energy things. The only issue that I have with it and I think that indeed the municipalities would probably have with it too, is if there was a program through Efficiency Nova Scotia they wouldn't have to do this, they just simply wouldn't have to do it.

Efficiency Nova Scotia is set up to provide financing and grants and everything else for renewable energy, for energy efficient projects and they could provide a lot broader range of services to the general population all over the province to do this. The municipalities will have added costs from this - even though they may say they will not they will have added costs and eventually it could affect, in minor ways, some of the costs in each individual municipality. Some municipalities may not be able to do it, they just



simply may not be able to do it and that would make an unfair service in one part of the province and not in another, and no fault of the municipality.

I would really encourage the government to look at Efficiency Nova Scotia providing this service across the province on a universal basis and indeed provide the programs to do that through that means. It doesn't mean we don't support this bill, the municipalities have asked for it but it would be nice to see the province react to this and make programs available provincially, right across the whole province, it would allow people to get solar panels for whatever type they may need or whatever they wanted to use.

It's with those concerns that I move forward. I give the municipalities credit for doing this, the government hasn't been doing it so I give them credit. It's unfortunate they have to and I don't think municipalities should be in the business of financing equipment like this in individual homes. They have enough battles now with local improvement charges for sidewalks, curbs and all the other things that municipalities are entitled to do. So I would think this is going to be interesting to see how this works out, especially in some of the smaller municipalities, if indeed they start a program, whereas today the ones I've met with so far have indicated they're having a real battle keeping up with just the maintenance they have to do in the municipalities themselves and the work they have to do there.

So, with those few words, I just wanted to make those comments on the bill. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, I thank the members for finally letting this bill proceed to the Law Amendments Committee (Interruptions) Yes, well I realize that and we'll have the debate after that again.

The couple of points I want to make, just from comments that were made three weeks ago, is that Efficiency Nova Scotia actually has a program to do this. As a matter of fact, the HRM, who had this enabling legislation for some time now, when they do their program - and they are getting to the final stages of the bylaw around this - their plan is to incorporate the rebate that is in Efficiency Nova Scotia that the homeowner can get, as part of their program. They will get the rebate for the homeowner and that will all be incorporated in the payback that the homeowner has to pay, so it will be reduced by the amount of the rebate. Even without this enabling legislation going to all municipalities, homeowners in Nova Scotia across the province could go to Efficiency Nova Scotia and get that rebate for solar panels.

The legislation is purely enabling legislation. The other municipal units wanted the ability to offer a similar program to HRM. They may vary it somewhat depending on what their council decides they want to do, what their citizens decide they want to do and it doesn't just apply to solar panels - "energy-efficient equipment" is the wording in the bill. Now "solar panels" is the term that has been used the most, but if there is the possibility of something different, better, whatever that the municipality may want to do or try, they have that option in whichever municipal unit.

Some municipalities may decide not to go forward with a program depending on particular costs or whatever, as the member for Preston indicated, or the wish of the council, that they may not see this as something they want to proceed with at this time - they have that option. It's not to say that they necessarily have to do it, but they wanted the ability to do it should they decide to do that.

Mr. Speaker, the UNSM was quite clear on their desire for this so that the other municipal units could offer this program if they wanted. It appears from research from HRM, that probably with solar panels and the electricity side of that - they deem that not to be that viable a road to go, but certainly for hot water, I think, is the place that they deem is probably the more likely.

Anyway, I thank the members opposite for their input. I was glad that it drew as much debate as it did. I think this will be one that the UNSM will be very pleased to see move forward and I think Nova Scotians across the province, some of them were very keen when they heard about the program in HRM and thought gee, I wish my municipality would consider something similar.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that I close debate on Bill No. 5.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 5. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow from the hours of 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. I will now turn it over to the House Leader for the Official Opposition.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Opposition House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, following Question period tomorrow we will be resuming second reading of Bill No. 45, the Ratepayer Protection Act and Bill No. 46, the Electricity Act.

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We have now reached the moment of interruption. The Adjournment motion was submitted by the honourable member for Argyle:

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly urge the NDP to stop dismissing recommendations and impoverishing our province.”

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

### **NDP - RECOMMENDATIONS: DISMISSAL - STOP**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, let me give you a translation. It's funny how we're so used to doing resolutions around this House that we sometimes don't realize that without the “whereas”, it's really hard to understand exactly what the “therefore be it resolved” really means.

So, what we're trying to get at here is the recommendations of the Auditor General, especially when the member for Halifax Chebucto asked the famous question of “who asked you?” So, if you guys want to preface your work on that one, I'll be happy to maybe fill in what my thoughts are on this and I'm sure the government will have its opportunity to reply to that.

It's truly shocking when one compares the NDP that's in government to the NDP that once was in Opposition. I can tell you that much has changed since those times. I can remember a time when the NDP would never, never question the role of the Auditor General. They spoke at length, and I'm sure the Minister of Finance - the member for

Halifax Fairview - on many occasions would speak at length about the need to be respectful of the Auditor General and about how important it was to ensure he had the tools he needed to do the job.

Now, when the Auditor General comes forward with genuine warnings about the devastating effects of the NDP's financial mismanagement, they seem far less respectful. Instead they ask, it's almost a famous word for us now, or famous line - who asked you? Just when we thought this government couldn't fall off the rails any more, they turn around and they ask the Auditor General, who asked you?

It sort of brings us to the question of, why was the government so sensitive that day? Here in the Public Accounts Committee, why were they so sensitive? Why were they so defensive and so ready to attack the Auditor General for his warnings? You know why? It's because they know the Auditor General was right. He was right in his recommendations and the issues he brought forward that we were jeopardizing the future of our children with the amount of debt that this government continues to add on top of the debt that was already there.

In condemning the NDP's deficits, the Auditor General has put the spotlight on the government's unethical overspending. The NDP may be ready to shoot the messenger, but in this caucus we're glad the Auditor General came forward the way that he did. I can tell you on many occasions when I was in government and when an Auditor General Report came down, on many occasions we just sort of said, thank you sir for your information, we'll work our best to get those recommendations put in place for you.

That's not what happened in this one. He raised some important points. He reminded us that we need to think about our children, about the next generation. I don't have to go very far to think about children - my two children André who's 13, and Alec who is nine - to think about what their future is going to look like if they have to continue to pay for this government's mistakes. So far we feel this government has failed to put our children's future first.

After promising to balance the budget in their first year in office, Mr. Speaker, the NDP produced deficit budget after deficit budget and more and more debt. So who pays for the new debt? The NDP don't have to worry about it because they know Nova Scotians will toss them from government in short order, but our children will have to worry, our young people obviously will end up paying for this debt. The NDP financial incompetence, coupled with their refusal to listen to recommendations and advice from qualified individuals, will have detrimental effects on our young people

I can tell you, and I know the members opposite know full well that it didn't have to be this way, the government could have gotten off on the right foot by prioritizing and making tough choices necessary to budget during difficult financial times, but instead they chose to run large deficits and add to the debt. They were handed a financial surplus of

\$19.7 million when they attained office in 2009, and what's the first thing they did, Mr. Speaker? They raised taxes. They raised the HST to the point where they'll rake in over \$1 billion in new taxes during their time in power and, as we've said many times in this House of Assembly, that's \$4,000 for every family in Nova Scotia that they are paying extra in HST.

What do they have to show for the \$1 billion in extra HST taxes? (Interruption) I don't think they've got much to show; as a matter of fact I think it's absolutely nothing. After taking in \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker, in the form of higher HST, they still can't balance the budget and they're still taking the axe to front-line services in health care and education. And, despite this, they had the gall to ask the Auditor General, "Who asked you?"

I can tell you that if they were smart they would take the recommendations and the suggestions, the advice of our Auditor General. They could have said, okay, we get it, let's get us back on the right track. But instead, because it didn't fit their plan, or the Finance Minister's plan, they attacked the Auditor General. But over there on that side of the House, of course, they always know best and now the Minister of Finance is running around bragging about how he's going to balance the budget next year - but balancing the budget when you have the highest rate of taxes in all of Canada is absolutely no accomplishment, and borrowing money to pay for increased government spending and adding to the debt is no accomplishment.

This is a government in need of help. If the Minister of Finance and his NDP colleagues came forward and admitted they struggled with budgeting and admitted they needed help, I can tell you that we would be there to help them out with it, not to gloat, but I'm sure we would be there to help. But because we're not interested in the kind of political games that have become the norm for this government, Mr. Speaker, the political games that are the norm for this government of saying one thing and doing another, and making promises and breaking them. We're interested in creating the winning conditions of a stronger economy because, of course, it is the economy that will pay for all the services that we need in this province. (Interruption)

The Minister of Health and Wellness is over there saying, oh, oh, oh. Well, in order to pay for those services, in order to pay for all those great services that the men and women in the health care system are offering, with all those services that she's doing, the billions of dollars that are spent by the Health and Wellness Department, I would suggest that maybe she should think of ways that we can get those things done. We need a stronger economy to pay those taxes in order to pay for those services. Without a strong economy that I feel this government is not paying any attention to, we'll no longer have the capability to pay for the services that we need in this province.

We're interested in balancing the budget, lower taxes, eliminating unnecessary regulations, and an energy plan that is affordable, Mr. Speaker, but this government won't

take the advice of the Auditor General. So with that, I'm sure that they'll be very skeptical to listen to anyone else.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is a great opportunity to hear from the government, to see what their thoughts are on economic growth. Maybe they can finally explain to us why the member for Halifax Chebucto was so indignant that day and spoke against the recommendations of the Auditor General when he asked that question that day, which was, "Who asked you?"

The Auditor General is an important part of the Government of Nova Scotia. We should be listening to his recommendations and implementing everything that he brings forward. With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak to this late debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens.

MS. VICKI CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in my place to speak to this Opposition resolution. I must say I was rather perplexed when I had seen the topic of debate that the Opposition, my colleague from across the way, the honourable member for Argyle, I was surprised by the topic, quite frankly, because I'm wondering where they have been for the last couple of years. I recollect and will speak to all of the good things and all of the recommendations that we have been paying attention to.

The member for Argyle pointed out that the Auditor General has made some recommendations over the last several years since we became the governing Party. I want to point out to my good colleague across the way that the very first thing that we did when we formed government, Mr. Speaker, was we took, on recommendation from the Auditor General, to clean up the way members look after our expenses.

We have really reformed the way members of this great House put forward their expenses, at the request of the Auditor General. We have now one of the most transparent and accountable systems in place, after many, many years of not seeing that type of transparency. We certainly thank the Auditor General for making those recommendations. We did implement them very quickly and swiftly, if I might add.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take the opportunity to speak to the openness and responsiveness of this government and show the House and all members the many examples of initiatives that this government has undertaken. After many discussions, not only with the Auditor General but with industry, special interest groups and with Nova Scotians, before we formed government in 2009, we had committed to bringing in better health care to Nova Scotians. One of the very first health care initiatives we undertook, once we formed government, was to hire an emergency care adviser to assess the provision of emergency services in Nova Scotia and make recommendations to government.

The report, *The Patient Journey Through Emergency Care in Nova Scotia*, by Dr. John Ross, outlined a number of recommendations for this government, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to report that our government produced the Better Care Sooner plan based on Dr. Ross' recommendations and that this plan is working for Nova Scotians across the province.

I want to table a release, Better Care Sooner, a government release that will improve emergency care for Nova Scotians. Since announcing the Better Care Sooner plan, our government has moved quickly to initiate many other key initiatives Dr. Ross recommended, the creation and implementation of collaborative emergency care centres in towns all across rural Nova Scotia. Today we have two CECs up and running and two more that have been announced. I'd like to table a news release, "All Saints Collaborative Emergency Centre Providing Springhill with Better Care Sooner". Dr. John Ross made recommendations to government and we follow through, implementing changes that bring better care to all Nova Scotians sooner.

In November 2009, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's Economic Advisory Panel recommended that our government make some tough choices to bring the province's finances into order. Some of those recommendations include tighter management of spending, and it can be clearly seen in our fiscal management that government has provided good management over the last three years. A key recommendation of the advisory panel was the need for a renewed commitment to enhance our economy, and I'll table a government release called the "Economic Advisory Panel Recommends Tough Choices to Right Finances". Our government took this recommendation to heart and we produced the first jobsHere strategy which challenges governments, businesses, educational institutions, unions, non-profits, and others to work together towards a single vision of economic growth in Nova Scotia.

I'm really not clear what the good member for Argyle was suggesting earlier in that we don't have a good, clear economic growth strategy for this province. I'll table here today the government news release from the launch of the jobsHere strategy, which states very clearly that this strategy is a product of consultations with numerous stakeholders including, Mr. Speaker, local businesses, industry associations, the economic council, and Donald Savoie who wrote a report about improving economic development in Nova Scotia.

It's not only in health care and economic development that we have listened to experts, Mr. Speaker, in May 2010 the very respected, and very much admired David Suzuki said very clearly that offshore drilling should never again be considered on Georges Bank. The member for Argyle had suggested that this government needs to be thinking about our children and the next generation and future generations, and I want to tell you that our government has done just that. I'll table the Sunday Herald story here where just six months after Mr. Suzuki made his unequivocal statement, our government indefinitely extended the moratorium on drilling in the Georges Bank area. (Applause)

That, Mr. Speaker, protects that valuable resource for our children, future generations and the great fishing grounds that that resides on. I also will table the news release around the moratorium, that the government extends the Georges Bank moratorium. This is just another example of how seriously our government takes recommendation from industry experts.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business regularly advocates on behalf of Nova Scotia's business sector. Over the last year or so the CFIB has circulated postcards to businesses and politicians asking government to throw them a lifeline. I have a copy of one such postcard here and it has noted the progress that our government has made on their requests. CFIB has asked that we lower HST when the budget is balanced, I am pleased to state that our government has introduced legislation this session that states our commitment to do just that.

CFIB has asked that we restrain government spending to population growth plus inflation. Again, I'm pleased to point out that our government has taken a serious and strict approach to fiscal restraint and government spending. Our government's approach to fiscal matters resulted in an approved score from the CFIB this year; in response to our 2012-13 budget the CFIB gave our government an A-minus on spending restraint and an overall grade of B, Mr. Speaker, for the budget. I will table a report of that report card.

These are just some of many examples of how our government is listening to Nova Scotians and responding. There are so many more that I won't dive into in detail but I'd like to list a few for those present.

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society is an important advocate for the protection of ecological sites in Nova Scotia. Recently CPAWS spoke out about the importance of protecting wilderness land in Nova Scotia, particularly after years of clear-cutting have diminished our provincial forests. I'm pleased to note that our government has a plan in place to protect 12 per cent of provincial lands. CPAWS themselves stated recently - and I'll table the release - that our government is undertaking to designate protected areas in Chignecto, which will be the largest new protected area established in Nova Scotia in over a decade.

Thank you for allowing me to speak to this debate topic this evening. Government is following recommendations of many. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the members of the NDP caucus can't wait for me to talk about the fine job that they are doing destroying the economy.

I listened with great interest to the member who just spoke about all the wonderful things that the NDP has done, but it has come to our attention, one of my honourable



colleagues, the member for Glace Bay mentioned that the gross domestic product is 0.3 per cent in Nova Scotia right now, the lowest in the country. That's how well this jobsHere program is working, it's working really well. Basically 0.3 per cent is absolutely no economic growth.

With no economic growth, you can't grow the economy to the point where you can generate taxes the proper way, through economic growth. So 0.3 per cent - it's a dismal outlook. It's unfortunate that's the case. Nova Scotia is a wonderful province to be in. Let's look at why there's such dismal growth in Nova Scotia. I'm sure my honourable colleagues across in government will be quite interested in this information. I might have stated some of this before.

Since this government has come to power - and we'll talk about power, the power rates have gone up 38 per cent. That affects individuals, families, businesses; it affects our economy, that simple, 38 per cent increase. That's just since 2009, a very short time, that's over 10 per cent a year, almost, that's over 12 per cent a year. We've seen the HST go up 2 per cent. Again, that makes it more expensive for today's families, a better deal for today's families - a 2 per cent increase in GST, \$1 million a day into the coffers of the province.

We've seen higher income taxes, the tax that the now Finance Minister says that we shouldn't have a bracket increase in income tax. Most people don't notice this bracket increase. If you look at last year's income tax and the years before you'll notice each year, even if you make the exact same amount of money, you're paying more income tax every year - that's bracket creep. When I first heard what bracket creep was, I didn't understand it but I sure understand it now. I'm sure a lot of people who don't really pay attention to these things don't understand what is happening, but the bottom line is it gives you less money to spend.

If you have less money to spend, that means you can't hire the carpenter to do a renovation on your home or repairs; you can't hire the bricklayer, the plumber, whoever that may be to do work, you don't have the cash to do it - or buy a new car, whatever the case may be.

We've also talked about many things, but here's something that I hadn't talked about before, the cost of food in Nova Scotia. Between 2009 and 2010 - that's when this wonderful new government took power, this better deal for today's families - the average cost of food in Nova Scotia went up 3 per cent. That doesn't sound like a whole lot, but that's 3 per cent added to 2 per cent on the HST on some of the food; some of the food has HST, some doesn't. When you look at this cost, this is something that people need every day, it doesn't matter how much money you make, what economic environment you're in or what kind of money you make, you have to do that.

Let's look at more detail in that. Dairy products and eggs have gone up 7.4 per cent. If you have children in your family, you definitely want them to have dairy products. It's

good for their health and it's really important that they have those. Not only dairy products have gone up 7.4 per cent, but fruit and vegetables, something you definitely want to have, that everybody wants in their diet. They've gone up 5.7 per cent - two of the food groups that are so important for healthy Nova Scotians. At the same time, if people can't afford to buy these, it can affect our health care system. Our Minister of Health and Wellness has talked about that many times.

So when you look at those things increasing, it is very, very difficult for a family to properly feed their children and feed themselves and to pay for the costs of everyday living and the things that cost them more, as time goes on. You have less disposable income. You have less opportunity of a job under this government, even though they tout the Ships Start Here, the new ship contract - which is a wonderful contract, which we fully support, but I don't believe the numbers that they are quoting, 11,000 new jobs, are accurate.

Indeed, I've spoken here before and the day after I did speak - I figured there would be about 1,200 new jobs at the shipyards, based on what work they were going to do at the peak. Then Mr. Irving came on, and I believe he said on the radio the next day that there were really 900 new jobs. Now there will be some spinoff jobs and more of those things there that will do this, but this shows a gross domestic product of 0.3 per cent. In other words, absolutely no growth whatsoever in Nova Scotia's economy. None.

Then we see the money, the bills that were passed here to help unionize and arbitrate new union agreements, that Michelin Tire came in here and talked about. They said it's not a good environment in Nova Scotia to do business, not a good environment, and it may jeopardize long-term investment. I think that's what we're seeing with the gross domestic product. I have a lot of friends who run businesses, and they say now that some of their suppliers have moved to Moncton because it's more favourable to operate there, taking five, six, seven jobs with them each time they move. Each time that happens, that means a few more people aren't employed in Nova Scotia.

You see the job numbers and the losses in jobs, especially in the rural areas, how drastic that is. If you don't have any gross domestic product improvement, there's no hope for new jobs. So if we're losing jobs because the industries are changing what they do or they are moving out of Nova Scotia because of the tax and regulation environment, then you're going to have no growth, and we're actually seeing no growth now.

You see the Economic and Rural Development and Tourism Minister come up here and he has a wonderful plan, quotes two or three things over and over again, but there is no plan. There are no goals, there are no objectives to be met, there's absolutely nothing - a lot of rhetoric and no economic growth. Absolutely none.

The ferry in Yarmouth - they took the ferry in Yarmouth away, and that has hurt tourism in the province. Tourism has dropped - everybody who is connected with tourism. That means there are fewer people working, there's less wealth being generated from

money coming in from outside the area, no matter where you live. I hear it in my riding. I've talked about this before, when bed and breakfast bookings are down by 50 per cent because the ferry is gone, and yet they'll invest almost \$100 million in a pulp mill in a dying industry that may or may not be a good investment. It will be interesting to see how it works out over the next few years. At the same time, they wouldn't invest a small amount, \$2 million or \$3 million, in a ferry operation that would positively affect all the people in Nova Scotia by improving tourism and maintaining tourism where we were.

So we've taken tourism away from the province. We've regulated and changed the possibility for companies getting unionized and first contract arbitration, which is very negative, which we've had many companies - including, I believe, Sobeys is also against this - Clearwater, Michelin, and all these large companies. These are the real economic generators in the province. If they decide it doesn't make sense to come to Nova Scotia, one pulp mill closing in Nova Scotia is going to be a minor impact compared to what the size of these companies are, and that could happen.

We talk about electricity costs increasing 38 per cent. I want to talk about that again. You wonder why that has increased. Well, there's all kinds of possible reasons why the government didn't ever intervene in these things, but they just let them go through.

I would just leave people with one thought. Think about this: Nova Scotia Power gave to Emera, their parent company, \$112.3 million in 2010, and in 2009 they gave \$109.3 million back to Emera. That's money that's going out of the province and since 2000 to 2010, \$1.06 billion - \$1.06 billion. So there's something wrong with this whole situation with Nova Scotia Power and indeed we're starting to see this as the gross domestic product basically flatlined and that means no new economic growth in Nova Scotia.

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

The motion for adjournment was made earlier. We will now rise to sit between the hours of 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. tomorrow.

We stand adjourned.

[The House rose at 4:26 p.m.]

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**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 690**

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

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

Whereas the Oxford Regional Education Centre Senior Golden Bears Boys Basketball Team returned from Pictou in February as the NSSAF Division 4 Basketball Regional Champions; and

Whereas the boys kicked off the tournament with a 94-43 win over North Colchester, taking them into the second game where they beat the Parrsboro Warriors 98-42; and

Whereas the championship game saw the Bears on the court with the Pugwash Panthers, who they sent off with a 64-57 loss, earning them the title of Regional Champions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the OREC Senior Golden Bears on winning the NSSAF Division 4 Basketball Regional Championship and wish them continued success.

**RESOLUTION NO. 691**

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

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

Whereas the Oxford Regional Education Center Senior Golden Bears Boys Basketball Team participated in a tournament in Riverview, New Brunswick in February and came home as champions after winning every game; and

Whereas their first win was against Moncton High School with a score of 102-67 which moved them into game two where they beat out Salisbury with a 51-24 score; and

Whereas the third and final game of the tournament was against Riverview where the Oxford team clinched the championship with a score of 89-78;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the OREC Senior Golden Bears Boys Basketball Team on this outstanding achievement and wish them continued success in the season.

**RESOLUTION NO. 692**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Acadia Triple A Atom Hockey Team, with a number of Windsor-West Hants players playing, won the Nova Scotia Provincial Championship in Antigonish in mid-March; and

Whereas Acadia won all six games in which they played, including a thrilling 5-4 overtime victory over Antigonish and a 5-1 championship game victory over TASA from St. Margaret's Bay; and

Whereas Joe MacDonald of Ellershouse was named the Tournament's Best Goaltender; Damian Hartt from Ellershouse was named the Tournament's number one defenseman; and Bailey Peach from Falmouth was named top forward; while Maggie Burbidge of Falmouth was named Game MVP during Acadia's 3-1 victory over Glace Bay and Blake Rogers from Three Mile Plains also played a starring role in the championship round;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Acadia AAA Atom Hockey Team for their 2011-12 Nova Scotia AAA Atom Hockey Championship and wish them every future success.

**RESOLUTION NO. 693**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Duke of Edinburgh's Award was founded in 1956 by His Royal Highness, Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, and the award came to Canada in 1963; and

Whereas Kayla Walsh of Falmouth was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award is to encourage young people to be active, to participate in new activities and to pursue current interests in the areas of community service, personal skill development, physical recreation and an advantageous journey;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kayla Walsh on being a Bronze Award Achiever of the Duke of Edinburgh Award and wish her all the best.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 694**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas market needs are presenting an increased demand for skilled workers in key sectors of our economy; and

Whereas the Nova Scotia Community College Truro Campus offers a five-year automotive service technician course; and

Whereas the students have a block of six weeks of schooling each year, a total of 8,000 hours of work in the field during the course of the program, and must write the test for Red Seal certification;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mike Boyce of Colchester County for receiving his Red Seal certification which allows him to work anywhere in Canada.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 695**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas market needs are presenting an increased demand for skilled workers in key sectors of our economy; and

Whereas the Nova Scotia Community College Truro Campus offers a five year automotive service technician course; and

Whereas the students have a block of six weeks of schooling each year, a total of 8,000 hours of work in the field during the course of the program, and must write the test for Red Seal certification;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jason Hamilton of Colchester County for receiving his Red Seal certification which allows him to work anywhere in Canada.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 696**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas several students at West Colchester Consolidated School signed up for the knitting exploratory offered during March; and

Whereas Sybil Flemming, the teacher for their exploratory, mentioned the project “Blankets for Canada” in which eight inch squares were knitted and donated with volunteers piecing them together for the homeless; and

Whereas the students decided to make a blanket and donate it to one of the three Truro churches that support the homeless throughout the winter;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sybil Flemming and the students in her exploratory for their many hours of knitting and for enlisting the help of others, especially the teacher assistant, Michele Bowers, who contributed an entire bag of squares thus enabling the exploratory group to send two single bed quilts to help support the homeless.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 697**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas members of the Great Village Garden Club have long been known for their “green thumbs” and for their widely anticipated annual spring plant sale; and

Whereas the Club’s activities over the years have also included a wildflower contest at Great Village Elementary School, perking up the grounds at the Elizabeth

Bishop House, tending the war memorial grounds and supporting the 4-H floriculture competition at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition; and

Whereas in April this year the Great Village Garden Club is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Great Village Garden Club on their milestone anniversary and encourage them to continue with their numerous projects which provide beauty and enjoyment for everyone.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 698**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Carly Carter is a Grade 8 student at North Colchester High School in Tatamagouche, Colchester North; and

Whereas Carly's teachers and peers praise her because she works hard, contributes well, enjoys school and extracurricular activities and is hardworking and humble; and

Whereas Carly is a valued member of both the NCHS girls' basketball team and the soccer team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Carly Carter, a conscientious, involved student with an excellent work ethic for being named student of the month for February 2012 at North Colchester High School.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 699**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Brandon Read is a Grade 12 student at North Colchester High School in Tatamagouche, Colchester North; and

Whereas Brandon's earning Honours with Distinction each of his years at North Colchester clearly indicates his academic excellence; and



Whereas Brandon is a member of the Math League, participates in the Duke of Edinburgh program and takes guitar lessons;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brandon Read, a well- rounded, talented individual for being named Student of the Month for February 2012 at North Colchester High School.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 700**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Dr. Pippa Moss from Tatamagouche, Colchester North recently visited Tatamagouche House, a house sponsored by Moss and other Canadians for AIDS-abandoned and orphaned children in Africa; and

Whereas the house is home to William Ndungu Gatuse and his wife, Damaris and their daughter, Pippa (named after Moss because she sponsored William when he was young) and Erik and Phyllis who both came to the home after donations to Pippa's Place made their adoption possible; and

Whereas donations to the organization provides money for the adopted children for clothes, food, medical supplies and education;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dr. Pippa Moss and the many groups and individuals who have made contributions toward helping these AIDS-abandoned and orphaned children and wish them continued success with these ongoing efforts.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 701**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Gordon Savage has been an active member of the Bedford Lions Club, serving on the board of directors for the past five years and being an exceptional fundraiser by selling everything from Christmas trees to Easter chocolate bunnies, all to support a variety of activities in Bedford; and

Whereas Gordon Savage has been an active member of the 1st Bedford Scouts for 10 years, serving on the 1st Bedford Scouts Group Committee and as a Beaver Leader, Cub Leader and Scout Leader, who trained participants in leadership, friendship, sportsmanship and cooperation and organized many outside programs including winter camping;

Whereas Gordon Savage was instrumental in teaching the Scouts the meaning of their motto, "We Serve";

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this Legislative Assembly congratulate Gordon Savage for his dedication to his community and to the youth of Bedford.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 702**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Dawson Miller has been a member of the Bedford Horticultural Society for 10 years, held every office in the society, helped plant gardens in the Bedford community, has been involved in the annual fundraising plant sale at the Scott Manor House, and served on the Nominating Committee of the Mayflower Gardening Club in Sackville; and

Whereas Dawson Miller has organized garden tours and given presentations in every corner of this province, was a manager of several district and provincial annual gardening conventions and arranged the visit of a gardening group from Australia that will be returning this year; and

Whereas Dawson Miller has been a volunteer with the Canadian Cancer Society and is an honorary Life Member of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dawson Miller on beautifying his community and educating others as to the importance of gardening.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 703**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Sue Stewart has been a volunteer with Bedford United Church for 12 years, as an elder, a member of council, the coordinator of the Pastoral Care Committee, providing support to so many people in palliative care, and is the founder and leader of Spirit Rising, one of the most successful worship groups ever seen at the church; and

Whereas Sue Stewart is a board member of the Hospice Society of Greater Halifax, actively involved in the development of a hospice in Bedford; and

Whereas Sue Stewart is described as a person with great empathy and enormous commitment who follows through on her endeavours and is a steadfast supporter of anyone in need of her pastoral care;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sue Stewart, a visionary, an advocate and source of strength for innumerable people in her community.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 704**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Isabel Wynn has been a dedicated volunteer of the Canadian Cancer Society since 1988; and

Whereas Isabel Wynn has motivated peers in her neighbourhood to donate their time to support the Canadian Cancer Society's vision to eradicate cancer and enhance the quality of life for people living with cancer; and

Whereas the Canadian Cancer Society has recognized Isabel's past efforts by awarding her silver and bronze pins and a certificate of merit from the Nova Scotia Division;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this Legislative Assembly congratulate Isabel Wynn on her outstanding contribution to the Canadian Cancer Society.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 705**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Sandy Tillman and Joann MacCallum have been team managers for the Charles P. Allen High School football team for the past three years; and

Whereas they have transformed the team into an efficient organization by overseeing its finances, cleaning up the gear and locker room, and preparing community cleanup events and charity fundraisers in which the players participated; and

Whereas Sandy and Joann have put in many hours per week of volunteer time long after the football season, helping to mould so many of Bedford's boys into responsible young men;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sandy Tillman and Joann MacCallum for setting an exceptional example of involvement.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 706**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Diana Haydon, a member of the Fort Sackville Foundation for 18 years, has been chair of the Program Committee, a founding member of the Costume Committee, a member of the Artisans in Action Committee, a tea room coordinator, has helped with the yearly Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, arranged exhibits at Sunnyside and Bedford Place Malls, and assisted with staffing; and

Whereas Diana was chair of the Bedford Heritage Advisory Committee for four years, generating a level of public interest in the Scott Manor House such that it was designated a Heritage Property, and as a member of the Heritage Transition Team, helped catalogue items owned by the Town of Bedford at the time of amalgamation; and

Whereas Diana, as a member of the Bedford Grandmothers to Grandmothers for three years, was involved with the Dare to Dine fundraiser and the Little Dresses for Africa Committee, and is also a member of Quilt Canada and of the Atlantic Sewing Guide, which established an annual workshop in outreach in the aid of Bryony House;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Diana Haydon for working to highlight and preserve Bedford's proud past, and for all her kind work in this community and abroad.

**RESOLUTION NO. 707**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Christina MacDougall has been an active volunteer with the Girl Guides of Canada for 11 years; and

Whereas Christina MacDougall is a role model and great mentor, instilling a strong sense of community service in the girls of her unit; and

Whereas Christina MacDougall's accomplishments with the Girl Guides of Canada include earning an All Round Cord as a Guide, a Gold Thanks Award in 2004, a Silver Unit Guider Award in 2009, and a Bronze Merit Award in 2010;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Christine on volunteer efforts with the Girl Guides of Canada.

**RESOLUTION NO. 708**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Ken and Betty Smith have been active members for 39 years in the Kwebec Chapter No. 27 Order of the Eastern Star of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, working diligently on every function, including the preparation of exceptional meals; and

Whereas Betty has offered her services as a razor-sharp chaperone at school dances, wherein she claims she "never missed a trick," and Ken, retired from the DND Fire Department, found time to assist Scouts Canada; and

Whereas Ken, as a Mason, has held a number of offices including Master of the Bedford Lodge and the Royal Arch, and both Ken and Betty are involved with the All Saints Anglican Church on the Outreach Committee, delivering bulletins and items to church members, and in pastoral care, visiting hospitals;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ken and Betty Smith for the many years of service to the community of Bedford, the Eastern Star, the Masons, and All Saints Anglican Church.

**RESOLUTION NO. 709**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Bill Wilson has been a supporter of the MS Society for 13 years, having started by selling flowers in Bedford during the annual Carnation Campaign, transporting the flowers to a sales location and returning to remove the remaining flowers every day of the campaign; and

Whereas Bill Wilson is also a loyal volunteer with the Cancer Society, who delivers, sells, and collects unsold daffodil kits at local shopping malls during the campaign; and

Whereas Bill Wilson, a member of the Knights of Columbus for 50 years has given his time and energy to the many projects taken on by the Saint Ignatius group, including ushering and taking up collection, and has for years volunteered with Beacon House, working on displays and moving merchandise, and with Meals on Wheels, delivering hot meals to those in need;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bill Wilson for his generous contribution to the community, which has improved the lives of so many.

**RESOLUTION NO. 710**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Terry Yuill has been an active volunteer with the 1<sup>st</sup> Bedford Scouting Group of Scouts Canada since 2007, when he was appointed Group Quartermaster; has been part of the Group Committee, monitoring the activities of over 100 youth and volunteer leaders; and Group Cabin Manager, overseeing the safety of youth and volunteers at the organization's leased cabin at Miller Lake; and

Whereas during his time as Quartermaster and Cabin Manager, Terry was also an Assistant Cub Leader at weekly meetings and at special events and camps throughout the year and is currently an Assistant Scout Leader; and

Whereas Terry was an active member of a Bedford-area volunteer committee, Imagine Our Schools; a hockey coach; a lacrosse coach; has taught sailing out of the Bedford Basin Yacht Club; is currently the volunteer Class Development Officer and Webmaster for the Canada-wide association; and was recently appointed the Vice-Commodore of Sail Training for the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Terry Yuill on his proven track record of volunteerism and for setting such a positive example for the youth of Bedford.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 711**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Lawrence Baker has been a volunteer with Saint Ignatius Church for 25 years, during which time he has been a member of the Knights of Columbus and served as Eucharistic Minister and Mass Coordinator; and

Whereas Lawrence Baker is always willing to pitch in at the church whenever he is needed, from serving at the altar, ushering at funerals, fundraising, or maintaining the church building; and

Whereas Lawrence Baker has served as a Scout Leader with Scouts Canada for 12 years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Lawrence Baker for his unswerving dedication to his church and his community.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 712**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Brenna MacMillan, a Grade 10 student, has willingly offered her time to many of the volunteer and outreach activities offered at the Bedford United Church and has served as a youth representative on the Joint Needs Assessment Committee at the church; and

Whereas Brenna MacMillan has volunteered at the weekly free suppers served to the needy at Saint Andrew's United Church, has taken the time to socialize with seniors at Northwood's Ivany Place, and participated in the Cobequid Christmas Cheer Program which provides families with food and presents at Christmas; and

Whereas during her time as a Girl Guide, Brenna MacMillan organized several outreach activities including Angels with Backpacks and a fundraising drive for Phoenix House;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brenna MacMillan for her compassion and interest in her community and encourage her to continue her unselfish activities in the future.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 713**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Mary Boston has been an integral part of the ministry at Bedford Baptist Church for more than 30 years as a member of the Church Visitation Committee, bringing cheer to those in nursing care facilities and to the sick and shut-ins in their homes, accompanying seniors to medical appointments, serving as a greeter at Sunday worship, and as a member of the church's social committee, arranging numerous events; and

Whereas Mary Boston has been a faithful volunteer at Beacon House, sorting and stocking food and helping clients, and with the Cancer Society for many years; and

Whereas Mary Boston spent more than 40 years of her life bringing comfort and healing to others, both as a professional hospital nurse and a VON in the community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mary Boston for her compassion, care, and support, and thank her for being a source of good cheer and comfort for so many.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 714**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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



Whereas Brian MacLellan has volunteered with the Air Cadets for 15 years as chair of the parent support group as well as assisting with fundraising, training and mentorship; and

Whereas Brian MacLellan continued with the cadets even after his son graduated from the program, becoming a staff member and building rapport with all the cadets; and

Whereas Brian MacLellan has been recognized by the Bedford Air Squadron as a Friend of the Squadron, an award granted only to members who have devoted themselves to the program for many years;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly thank Brian MacLellan for his contribution to the 342 Bedford Air Cadet Squadron, to the young cadets and the Bedford community.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 715**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Joanne Guilderson has been a driving force behind the success of the Bedford Lawn Bowls Club as a member of the club for 13 years during which time she held the positions of secretary, match chair, vice-president and president, and continues to volunteer at the club at least six hours a week in the summer season; and

Whereas Joanne has been a steadfast participant in the Sackville Lionettes Club for 39 years, holding the positions of secretary, treasurer, vice-president, president and director, and dedicating up to four hours each week to the club's activities; and

Whereas Joanne Guilderson has been a dedicated member of the Dartmouth Curling Club for 30 years during which time she was a director for 16 years and also served as secretary-treasurer and president, and is active with the club at least six hours a week in the winter;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this Legislative Assembly congratulate Joanne Guilderson for her boundless enthusiasm, which has served to improve all of these organizations and inspired others to take on executive positions within them, and thank her for making Nova Scotia a positive place to live.

**RESOLUTION NO. 716**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas Joyce Heffler's volunteer work dates back to World War II where she tended to injured marines stationed in Halifax; and

Whereas Joyce Heffler has volunteered for countless organizations in Bedford including but not limited to the Bedford Leisure Club, the Bedford Baptist Church, and numerous elementary schools; and

Whereas Joyce Heffler's accomplishments include serving as the first female deacon at the Bedford Baptist Church and the first female president of the Telephone Pioneers in the Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador region;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Joyce for her long-time dedication to the Bedford community.

**RESOLUTION NO. 717**

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas more than 11,000 Nova Scotians volunteer their time with the Canadian Cancer Society in the fight against cancer; and

Whereas the Certificate of Merit award is given to those persons who have given significant volunteer service to the Canadian Cancer Society and have helped to further the society's mission; and

Whereas Yazeed Sobaih has created an annual fundraiser, a video game tournament called *Frag for Cancer*, which happens every October and in addition to this Yazeed also takes his fundraising initiative to Camp Goodtime, Curl for Cancer, Relay for Life and Dalhousie University;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Yazeed Sobaih on his successful fundraising initiative and on being honored with the Certificate of Merit by the Canadian Cancer Society, Nova Scotia Division.

**RESOLUTION NO. 718**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on February 23, 2012, a very special occasion took place when Terri-Lynn and Aaron LeBlanc welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Terri-Lynn and Aaron on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 719**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on December 16, 2011, a very special occasion took place when Suzanne and Jean-Guy d'Entremont welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Suzanne and Jean-Guy on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 720**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on January 13, 2012, a very special occasion took place when Jessica and Ben Allen welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jessica and Ben on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 721**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on March 13, 2012, a very special occasion took place when Gloria Marginson and Jamie Doucette welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Gloria and Jamie on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 722**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on January 19, 2012, a very special occasion took place when Allyson Melanson and Jordan Roberts welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Allyson and Jordan on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 723**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on March 15, 2012, a very special occasion took place when Colette and Allan Doucette welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Colette and Allan on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 724**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on November 25, 2011, a very special occasion took place when Nicole Leadley and Marc-Robert d'Entremont welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Nicole and Marc-Robert on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 725**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on December 6, 2011, a very special occasion took place when Kristy and Jordan Surette welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kristy and Jordan on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 726**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on January 5, 2012, a very special occasion took place when Sheena Stoddard and Brian MacIntosh welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sheena and Brian on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 727**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on December 21, 2011, a very special occasion took place when Samantha and Jason LeBlanc welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Samantha and Jason on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 728**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on April 17, 2012, a very special occasion took place when Robin Muise and Malcolm d'Entremont welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Robin and Malcolm on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 729**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on February 2, 2012, a very special occasion took place when Angeline and Dennis d'Entremont welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Angeline and Dennis on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.



**RESOLUTION NO. 730**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on December 12, 2011, a very special occasion took place when Falon and Marcel Doucette welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Falon and Marcel on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 731**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on March 8, 2012, a very special occasion took place when Dana and Randy Belliveau welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dana and Randy on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

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**RESOLUTION NO. 732**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas Bill Cosby once said, “the hardest truth for a father to learn: that his children are continuously growing up and moving away from him (until, of course, they move back in).”; and

Whereas on February 7, 2012, a very special occasion took place when Amber and Evan Jacquard welcomed their twin daughters into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Amber and Evan on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.