



DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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HALIFAX, THURSDAY, MAY 10, 2012

Sixty-first General Assembly

Fourth Session

12:00 NOON

SPEAKER

Hon. Gordon Gosse

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

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

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

Therefore be it resolved that through its \$65 million in cuts to public education that this NDP Government has shown no respect for teachers in Nova Scotia and that during this Teacher Appreciation Week, the Liberal caucus reaffirms its call on government to restore education funding.

It was submitted by the honourable member for Dartmouth East.

We will begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens.

MS. VICKI CONRAD: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition on behalf of my constituents, with the operative clause reading:

“We the undersigned have issue with the proposed closure and program changes and feel that Queens County deserves a dedicated adult learning environment serving our population.”

Mr. Speaker, I have also affixed my name.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

The honourable member for Lunenburg.

MS. PAM BIRDSALL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition on behalf of my constituents, with the operative clause being:

“As Nova Scotian consumers, we request the opportunity to be afforded the same services and privileges as consumers in other provinces. We request the Province of Nova Scotia to amend the current Liquor Control Act to allow ferment on premise wine operators.”

Mr. Speaker, there are 140 names, and I have affixed my name.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

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

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place today to inform the House that our government has approved the business plans for the nine district health authorities and the IWK for 2012-13. This is the first time ever that district health authority budget plans have been approved this early in the fiscal year. It's a commitment we made to ensure better management of our health care system, and stands in sharp

contrast to previous governments that sometimes didn't even approve business plans until almost a full fiscal year had passed.

The district health authorities told us they wanted plans approved in a timely manner so that they had the full year to implement their plans to be more efficient and to use their resources wisely. With these plans, the district health authorities are helping our province live within its means. They knew health care costs had doubled over a 10-year period, and they knew this was not sustainable and that a new approach was needed.

The district health authorities have reduced their administrative costs, so that Nova Scotia is now below the national average and continues to decline. Joint efforts, like merged services, will reduce administration even further, and in the upcoming year alone will save almost \$8 million.

We asked district health authorities to be more innovative, and they are. That means we can spend our health dollars on patients and provide better care sooner. This year we will once again hold the line on the amount we are spending. The district health authorities and the IWK again will receive \$1.6 billion.

Mr. Speaker, containing health care costs is challenging. It's hard work and it's work that is ongoing. Last Fall we asked the district health authorities to protect mental health services as well as to find efficiencies in areas that would have a minimal impact on patient care, and they have done that. This has been a thorough, in-depth exercise for those who manage the operation of our health care system and I want to thank the CEOs, the board chairs, and the staff of the Department of Health and Wellness. Together we are helping to ensure health care services are affordable now and sustainable into the future. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for the advance copy of her ministerial statement. I do believe that it's a positive development that business plans were approved as soon as possible, and I agree it's helpful for the DHAs to have a full year to implement the plan, however damaging the plan may be. It is unfortunate, however, that these plans do not become part of the budget debate process so that all Nova Scotians can see the impact health care cuts will have on the delivery of health care.

Perhaps a more useful ministerial statement today would have been the impacts of the cuts to health care and not a statement on the approvals. It is suspected by many - and I've had this confirmed by at least one CEO - that job cuts are anticipated this year, so the proof will bear itself out soon enough as to the extent of the impact these cuts will have on patient care. I further understand that X-ray services in the Annapolis Valley, both at Eastern Kings and Western Kings health centres, have been cut as a result of this year's

business plan. The minister can't deny that this will not only impact patients but will also impact wait times.

These are just two examples of details that will be forthcoming. While the minister boasts about administrative savings, it still remains that we have higher administrative costs than the requirement of health care delivery that a population of 940,000 warrants. Despite asking DHAs to cut administration, the minister saw fit to increase her own departmental administration costs to the tune of \$2.5 million over the forecasted amount for the last fiscal year. So now her own administrative costs total over \$65 million.

I note with interest the comment that she asked boards to protect mental health services. We only need to look at the IWK, which is forced to lay off workers who are providing direct hands-on patient support in order to pay for staff to assess people on a wait list faster. Both program support and more timely assessments are necessary, yet it was financial pressures of this NDP Government that forced the IWK to make the tough decision of taking from Peter to pay Paul.

Mr. Speaker, the details will bear themselves out over the next few days. That is when the true impact will be known. I doubt very much we'll be seeing anything soon - a ministerial statement on the detailed cuts contained within the business plans which have been approved by this NDP Government.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare. (Interruptions)

The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, as much as I like the great people of Clare, I have the great people of Argyle to represent as well.

I thank the minister for providing us with a copy of her statement today. When it comes to the business planning process for the district health authorities, this is a large chunk of the dollars expended by the Department of Health and Wellness - \$1.6 billion. Mr. Speaker, what I don't see in this today are the actual details. Normally the district health authorities or the minister will submit them to this Legislature so that we all can look at where the expenditure - the \$1.6 billion - goes. We would really like to see the details of those expenditures.

The second point that I really want to make is that I don't think that they are probably worth much at this point because of the labour negotiations that are going to continue to go on throughout this year. We already know with Local 42 that that number, the 1 per cent that would have been budgeted for in the business plan has changed to something much more dramatic. We're looking at labour negotiations that are bringing in pay increases of 6 to 9 per cent over three years. Is that representative of the business plans themselves? I would really like to have a look at those so we would know whether the

dollars are available to district health authorities as the nurses go into their contract talks, as other allied health professionals go into their contract talks, of whether the dollars are actually available.

Mr. Speaker, I know the minister talks about the increase in health care, the modest increase that they have received. Unless it is one that takes into consideration the true labour negotiations, I don't think that the district health authorities will come anywhere close to their budgets without making some serious cuts in order to receive them. The Premier, himself, actually made that comment not so long ago - in order to pay for certain labour negotiations, that it probably meant less jobs in the health care system.

Again, it's one of those issues where the devil is in the details. I know she's here talking about the business plans today but on behalf of all Nova Scotians, we'd all like to see them.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage on an introduction.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw the member's attention to your gallery, the Speaker's Gallery, where we're joined today by Douglas Day. I had the opportunity to meet Douglas this past weekend in the great community of Whitney Pier, where Douglas was part of a Polish dance group that performed at the Polish Hall in commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Saint Michael's Polish Association and Benefit Society, for which, of course, we passed recent amendments to their legislation. It was the first piece of legislation that was in English and in Polish.

I know, Mr. Speaker, they appreciate that effort that you brought and I'd like to say, and hopefully all members would give a warm welcome to Douglas Day who joins us here today. (Applause)

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

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 987

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

Whereas the third week of May is Foster Parents Recruitment Week; and

Whereas foster parents can be young or old, married or single, working inside or outside the home, and with or without children; and

Whereas foster parents open their hearts and homes to children who come from challenging circumstances and need love and support during a transition;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House commend our foster parents around the province who inspire others to consider becoming foster parents with their spirit of giving.

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. 988

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 Justin Rafuse and Cory Taggart, both Grade 9 students at Uniacke District School, volunteered to help staff with the daily maintenance of the school's flagpole when they were in the fifth grade; and

Whereas since offering to help, both boys have taken the responsibility seriously, and have learned about flags, halyards, and protocol in the process; and

Whereas Justin and Cory have fulfilled their duties, without prompting, every day for the last five years, and have shown a great deal of commitment at such a young age;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House recognize Justin and Cory's commitment, commend them for their dedication and join me in wishing both boys well as they move on to high school this June.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, before I do my resolution would you permit an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: I would like to introduce guests that we have with us today in the east gallery. I would ask them to rise as I introduce them. They are members and volunteers of Cystic Fibrosis Canada. With us we have Pamela Barnes, Jack Barnes and Stephen Vigneau. I thank them for joining us and I ask members to 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 Minister of Health and Wellness.

RESOLUTION NO. 989

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

Whereas each week two children are diagnosed and one person dies from cystic fibrosis, the most common fatal genetic disease that affects Canadians; and

Whereas Cystic Fibrosis Canada, a national health charity with more than 50 volunteer chapters, works tirelessly to find a cure while helping people and families affected by cystic fibrosis; and

Whereas Cystic Fibrosis Canada is a global leader in cystic fibrosis research by investing more dollars in life-saving cystic fibrosis research and care than any other non-government agency in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize May as Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month and congratulate Cystic Fibrosis Canada for their commitment to those affected by cystic fibrosis and on finding a cure.

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.

THE PREMIER: As you know, I just read a resolution with respect to two young students from Uniacke District School. They are here with us today so I'd like to introduce them and ask them to stand and to get the recognition of the House of Assembly. We have with us today Justin Rafuse and Cory Taggart. They're the Grade 9 students at Uniacke District School I mentioned in my resolution, they're here with their families, and I would ask members to give the boys and everyone a warm welcome. Welcome to the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: It is with great privilege that I would like to introduce a group of students from the Ross Road Elementary School. There are 31 students here this afternoon from Grades 3 and 4, and they're accompanied by Marion Bernard-Nauss and Donna Elliot, two teachers for the two classes, as well as four parents and one EPA. I'd like to say it's a wonderful school and they do a great job there with the kids who come from all over to the school. I ask you to rise and receive a warm welcome from the Legislature. (Applause)

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

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 990

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

Whereas for over the past 100 years the hardy fishing vessel known as the Cape Islander has been built on Cape Sable Island; and

Whereas two of the original builders, William Kenney and Ephraim Atkinson developed a design and incorporated ideas and suggestions from local fishers; and

Whereas the basic design remains the same today but many alterations have been made over the years - there are literally thousands of Cape Islanders in use along the North Atlantic Seaboard, Canada's West Coast and the West Indies;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge the significant contribution of the original builders in the design and development of the fishing vessel the Cape Islander, which is well-known and recognized on an international level.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 89 - Entitled an Act to Protect Patients and Provide for the Fair Resolution of Contract Negotiations in Health Care and Community Services. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

Bill No. 90 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 69 of the Acts of 1992. The Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition Commission Act. (Ms. Lenore Zann)

Bill No. 91 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 85 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Condominium Act. (Ms. Diana Whalen)

Bill No. 92 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 45 of the Acts of 2011. The Safe Collection of Scrap Metal Act. (Mr. Allan MacMaster)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

RESOLUTION NO. 991

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

Whereas a unique hockey tournament takes place in Greenwood each Fall with four teams and in the Spring with eight teams, for players from the age of 50 to over 80; and

Whereas players come together from communities across Nova Scotia and play on teams arranged through a draft; and

Whereas Gerry Meade, Dave Kennedy, Bob Holmes, Earle Mahar, and Bob Landry were instrumental in starting and fostering these two special weekend tournaments where winning is sort of important, but it's not the only thing - sorry, Vince Lombardi;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate the founders and the Golden Oldies Hockey Club on the tournament's 10th Anniversary and commend them for an event that is based on new teammates, friendship, and inspirations.

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. 992

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 Mira Players from Marion Bridge are celebrating 25 years of entertaining theatre fans; and

Whereas the Mira Players, a volunteer theatre group, have presented a major production each year for the last quarter century; and

Whereas the Mira Players' director for the past 10 years, Archena MacKeigan, praises the group for the camaraderie they each share as well as their love and enthusiasm for theatre;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Mira Players on their 25th Anniversary and encourage the group to continue to entertain theatre-goers for years to come.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

RESOLUTION NO. 993

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

Whereas 42 years ago, on May 10, 1970, legendary Boston Bruins defenceman Robert Gordon Orr scored the goal capturing the Stanley Cup that unforgettable NHL season; and

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

Whereas loyal Bruins fans remember Bobby Orr's tremendous talents, highlighted by his memorable May 10th goal;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Bobby Orr's Cup-winning goal on May 10, 1970, with best wishes of good luck to loyal Bruins fans in their team's quest to future Stanley Cups.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Clare.

RESOLUTION NO. 994

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

Whereas the Halifax Regional Search and Rescue's Eco-Endurance Challenge was held on May 5-6, 2012; and

Whereas the Eco-Endurance Challenge fundraising event challenged your navigation abilities as well as your endurance in the backcountry; and

Whereas 196 participants took part in the Challenge 1 competition for Emergency and Search and Rescue responders;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ralph Dugas, Daniel Gaudet, and David Comeau for finishing first in the competition, with a score of 740 points and eight controls, and wish them continued success in future competitions.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

RESOLUTION NO. 995

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 Northside Community Centre hosted a championship game in the recent Vince Ryan Memorial Hockey Tournament, showcasing the new facility that has a state-of-the-art geo-thermal ice-making and heating system, in-floor heating, and a walking track; and

Whereas this was the first time a championship game for this tournament was held on the Northside and organizers wanted to show the teams from away the new facility; and

Whereas the tournament features 134 hockey teams from all over North America and the Northside was proud to provide hospitality and an excellent centre in a championship game;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the importance of the Northside Community Centre and the Northside community, and thank the staff and volunteers who make it such a great facility.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Queens.

RESOLUTION NO. 996

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

Whereas adult high school is an opportunity for people to continue their education in a safe and productive environment; and

Whereas residents of Queens expressed their disappointment at the school board's decision to move the adult high school from the Goreham facility to another location; and

Whereas after discussions between program directors, students and staff at the Department of Labour and Advanced Education, the search for a new location for adult education in Liverpool has become a team effort;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House commend the program directors, students and staff of adult education programming in Liverpool, and the staff of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education for their finding a new independent location for adult education programs in Liverpool.

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. 997

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

Whereas this NDP Government has hiked taxes, and stood by and done nothing while power rates have skyrocketed; and

Whereas this NDP Premier has never once appeared before a power rate application hearing in order to protect Nova Scotians from the skyrocketing cost of power; and

Whereas not only has this NDP Premier failed to protect Nova Scotian families and businesses from the skyrocketing cost of power, but has imposed a tax on every single power bill in the province, ensuring that every Nova Scotian pays even more on every power bill;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly strongly urge the Premier to start showing leadership and stand up to Nova Scotia Power, instead of sitting idly by while power rates continue to skyrocket and life becomes less affordable for Nova Scotia families.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 998

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 this week is National Hospice Palliative Care Week; and

Whereas Hospice Palliative Care Week is an opportunity to raise awareness about the services and care available for families with loved ones suffering from life-limiting illnesses; and

Whereas it is also a time to recognize the achievements of the wonderful individuals who provide Canadians with the care and support they need during difficult times;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly show our appreciation to those working in hospice palliative care, and thank them for their incredible contributions.

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. 999

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore District High School concert band is comprised of 19 music students, under the direction of Ms. Allison Penwell; and

Whereas after weeks of rehearsals outside the regular school day, the concert band entered into the Atlantic Band Festival on May 5th, the largest band and choral festival held on the East Coast; and

Whereas after a successful performance, the Eastern Shore District High School concert band received a Gold Standard and was awarded Outstanding Brass Section;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate the students of the Eastern Shore District High School concert band and their director, Ms. Allison Penwell, for their impressive achievement at the Atlantic Band Festival, and wish them continued success into 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 Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 1000

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

Whereas this week is Hunger Awareness Week in Canada, a week devoted to raise an awareness about the solvable problem of hunger; and

Whereas more than 22,000 Nova Scotians accessed community food banks last year, and of that number 7,000 are children and youth; and

Whereas people across the country will raise awareness by fasting, making donations to their local food bank, and sharing their experiences with others so we can one day eradicate the hunger problem in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly show thanks to those working at our local food banks, and do what we can to raise awareness and address the issue of hunger in our province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

RESOLUTION NO. 1001

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 Glace Bay Sports and Volunteer Hall of Fame will host its annual dinner and induction ceremony this Friday, May 11, 2012, at the Bayplex in Glace Bay; and

Whereas the Glace Bay Hall of Fame recognizes gifted athletes, coaches, builders and volunteers who have contributed to the rich sport culture of our proud town and played a role in our countless championships over our 110-year history; and

Whereas the Hall's Class of 2012 includes the talented Jackie Ferguson, who starred on many baseball, hockey and fastball teams, spent years as a coach with the Glace Bay Little League program and was also an award-winning bowler and dart player, and Jackie was also a member of the Mel White Auto Datsuns and the Glace Bay Alpines, where he was a proud teammate of the current Speaker of the Nova Scotia Legislature;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jackie Ferguson and his family on his induction into the Glace Bay Sports and Volunteer Hall of Fame and wish him good health and happiness in the years ahead.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1002

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

Whereas Strait Regional School Board Superintendent Jack Beaton recently received a provincial award for his efforts in education; and

Whereas Mr. Beaton has dedicated 38 years to public education as a teacher, vice-principal, principal, coordinator of education and human resources, superintendent, and president of the Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators; and

Whereas Mr. Beaton's leadership experience, understanding of today's educational challenges and his personal attributes have all helped to provide leadership and direction to the school board and enhance the education of students;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge Jack Beaton's dedication to education and congratulate him on a much-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 Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 1003

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

Whereas Bailey Ross, Frank Garron, Kamrin Maryatt and Zachery Robinson make up Digby's Junior Curling Team; and

Whereas in February the Under-13 Junior Youthspiel was held in Truro; and

Whereas Digby's Junior Curling Team finished fourth among the 32 teams competing;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House commend the Digby Junior Curling Team on their sportsmanship and wish them continued success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1004

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 late Vince Ryan will be posthumously inducted into the Cape Breton Sport Hall of Fame at the 2012 awards banquet; and

Whereas Mr. Ryan will be inducted as a member of the 1961 Maritime Senior Softball Champions, the Caledonia Aces; and

Whereas the Caledonia Aces were a legendary team that possessed not only a high skill level, but also team chemistry and versatility;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the contributions of the late Vince Ryan made to the 1961 Caledonia Aces and to sports in Cape Breton.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Clare.

RESOLUTION NO. 1005

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

Whereas La Baie en Joie, a dance troupe from Clare, recently participated in the British Association of Teachers of Dancing Festival of Dance on May 6, 2012, in Halifax, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas La Baie en Joie placed first in their category, which included other dancing groups from Atlantic Canada, and had the highest mark for step-dancing; and

Whereas La Baie en Joie placed first amongst the Nova Scotia dancing groups that competed in the category of Nova Scotia's Traditional Dancers;

Therefore be it resolved that La Baie en Joie be congratulated for winning the BATD Traditional Rose Bowl and for winning the Dance Nova Scotia Traditional Rose Bowl.

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. 1006

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 newly opened Sydney Mines Community Office has been a going concern offering afterschool programs for children ages 5 - 14; and

Whereas community police officer, Constable Paul Ratchford, oversees the community office, its staff and volunteers where the drop-in centre operates from two to five days a week and can accommodate 19 - 25 kids per day; and

Whereas the centre helps children interact socially, provides a safe place for kids to discuss concerns or problems, play games, do research, work on homework and has had a major positive impact on volunteers as well as students;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Constable Paul Ratchford and all those who help to make the centre help kids in a safe, fun learning environment.

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. 1007

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

Whereas Merrick Seidel is a 10-year-old student at École Shannon Park; and

Whereas Merrick is a member of the Dartmouth Titans Gymnastics and Trampoline Club and competes at the Argo A level; and

Whereas in January Merrick qualified to attend the 2012 Canadian National Gymnastics Championships in late May;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Merrick Seidel on his achievements and wish him success at the Gymnastics Championships in Regina, Saskatchewan.

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. 1008

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 Monday marked the beginning of National Nursing Week across Canada first initiated in 1985 with this week's theme being "The Health of Our Nation"; and

Whereas more than 9,500 nurses here in Nova Scotia make a positive impact on the lives of and well-being of Nova Scotians who are ill or who require medical attention; and

Whereas the second phase of the Nova Scotia's Nursing Strategy which is now underway faces serious recruitment and retention issues when one considers a report from the College of Registered Nurses in Nova Scotia in 2005 indicating there will be more than 3,300 nurses between the ages of 50 to 69;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the critical consequences of ensuring enough nurses are trained and ready to replace those individuals wanting to retire while doing everything in their power to assist with the recruitment of more than 40 nurses to vacant positions in Nova Scotia at this present time.

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. 1009

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 Glace Bay Sports and Volunteer Hall of Fame will host its annual dinner and induction ceremony this Friday, May 11th at the Bayplex Community Hall; and

Whereas the Glace Bay Hall of Fame recognizes gifted athletes, coaches, builders and volunteers who have contributed to the rich sports culture of our proud town and played a role in countless championships over our 110-year history; and

Whereas Harvey Ellsworth Jr. will be inducted for his long and successful career which included many victories and record breaking rounds on the golf course, a second place finish at the 1989 Canadian Amateur Golf Championship, selection as Nova Scotia's Golfer of the Year in 1989 in addition to many appearances with the provincial junior and Wellington Cup teams in the 1980s and 1990s;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in congratulating Harvey Jr. on his incredible accomplishments on the golf course and for his induction into the Glace Bay's Hall and we wish the Ellsworth family the best of weather and luck as they prepare to operate their family business, the Passchendaele Golf Club.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 1010

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

Whereas the Municipality of the County of Victoria is celebrating its 39th Annual Volunteer Recognition Night recently during Volunteer Week in Canada; and

Whereas Dryden MacNeil is a volunteer and youth member of the Iona Volunteer Fire Department, a 2012 canvasser for Nova Scotia Diabetes Association, a member of LEAD, Leadership Education Awareness Against Drugs, one of four students who sits on

the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board Committee of LEAD, and is also a volunteer with Nova Scotia Highland Village and St. Columba Parish; and

Whereas Dryden was nominated by Iona Volunteer Fire Department and selected for a Municipality of Victoria County Youth Award, recognizing him for contribution and dedication to the community of Iona;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize Dryden as a youth ambassador for his community and congratulate and thank him for his contributions to both his community and to Victoria County.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 1011

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

Whereas Ditch Pig Farms in Bear River took a chance and planted approximately 400 Katelyn grapes; and

Whereas this chance was proven positive when Jost Winery transformed Ditch Pig Farm grapes into Bear River Katelyn; and

Whereas this stand-alone sipping wine earned a silver medal at the Finger Lakes International Wine Competition in New York recently;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House congratulate Ditch Pig Farms owner Gerry Chute on his success in growing the award winning grapes and wish him all the best in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1012

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

Whereas Charlene's Bayside Restaurant and Cafe in Whycomagh was featured on *You Gotta Eat Here*, a FOOD Network television program; and

Whereas host John Catucci and his camera crew visited Charlene's Bayside Restaurant and Cafe, introduced viewers to their famous seafood chowder, lobster sandwiches and bucket of mud dessert, showing how each dish is made; and

Whereas Charlene's Bayside Restaurant and Cafe is known for their warm and welcoming staff, returning customers, baked goods and large display of desserts;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Charlene's Bayside Restaurant and Cafe on their television appearance and wish them continued success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Kings West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1013

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

Whereas each week two children are diagnosed and one person dies from cystic fibrosis, which is the most common fatal genetic disease that affects Canadians; and

Whereas Tim Vallillee was born with cystic fibrosis, and now at the age of 44 years has become the poster child of hope, representing significant advances made in the treatment of the disease; and

Whereas Tim and his family and friends have organized a Great Strides walk in Kingston/Greenwood, for May 27th, following a very successful Squash CF Pumpkin launch last Fall;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly recognize May as Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month and congratulate and thank Tim Vallillee, his mother Dorothy, family, friends and supporters for their commitment to those affected by cystic fibrosis and in finding a cure.

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 on an introduction.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to draw the attention of members to some very special guests we have this afternoon in our east galley, and I'll ask them to stay when I introduce them. We're joined this afternoon by Ainsley and Elliott Boyd, who are here today with their mom, Michelle. Michelle is the Senior Policy Advisor in the Department of Health, and they've come to watch some of the proceedings. I'd ask the members to give them a warm welcome.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY**ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The time now is 12:56 p.m. and we will finish at 1:56 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**PREM. - EMERA EXEC. COMPENSATION:
POWER RATE INCREASES - JUSTIFICATION**

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, earlier today we learned that the president of Emera made a 7 per cent increase to his total compensation, which is equal to almost \$3 million per year. The president of Nova Scotia Power has had a 23 per cent increase in his total compensation package, bringing it to \$1.15 million.

My question to the Premier is, does the Premier think power bill increases over the next three years are justifiable when Nova Scotia Power executives are making millions of dollars?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I pointed out to the Leader of the Official Opposition in the past, executive bonuses and incentives to senior executives of Nova Scotia Power are not part of the rate application, nor will they be part of the basis on which rates are decided.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, their salaries are - and I know the Premier would know - and so are the executive bonuses. They were only excluded for one year, and that was last year. The Premier knows that. The Nova Scotia Power president's compensation is \$1.15 million a year; a 23 per cent increase. At the same time, this company is going before the URB for consecutive increases - a 20 per cent increase since they've taken power. Nova Scotians are struggling to meet their power bills, and at the same time they find out that the executives of this company are making millions of dollars. Ironically, that's only one executive. It would be helpful if this company would disclose the entire compensation package that Nova Scotia Power is receiving for all of their executives.

This is further proof that a performance value audit is needed at Nova Scotia Power, as Nova Scotians struggle to meet the energy costs of their families. It is time that we do a performance value audit of Nova Scotia Power. My question to the Premier is, will he order a performance value audit of Nova Scotia Power immediately?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I have said before that audits of the utility have already been completed. This morning on one of the popular radio shows, they interviewed the consumer advocate who represents consumers at the Utility and Review Board. They actually asked the exact question that the Leader of the Official Opposition - in fact, they

referred to the Leader of the Official Opposition's question - and the consumer advocate said that there had been a lot of audits done of the utility, that that was not the issue. What was required at the Utility and Review Board was a diligence with respect to the examination of the rate filings, which is why the consumer advocate was created, of course. It is why the government is there: to oversee the rate applications, to ensure that the rates that are decided are fair and that they take into account only the appropriate expenses.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, what the consumer advocate said was that aspects of the rate filing go under audit each and every time. There has not been a total performance value audit done of Nova Scotia Power in a number of years. I said yesterday that Nova Scotia Power executives have a responsibility to the shareholders, and they do their job very well, but the people in this House and the Premier of this province have a responsibility to ratepayers and he's not doing his job.

Instead of defending these massive increases that the executives of Nova Scotia Power are taking out of the pockets of every Nova Scotian, why doesn't he stand up for Nova Scotia ratepayers and demand a performance value audit of this company?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what we're doing. We're standing up for ratepayers, ensuring that there is a stable generation and transmission system in this province that will get us off fossil fuels, that will create stable, long-term energy prices for Nova Scotians, that will give a competitive advantage to industry and business here in the province.

I only wish, of course, that the Liberal Party had thought about that when they were bringing forward the legislation that created Emera and Nova Scotia Power. That would have been useful. (Applause)

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

PREM. - HFX. REG. SCH. BDS.: CUTS - ENROLMENT-BASED CONFIRM

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, we now know that the Halifax Regional School Board has been forced to deal with a \$10.2 million budget shortfall because of cuts imposed on them by the NDP. The Premier told all Nova Scotians that cuts were enrolment-based. In fact, we know that the Halifax Regional School Board is going to lose 154 teachers, as a result of their cuts. Only 25 of those teachers are losing their jobs because of enrolment-based decline. All the rest, other than those 25, are the result of cuts beyond enrolment-based cuts.

I will quote from the chair of the Halifax Regional School Board, and I'll table this from Mr. Irvine Carvery - a very wise and able chair of the school board, I might add, Mr. Speaker - who says, "If declining student population determined the amount of cuts boards

should have received, then our board should have only received a cut that relates to 25 positions . . ." and not 154. A very wise school board chair.

My question to the Premier, why did the Premier tell Nova Scotians teacher cuts were enrolment-related when, in fact, they are not?

THE PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, they are enrolment-based. Of course the figures that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party refers to and that the board referred to is over a year. In fact, the decline in Nova Scotia and in this board - although as the board chair has pointed out, is not as pronounced in Halifax as in other parts of the municipality - has in fact been going on for a number of years. That is why I assume that the board chose to find savings in the manner in which they decided to find them.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, if the Premier believes that answer, he should have ran for chair of the school board and not for Premier of all Nova Scotia because the fact remains that 25 teachers are enrolment-related, but 154 teachers in total are being cut, because of decisions made by his government.

It's not only the teachers, Mr. Speaker. The Premier also told all Nova Scotians that cuts would be at the administrative level and would not affect the classroom. But, in fact, in addition to the teachers who are being cut, there are 21 school-based support positions being cut, resource teachers and coaches and so on, 8.5 custodial positions, 6 library support specialists - all of these important services to kids in the classroom. That is in addition to the obvious increase in class sizes that will come when you cut 154 teachers out of the system, when only 25 are related to enrolment.

My question to the Premier, like my first question - why did he tell Nova Scotians that these cuts would not be at the classroom level when, in fact, they so obviously are?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I understand why it is that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party is asking the question, although I believe that he is not properly representing the reality of it. The reality is that we have historic lows in class sizes in the province that will continue to be the case. That will continue to be the case in the Halifax Regional School Board.

The decisions around how to deal with the budget allocation, of course, belongs to the school board. They have pointed out that no teachers, in fact, will lose their jobs. These are positions that are being eliminated but, in fact, they will be able to retain all of the teachers they have - all the probationary teachers they have.

We understand that change is sometimes upsetting to people but change, we must. I know there are those who will defend the status quo to their last breath. But if we are to have a system that is truly going to meet the needs of the people, the system needs to change.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, what is upsetting to people is when they have a Premier who tells them the cuts are only enrolment-related when they're not, and they have a Premier who tells them that they won't affect the classroom when they do. That is what is upsetting to the students and the parents of Halifax Regional School Board.

Yesterday the Premier was questioning the reading skills of some members on this side of the House. Let's just look at the facts - when you cut 154 teachers out of the school board, when only 25 are related to enrolment, then obviously the class sizes are going to go up. That is a matter of simple math. Maybe the Premier needs to go back to math class to find that out for himself, Mr. Speaker.

But it's not just, of course, the Halifax Regional School Board. The chairman of the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board said yesterday: "The education system, with these latest rounds of cuts, is moving 15 or 20 years backwards." I will table that for the benefit of the Premier and the House.

That is where the Premier is taking our school system - backwards, not forward. So my question to the Premier is, will he review the spending of his own Department of Education before he takes our classrooms another 20 years backwards?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I had pointed out, there are very significant declines. There was a review done of the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board by Mr. Stewart. That was released and it demonstrated that even though the number of students in that board had decreased by something like 2,225, I believe, or 2,250, the number of teachers in the system had only gone down by 10 and that, in fact, the number of hours that had been allocated for teachers' assistants in the classroom had actually gone up by something like 146 hours, I believe was the figure.

So, far from taking back the system, we are investing in it, and if that is the opinion of the school board chairman, then that is an indictment of her own policy.

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

PREM.: NSP RATE HEARING - PARTICIPATE

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, it's a sad day in our province when our Premier won't stand up for Nova Scotians, when the Premier refuses to stand up against Nova Scotia Power.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is, will the Premier personally step in and participate in the approaching rate hearings and say no to power rate increases in 2013 and 2014?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Official Opposition should know that there is the Utility and Review Board process. It is one that is designed to take into account the requirements that the utility has in order to be able to fulfill its mandate, in order to be able to supply electricity to the people of Nova Scotia. That is a job that is fulfilled by the board based on the evidence that comes before it. Surely, the Leader of the Official Opposition is not suggesting that for political reasons, the Premier of the province ought to be involved in that process.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure defending Nova Scotians is for political reasons. (Applause)

We heard today that the president of Nova Scotia Power has had a 23 per cent increase in his executive compensation package. There are seven other executives in this company - we don't even know what their compensation package is. As a matter of fact, the Premier is unwilling to mandate a performance value audit of this company so that Nova Scotians can be reassured that this company has done, like every other Nova Scotian company has had to do, and that is look inward for savings and not look into the pockets of Nova Scotians for more money each and every time.

Mr. Speaker, we're not asking the Premier to intervene to do something to break the law - we're asking the Premier to intervene to stand up for Nova Scotians. So my question to the Premier is, will you stand up for Nova Scotians and say no to another rate increase?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we're standing up for Nova Scotians every single day when it comes to power rates - and it's hard to believe that the Leader of the Official Opposition could stand here and make that kind of a submission when it was he and his Party who voted against taking the HST off electricity. It is hard to believe.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, it was this Party that didn't mislead Nova Scotians. It was that government that said they were going to reduce the HST and then add their own NDP electricity tax. It was that government who said, when they were in Opposition, that they would put a stop to power rate increases.

Since they've been in power, since they have been the Government of Nova Scotia, power rates have gone up 20 per cent. As a matter of fact, we're on record of having at least one power rate increase every year since they've been in office. They're batting a thousand. My question to the Premier is, when is he going to stop being the chief apologist for Nova Scotia Power and stand up for Nova Scotians?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians know that they have no greater champion when it comes to energy prices than the people in this caucus. It is the people in this caucus who took the HST off of home electricity, not just home electricity but also energy. It is that Party over there that voted against taking the HST off. If they had their choice electricity would be 8 per cent higher today than it is.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

PREM.: MARITIME LINK REVIEW - LEGISLATION

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: My question is for the Premier. Last week at the Public Accounts Committee I asked the chair of the Utility and Review Board whether or not a change in legislation would be needed to ensure the Premier's commitment that the URB fully review the Maritime Link project can be met. The chair said that he felt legislation would be needed unless it became an NSP project, and even in that case they would only review part of the project, and I'll table that.

The same day I asked the Premier whether he would be willing to introduce legislation to correct that issue and the Premier said, ". . . I've done my best to explain to the member opposite why he is wrong." - regarding legislation being needed - ". . . and that was not what the chair of the Utility and Review Board said." - even though he did and I just tabled that. So, Mr. Speaker, did the Premier just not know that legislation would be needed or did he mislead the House?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I said on that day legislation was not required, it could have been done via regulation. We chose to make sure that it was a nice, clean package, one that the Opposition could understand. The bill is currently before the House and we look forward to their endorsement of it and its speedy passage.

MR. YOUNGER: Even the department's deputy minister said that you were wrong yesterday and said they wouldn't be able to review the portions of the project outside of Nova Scotia under any legislation currently. All we're asking is for the Premier to admit that he made a mistake and he didn't check the facts before he spoke, and frankly, everybody makes mistakes. I'm sure Nova Scotians would appreciate it if the Premier would just simply say he made a mistake, they are correcting it introducing the legislation, and we move on. So, Mr. Speaker, will the Premier please admit that he was mistaken when he said legislation wasn't necessary for a complete review of the project?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, of course, as I've pointed out, that's not what the chair of the board said so I'll quote from the actual Hansard. It says, "I hope and expect that we'll be given our normal mandate under Section 35 of the Public Utilities Act to make whatever inquiry we think we need to make . . ." Mr. Gurnham said. I'll give this back to them so that perhaps the member opposite can read it.

Obviously under the provisions of the legislation the Utility and Review Board would have been free to do an analysis of that project, as I've pointed out, but I also pointed out for greater certainty and to ensure that this was placed before the people because I think it is a very important project. I'm hopeful that the members of the Opposition will support it. We introduced a bill, which is a good bill, and I would hope they would quickly endorse it.

MR. YOUNGER: What the Premier forgot to say in that quote was that that was a part of the answer to the question but also said that would only apply if Nova Scotia Power made the application and it would still not allow a review for the part of the project outside of Nova Scotia. Mr. Speaker - and the Deputy Minister of Energy said this yesterday - the difference with the legislation that was introduced yesterday is that this will allow the URB, if Cabinet decides to review the parts of the project that are outside of Nova Scotia and allow a review of the project if it is not submitted by Nova Scotia Power, which is an entirely different issue. The legislation introduced yesterday addresses an issue that the Public Utilities Act doesn't cover. So the Premier is going to have to make regulations on this and decide what the Utility and Review Board should review, related to the Muskrat Falls project.

Will the Premier promise and commit in this House that the regulations governing the review will not just be a free pass but will ensure that the project is fully evaluated, both the benefits and the risks?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I said here in the House, you know the member for Dartmouth East likes to cherry-pick various pieces of what people have said and he tries to interpret them in ways that are (Interruptions) Creative is the best possible word.

I said there would be a complete review of the project. It is now completely obvious that there will be a complete review of the project. I am satisfied, I would think that the member opposite would be satisfied but if he's not satisfied with that, I hope that he is at least satisfied now that he may content himself with the idea that his time in this House hasn't been completely wasted.

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

PREM.: MUSKRAT FALLS REVIEW - INDEPENDENCE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I just heard the Premier say that he hopes that members on this side of the House support the Muskrat Falls project. I just want to point out that unlike the Premier, we asked that very basic, common-sense question, how much will the power cost, before we make up our minds about expensive projects like that.

The fact is the Premier is committed to this project without knowing the cost himself, either the cost of the project or how much the electricity will cost when it reaches Nova Scotians' homes. Now he is planning a partial review but he has kept to himself the power to set the scope, in terms of that review, which is hardly an independent review of the project. That is the kind of neglect that leads to skyrocketing power rates.

My question to the Premier is, why did he reject the option of doing an independent review of the entire Muskrat Falls project, the costs and the benefits?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I pointed out a number of times to the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party that until the design is fixed, until the costs are known, it's not possible to do the kind of review that he has talked about.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we do have on record what it is that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party has said in the past and this is what he said on March 8, 2011, to the National Press Club, "I am an opposition leader. This is one of those times when I actually completely agree with what the government is doing and have said so in the legislature . . ." (Applause)

MR. BAILLIE: Of course, Mr. Speaker, but like every other Nova Scotian, when we agree with something, when we like a new car - I know the Premier likes to make that analogy - we always ask, how much will it cost? But that is the one question he won't ask on our behalf. That is how he is different from us - we may like something but we still want to ask how much it will cost before we go any further.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier said it's a little like asking what the price of next year's car is, when it hasn't even been designed. The problem is that's exactly what the people of Nova Scotia pay the Premier to ask, how much it will cost. He doesn't know but he is already committed to the project so my question remains, will he commit to an independent review of the Muskrat Falls project so that we will all know how much it costs?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, that is entirely the point of the piece of legislation that has been introduced. I want to read another quote for you from the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, also at the National Press Club on March 8, 2011. He said, "Coal is dirty and expensive and getting more expensive and electricity prices continue to climb in my region as a result - which is a hardship for our industrial base and manufacturing . . . This agreement provides an opportunity to give Atlantic Canada a long term fixed price to a clean, green supply of electricity."

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, for the first time in umpteen Question Periods, the Premier is finally saying something that makes sense, in answer to a question. The problem is he still hasn't said how much it will cost, and he's now going to do a partial review but he keeps to himself the power to decide what that review will cover. The problem is that Nova Scotians have been down this road before.

He cooked up a consultation with Nova Scotians about taxes that led to the highest HST in all of Canada, which cost Nova Scotians \$1 billion. He cooked up a Labour Management Review Committee that led to first contract arbitration, something every other business in the province said was wrong, and now he's going to pull the wool over their eyes again. For all of those reasons, just like in those circumstances, he has already made up his mind regardless of the cost. My question to the Premier is, will he do the right thing this time and permit a complete, independent review of the Muskrat Falls project?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, of course there will be a review, as we've pointed out. That's what the legislation is about; it brings it before the independent Utility and Review Board. I'd like to just read one more thing from the address to the National Press Club by the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. This is what he said about Muskrat Falls, "This may be the single, greatest way that by working together we can kick start real, true sustainable long term economic growth for our region . . . I commit my party to making sure we will use this as a start of a whole new age."

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

PREM.: TAX CUTS (2014 & 2015) - SCHEDULE CONFIRM

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, the Premier made a promise to cut the HST to 13 per cent by 2015, based on a projected or anticipated or hoped-for surplus that may or may not exist at some point in the future. The surplus is expected because of improved economic growth in 2013. RBC says that growth will be led by Deep Panuke, Shell, the shipyard and Donkin Mine. The shipyard and Donkin Mine, two of the four projects needed to generate a surplus, are now behind schedule. My question for the Premier is, with two crucial projects behind schedule now, how can this government promise a tax cut in 2014 and 2015?

THE PREMIER: Through good stewardship and management of the resources of the province.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I think the Premier knows there are a lot of unknowns that are coming up in the future; financially it's very hard to predict what's going to happen. We have the costs of the federal prison plan coming down, the federal costs that are going to be downloaded to us, and we don't know the magnitude of those costs. We'll see definite decreases in health transfers coming from a new federal agreement starting in 2014; again, we don't know the full impacts of those. The Premier said the province will take a financial hit if demographics are not factored into the health transfers right off the bat because of our aging population. Clearly there's a lot this government does not know about the future threats to our finances.

The NDP broke their last tax promise without having all of the information and now we see again the NDP are making promises without all the information. My question to the Premier is, without knowing the cost of the Conservative crime bill and without knowing more about the new Health Accord, how can the people of Nova Scotia trust your tax promise this time?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, in fact, we do know what the projections for the Health Accord are and what the increases will be going out the next couple of years; it's in the longer term that we are concerned about. They are decreasing a portion of the federal

health transfers so, of course, those are concerns for all of us. What I can say is that for the last three years we have met and exceeded the budget targets every single year.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, on March 20, 2012, the Finance Minister rejected cutting the HST because he said it would be simply too much to consider. The Finance Minister said it was too expensive and it was also economically the wrong thing to do. He said, "When you talk to people about if you're going to reduce taxes, which one, the great majority of people say sales tax, and so it's not like I'm going to say, 'Yeah, but the economists know better than you.'"

Only two weeks later the Premier stood in this building and promised an HST cut. First the NDP promised not to raise taxes and then they raised them. Then the NDP Finance Minister says there should be no tax cuts, and then, in a quick about-face, they promised to cut them.

Mr. Speaker, my question is, with so many mixed messages and broken promises, why can we trust the NDP Government now?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance has produced for the province a budget which year over year has set targets. They have met those targets. In fact, I think we are the first government in 40 or 50 years - maybe ever - to have come in under budget three successive years. But one thing we do know for sure, and that is that taking the approach that the Liberals are taking, that the Official Opposition is taking by promising to spend hundreds of millions of dollars more money, is not the road to either a balanced budget or to being able to give tax relief to Nova Scotians.

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

ERDT - SHIPS START HERE: INFO - DELIVER

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question will be to the Acting Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. This government wants to keep the process around the Ships Start Here contract quiet. They're keeping it secret. On March 8th the Progressive Conservative caucus submitted a FOIPOP application to the Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism asking for the minutes of the Ships Start Here steering committee, a group that only had eight meetings. On April 11th we learned that the ERDT decided to extend the 30-day response time for the application to an additional 30 days - to May 11th, tomorrow.

Today our caucus learned that all the information requested has been gathered. They actually found the binder. But we also learned that we won't get those minutes now for another 20 days. My question to the acting minister is, will he ensure that the ERDT lift the veil of secrecy on Ships Start Here and commit to delivering the information before tomorrow's deadline?

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I think all Nova Scotians should feel proud about our province being selected to build these ships. With any freedom of information request, there are procedures and policies in place. We're going to continue to follow those and we're going to respond in a timely manner to ensure that we have an open and transparent policy here in the province when we deal with FOIPOP requests. We'll continue to do that.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the meetings in question happened over a span of 56 days, yet it's taking almost twice that time for the minister to gather and deliver the information. What's the big secret? My question again - I'll ask it again - will the minister ensure that his department meets its obligation and delivers the minutes of those eight meetings before tomorrow's deadline?

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that question. No question, as a department that receives a request for FOIPOP information, the province is following the proper procedures by consulting with third parties. We're doing our due diligence when it comes to this request, and we'll continue to do that with future requests. We will, in the appropriate amount of time, respond to the freedom of information request.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it's funny the government was able to plot, plan, and execute a \$600,000-plus campaign in a shorter time than it takes them to cough up the minutes for eight meetings. It's also strange that it only took minutes for the Minister of Community Services to put a matter of privacy - personal information about an individual - up on her Web site.

I want to ask, why the double standard? When it's information about the executive director of Talbot House, it's open season. When it's information about how this government spends taxpayer dollars, it takes months to get simple information. I will ask one more time, will the minister stop making a sham out of the FOIPOP process and deliver the minutes to our caucus before tomorrow's deadline?

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, we're very clear on the commitment when it comes to FOIPOP in the province. The only thing that's really confusing is the Third Party's commitment to the Ships Start Here program or even the contract for Irving shipyard. We're going to take advantage of the thousands of good jobs that are going to be created by the announcement of this contract. I just wish that Party would get behind it for once.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

COM. SERV.: STRAIT AREA WOMEN'S PLACE - FUNDING

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, in the Spring of 2011 the Strait Area Women's Place opened its doors to provide a long overdue service in our community. The centre provides service to women and girls facing adversities such as poverty,

unemployment, barriers to education and violence. The precarious economic situation in the Strait has made this community resource a much needed institution and one that women and girls in the community turn to. Sadly, the Strait Area Women's Place funding ended on March 31st and the good work that the centre did in the community will come to an end.

Given that there are no other options for these services in the area, will the Minister of Community Services see to it that these services for women and girls can continue in the area and fund the Strait Area Women's Place?

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, this particular funding project was actually a pilot project that was funded through another source and that funding has been completed and that pilot was completed.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, we're all blatantly aware of that, the question is whether the Minister of Community Services will find the funding to continue the service. The Strait area has been dealt some tough blows lately. Businesses have closed. Employers are downsizing or disappearing and this has undoubtedly had an effect on families in the region. In a letter to supporters of the women's centre, the Minister of Community Services says, "I wish I could do more."

Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that she can do more and she should do more. So my question is, will the minister reconsider her decision and meet with members of the community to really see the impact this women's centre has made in the Strait and how important it is to maintain its funding?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I certainly know the importance of such services. That's why this government brought in \$500,000 on an annualized basis for the transition houses and women's centres and certainly I'm always available to meet with organizations.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, organizations in the area that know the value of the Strait Area Women's Place have written to support the continued funding of the centre. Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Association want to see it continue and have written letters of support to the minister. The Strait Area Transit wrote to the minister on the issues saying: ". . . we cannot emphasize enough the importance of having the appropriate supports in place such as SAWP."

As well, the mayor of Mulgrave, whom I'm sure this government is aware of, has also written to the Minister of Community Services asking that this service remain in our community. So my question is, will the minister reverse her decision, support women and girls in the Strait area, and ensure that this organization can continue to carry out their important work by providing them with stable funding?

MS. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the member opposite understands that it creates a very difficult position when a pilot project is funded by another source and when that project finishes, then the expectation is on the government to pick up those costs. So it's something that can create difficulties when you're looking at the budget situation and so that's what we have to consider as a department because this is not just the first time that this has happened in our province. It happens often when there's federal funding that may be just one year or from another source. So what they should do is go back to the other source of funding. That's what a pilot project is, usually when you run a pilot project, the hope is when it's analyzed at the end of that project, that if it's successful, then that particular funder that initiated it would continue on. However, as I said, we're always willing to meet and have open discussions with any community organization.

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

COM. SERV.: TALBOT HOUSE - FUNDING RESTORATION CONFIRM

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, when asked about the future of Talbot House on Tuesday, the Minister of Community Services said she had already given us all the information, she simply had nothing more to add.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's funny, considering how many Nova Scotians, including members from this Party, have been left with unanswered questions. Talbot House has been put through the wringer by this minister's department. All they've got to show for their 53 years dedicated to helping rehabilitate young men is a tainted reputation, false accusations and closed doors.

Mr. Speaker, the minister was wrong to think she had given us all the information. We asked a simple question, with no answers, so we're going to ask it again, can she tell us now whether she plans on restoring funding to Talbot House, or if she'll make them reapply through the RFP process?

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I want to clarify again because I have done this over and over, that this government and the department and this minister did not close Talbot House, the board of directors made that decision.

The review is a review on organizational procedures, that is it. The tie-in between that and any allegations was never done by this department, it was done through the media and the board also provided a press release to the media. It's media stories and the Party opposite that is trying to tie those in together.

Finally, I have offered to meet with the board and we will make a decision after we go from that particular meeting.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, the minister refuses to acknowledge her role in the closure of Talbot House. Members of this House know that the string of bad decisions made in her department not only set in motion the inevitable closure of the facility, but also continued to damage the reputation of Talbot House, the board of directors and the dedicated staff, long after they shut their doors.

Mr. Speaker, her department is responsible for \$420,000 of funding for the recovery centre every year. The minister knows full well that without that funding, Talbot House, or any other recovery centre in the province, would cease to exist. On April 17th the minister told reporters that it was up to Talbot House if they decided they wanted to open up service again.

My question through you to the minister, does the minister really stand by that statement? Does she really believe the board of directors of Talbot House are standing in their own way?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, it's very important to know, and I agree with the member opposite that we are the funder, so as a funder, those are taxpayers' dollars. As the funder utilizing taxpayers' dollars, we have to be ensured that the services provided to the gentlemen at the recovery house are the services that are required to be provided, plus that the organization is functioning and meeting the standards in the agreement. It is our responsibility to do that.

If we hadn't done that, I'm sure that the member opposite would be standing there with another story in hand. The fact is that what we're doing is we did an organizational review. Based on that review, we will make a decision in the future as to what direction we need to go to ensure that those receiving the services receive the appropriate services and the taxpayers' money is being well spent. Thank you.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, Talbot House has had quite a legacy in this province. They have been treating and helping young men get back on their feet for over 50 years. The need for those services hasn't subsided.

The minister is responsible for the well-being of those young men and that didn't stop with the closure of Talbot House. The minister needs to swallow her pride and admit her mistakes. My question to the minister, will the minister commit to reopening Talbot House, or to at least getting out of the way so the community can have their important service back?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has to realize that I do understand that Talbot House has been in existence for many, many years, but it was only in 2008 that a service agreement was developed. From that time, it is our job to go and do organizational reviews - we do them all the time - and to see if those requirements that are set out in a contract are being met. When they are not being met, as it's seen in the

organizational review, then we have to make the appropriate decision for the future services for the people of Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare.

**LBR./ADV. EDUC. - EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE: PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES - REVIEW**

HON. WAYNE GAUDET: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. The Department of Labour and Advanced Education is undergoing a review of all of its employment assistance services in Nova Scotia. My question to the minister is, will this review take into consideration the particular needs of persons with disabilities?

HON. MARIYLN MORE: To the honourable member, I appreciate you raising this very important issue in the Chamber. I'm very proud of the extensive consultation and review that's going on with Employment Nova Scotia. We're at a time where, through the devolution of federal funding, we're now in the midst of combining the work of organizations who originally had been funded federally with those who had been funded through the provincial government.

It's important to create a model that best serves all Nova Scotians, so that's exactly what we are doing with the review. There are no predetermined outcomes. We are carefully considering appropriate models. In some areas there may be a universal program providing those services, and in other areas it may be, depending on the population and the needs, that we need to get into more specialized services. But those decisions have not been made and we are doing a thorough consultation.

MR. GAUDET: Mr. Speaker, the Collaborative Partnership Network - a network of nine specialized employment agencies providing services for persons with disabilities - is concerned for the future of their clients. They're concerned that the department review will result in a loss of specialized services for persons with disabilities - and 20 per cent of Nova Scotians live with some type of disability. These agencies have a proven track record of meeting the needs of people with disabilities and want to continue to offer that support to the community. They're concerned that the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education sees the service as another line item she can cut.

Again, to the minister, will the minister commit today to continue funding these vital employment agencies and maintaining specialized service delivery for persons with disabilities as it currently exists?

MS. MORE: After all the time I've spent in this House and the last three years as Minister of Labour, I think it's pretty obvious that I'm a great believer in due process. I've already said that there is no predetermined outcome and we are consulting with the groups.

In fact, I had the opportunity within the last two or three weeks to meet with representatives from that very organization. They had the opportunity to speak to me, to explain the value and the breadth of the work that they do. I acknowledged at that time that I was very appreciative, that the government was very appreciative, of the excellent track record that they have. They had plenty of opportunity to make their points and bring to my attention any of the themes or priorities that they wanted to present, and certainly all of that will be taken into consideration.

MR. GAUDET: Mr. Speaker, the issues related to dealing with clients with disabilities and multiple barriers are complex. The department circulated a questionnaire to all members of the Collaborative Partnership Network and the scope of the questions led respondents to believe that the department is going to mainstream services. The disability community is rightfully concerned about this.

Again, to the minister, will the minister commit to members of the House, members of the Collaborative Partnership Network, and all Nova Scotians with disabilities, that she will continue to invest in this service and maintain specialized employment services for persons with disabilities?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, I've been involved in supporting services to people with disabilities for the past 20 years, both inside and outside of government. I fully understand their needs, I understand the priorities that the Collaborative Partnership Network has put forward. I have reassured them, as I have the House, their concerns are going to certainly be very carefully considered. It may be that, as I explained earlier, we have different models of service delivery, but certainly as a department and a government we owe the citizens of this province a thorough review, an opportunity to get through that review, and make decisions that will be in the best interests of all Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

AGRIC. - INTEREST RELIEF PROG.: SCOPE - LIMITATION

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the interest relief program from the Department of Agriculture only applies to the Farm Loan Board. This makes it difficult for other entities such as the Canada Farm Credit or even the Royal Bank of Canada, which even has a dedicated agricultural loan consultant in the Annapolis Valley - they cannot gain access to this program.

My question to the Minister of Agriculture is, why is the scope of this program so limited?

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, because that's the way I wanted it.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, well, you know, the young farmers I speak to will not be happy with that answer; in fact, it's quite insulting.

Families for two and three generations have used the RBC and the strong consultants that we've had in the Valley and, again, Farm Canada Credit. My question to the minister, will the minister expand this program and allow other bodies to access the interest relief program from the Department of Agriculture, other than the Farm Loan Board?

MR. MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, I told my staff that we would revisit this policy and I want to make it clear that taxpayers of Nova Scotia fund this interest relief program. I see no reason why we want to give a pass to the banks who offer nothing special to new entrants in this province. So the member can stand up and say why he thinks Nova Scotia taxpayers should give a benefit to the banks, when this is a benefit for new entrants who borrow from the people of Nova Scotia, with a lending institution that's sponsored by the people of Nova Scotia to enhance agricultural development in this province.

We are a lender, we have a perfectly good reason to be a lender, and we are the most compassionate lender in all the lending circles. I did make a commitment to the Federation of Agriculture that we would revisit it. I think members can tell by my tone how keen I am on that change, but that's not to say that I'm not willing to take a second look at it.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the second look, but we do have to realize that the real benefit here is to farmers, and especially to young farmers in Nova Scotia, that's who will get the benefits.

Agriculture supports many small communities and businesses in Nova Scotia. Yesterday's announcement about the merger of Dalhousie University and the Nova Scotia Agricultural College was a way at the time to highlight how important agriculture is to our province. In order for farmers to have interest relief, the department must expand the interest relief program and the minister has the power to do so.

My question to the minister is, when will the NDP Government expand the interest relief program from the Department of Agriculture so farmers can gain access to it?

MR. MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, farmers who can gain access to it certainly have to qualify for the criteria of new entrant. If they are someone who has gone to another lender, they can come to the Farm Loan Board, pay out that existing loan with that lender and still qualify for the interest forgiveness at the Farm Loan Board.

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

ERDT: IRVING SHIPBUILDING CONTRACT - FUNDING DETAILS

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, the Irving shipbuilding contract is the single largest shipbuilding contract in Canadian history. Irving won the bid based on merit and we as Nova Scotians couldn't be prouder. (Applause) However, when the province decided to extend a loan of up to \$304 million - \$260 million of that being forgivable - we start to wonder what the government is up to.

My question, through you, to the Acting Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, is, what alternative funding options were exhausted before this loan was authorized?

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, what this government did was to ensure we had the best possible application to win that contract. We stand by our commitment to winning that contract.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, we know the contract is a huge boost to our province; that's not our concern. Our concern is the process the government went through in order to grant this funding, and the structure of the loan that was granted. My question again: did the NDP Government look at even one alternative besides giving Irving a forgivable loan?

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, we did our due diligence. We canvassed all opportunities and we made sure that Nova Scotia and Irving shipyard was in the best position to win that contract.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, we all understand the goal was to win the bid by reducing the bid cost Irving provided. But \$300 million is a lot of money and Irving is a big company, and Nova Scotians want to know if other alternatives were considered. My question through you to the acting minister is, did any other bidder - for example B.C. or Quebec - give a \$300 million loan to a multi-billion dollar corporation?

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, we look forward to having thousands and thousands of Nova Scotians working here in Nova Scotia when this contract gets up and running. I understand \$300 million is a large amount of money, but \$25 billion is a lot larger.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

TIR - MARY JANE RILEY RD.: CONDITION - ASSESS

MR. HAROLD THERIAULT: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. I know he's been a lonely minister over there this session and I knew he needed a question, so I brought him one from Digby-Annapolis.

I've had a lot of calls these past few weeks about a new road that's been built in my riding, the Mary Jane Riley Road. This road was built just this past few months and is breaking up, and I'm wondering if the minister is aware of this and, also, if he is aware of it, is there any inspector in his department who is watching these roads? I brought a piece of this pavement with me - I was going to bring it here and table it, but I was told not to - but it's in my office. This pavement is not much thicker than some of the asphalt shingles on roofs in this province. I don't think you're aware of this, minister, but this has to be looked into.

We have a brand new road there being built that's breaking up in small chunks. I wonder if the minister is aware of this and, if he is, are his inspectors inspecting these roads and is this going on all over the province? If it is, there's going to be a lot of new repaving to be done in this province within two years.

HON. WILLIAM ESTABROOKS: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member opposite. I, of course, know of Mary Jane Riley and the importance of that road in your community. This is the first time I've heard of this concern, but I can assure the member opposite, and members of the House, it's not the first time that I've heard from members or people involved with the projects across the province when it comes to paving.

When there are concerns about jobs that have just been completed of this nature that have just been completed, we will make sure the inspectors are out having a look at that particular one.

I want to assure members opposite that when a job is not done correctly, this minister takes it seriously and there will be a follow-up and I thank you for bringing it to our attention.

MR. THERIAULT: I was just wondering, Mr. Speaker, these companies that are paving these roads, are they bonded? Do they have to come back and repair them? Is there a time limit that they have to come back, because if it goes on too long, they may not come back to fix it? I think it's something the minister has to get on right away. Thank you.

MR. ESTABROOKS: Yes, and something will be done, and bonds aside, the importance of highways and how the job is done by these companies, they will be held to their task.

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

The honourable Government House Leader on an introduction.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery is Father Albert MacPherson. Father MacPherson is head of the Augustinian Healing Ministry and he is out

of Lawrence, Massachusetts, but more importantly, he is from Roaches Road in New Waterford, and one cross he has to bear is that his sister is married to me. So even through his healing ministry, I don't think his prayers can work on me.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to wish Father MacPherson a warm welcome to the House. (Applause)

I should have mentioned that Albert is also a member of the Sports Hall of Fame at the Catholic University in Washington, D.C., and he is a long-distance runner, Mr. Speaker, who spent many years at St. F.X.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

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

The motion is carried.

[1:58 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

[2:37 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and considered the following bill:

Bill No. 79 - Education Act.

and the chairman has been instructed to recommend this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, without further amendment.

Further, Madam Speaker, that the committee has met and considered the following bills:

Bill No. 17 - Financial Measures (2012) Act.

Bill No. 30 - Promotion of Respectful and Responsible Relationships Act.

Bill No. 52 - Conservation Easements Act.

Bill No. 55 - Community Easements Act.

Bill No. 65 - Consumer Protection Act.

Bill No. 78 - Justice Administration (2012) Act.

which were reported with certain amendments by the Committee on Law Amendments to the Committee of the Whole House, without further amendments, and the chairman has been instructed to recommend these bills to the favourable consideration of the House.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, with the consent of the House, would you please revert to the order of business, Private and Local Bills for Second Reading.

MADAM SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 90, and I so move.

Bill No. 90 - Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition Commission Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 90. 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 of the Whole House on Private and Local Bills.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, with the consent of the House, would you please revert to the order of business, Presenting Reports of Committees.

MADAM SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

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

Bill No. 57 - Crosbie Memorial Trust Fund Act.

Bill No. 83 - Annapolis Valley Apple Blossom Festival Incorporation Act.

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

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 84.

Bill No. 84 - Dalhousie University-Nova Scotia Agricultural College Merger Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in the House today to move second reading of Bill No. 84.

As you know, the Nova Scotia Agricultural College has made a significant contribution to the Province of Nova Scotia since it was founded in 1905. Many generations of Nova Scotia farmers have taken part in academic and training programs at the AC, as it is fondly known. In the past 20 years NSAC has expanded its enrolment and become a major regional, national, and international player in agricultural research, education, and innovation.

In addition to educating Canadian students from the Maritimes and beyond, NSAC now has a substantial enrolment from China, the Netherlands, and other countries in fields such as plant and animal science, aquaculture, and environmental science. Researchers and professors have adopted an international focus, building on their work to develop and improve agriculture and agri-food methods in Nova Scotia and the rest of the country. NSAC faculty members attract the second-highest amount of research funding in the province after Dalhousie. Much of their research is of the applied variety, designed to solve real-life problems.

We are here today to help the NSAC expand on all these opportunities through a formal partnership with Dalhousie University, the region's largest comprehensive post-secondary institution. It has been agreed for many years that it's time for a new form of governance for NSAC, which has been operating as a division of the Department of Agriculture. In the 2010 report on the university system in Nova Scotia, Tim O'Neil recommended that government should consider integrating the Nova Scotia Agricultural College into Dalhousie University.

In fact, Dalhousie has had a formal academic relationship with NSAC for close to 30 years. Dalhousie started granting bachelor degrees for NSAC students in 1982 and master's degrees in 1994. Dalhousie has many complementary program areas that naturally link with those at NSAC, and there are also many long-standing research partnerships between NSAC and Dalhousie professors. A merger between these two distinguished institutions offers great potential.

Dalhousie and government together believe that a stronger linkage between Dalhousie and NSAC will accomplish a number of important objectives. It will help promote Nova Scotia as a centre of excellence in Canada for research and innovation in agriculture, agri-food, and bio-resources. It will give students in Halifax and Truro a broader choice of programs and access to the very supportive learning environment offered in Bible Hill. It will encourage more collaboration between researchers at the two institutions and it offers potential long-term cost efficiencies, especially on administration.

The purpose of the bill before the House today is to provide for and facilitate the merger of NSAC with Dalhousie. A set of principles was developed last year to capture what we really want from the merger, especially to preserve the strengths of NSAC within a fair cost-sharing arrangement with Dalhousie. The bill gives specific authority for the

signing of a final agreement that will reflect these principles and make appropriate arrangements for the transition of property, finances, employees, academics, and research.

Madam Speaker, both government and Dalhousie recognize the significant contributions of NSAC's dedicated staff and faculty. The merger negotiations were governed by the principle that Dalhousie and its agricultural faculty will continue to be a responsible and respectful employer. We believe the bill and agreement will ensure fair treatment for NSAC employees moving to Dalhousie. In fact, legislation is already in place to govern this transaction. Legislative amendments passed last year will ensure that employees carry over their collective agreements to Dalhousie on September 1st. After that point, with Dalhousie as the new employer, employees will have a fair opportunity to raise any concerns through their union and a new collective bargaining process will unfold.

Madam Speaker, there are some provisions of this transition for employees that require legislation and, therefore, they are contained in Bill No. 84. The legislation assures that the continuity of employment is not broken and that past service will be recognized by the merged university. The legislation provides for NSAC employees to continue their membership in the Public Service Superannuation Plan. The bill also makes it clear that employees will not be eligible for supplementary pensions once they move to Dalhousie, known as the SERP. This recognizes Dal's right as the employer to opt out of the SERP provision of the Public Service Superannuation Act Regulations and essentially ensures that NSAC employees are treated the same way as their Dalhousie colleagues in this area.

It's very important, Madam Speaker, to Dalhousie to have the tools and resources it needs to operate the campus efficiently and effectively. The legislation and the agreement to come will provide for this. One example is the continued operation of the NSAC farm, a unique educational and research operation that includes a herd of cows, sheep and mink. The bill provides for the minister to give Dalhousie continued access to the dairy quota needed for the farm.

Madam Speaker, we're pleased to report that the merger process we started just a year ago remains on track. We expect the merger to be effective on September 1, 2012, when NSAC employees will officially become employees of Dalhousie and when students will officially enter a merged institution. Over the summer, staff at government, Dalhousie, and NSAC will be working together to complete the agreement and prepare the campus for the transition. I want to acknowledge the ongoing work of everyone who has contributed to the merger project. We see this as a positive measure to promote agriculture and related industries in Nova Scotia. It's about maintaining strong rural communities and creating good jobs.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I want to give you an example of some of the potential in this sector. I refer to Dr. Sean Myles, a Canada Research Chair in Agricultural Genetic Diversity at NSAC, who leads a team of scientists at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Kentville Research Station. Dr. Myles uses modern genetic tools to breed apples and

grapes more efficiently, very important priorities for farmers in this province. Just last week, Dr. Myles and colleagues from around the world had the results of some of their genetic research published in Science magazine. We hope and expect that the merger of Dalhousie and NSAC will help support the success of Dr. Myles and researchers like him in the future. We look forward to what the merger of these two great institutions will bring and with that, I move Bill No. 84 for second reading.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Madam Speaker, as I said in Question Period today, Bill No. 84, an Act Respecting the Merger of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College with Dalhousie University, it's time to highlight the importance of agriculture in our province. There's certainly nothing about this bill, this piece of legislation, that will in any way downplay the importance of agriculture. In fact, everyone is hoping that it will lead to enhanced research and further acknowledgement of the primary role that the Agricultural College plays in support of the agricultural industry in our province.

The legislation was introduced on May 8th of this year to formalize the planned merger of the two institutions. The legislation will enable Dalhousie to continue the Nova Scotia Agricultural College mission as a regional, national, and international leader in agriculture research, education, and innovation. The legislation gives authority for a formal merger agreement to be signed later in the Spring, consistent with the terms of an agreement and principle that were announced on March 23rd.

The target date for the merger has been extended from July 1st to September 1st to allow sufficient time to finalize details of the formal agreement and engage the campus, as the minister said, in transition preparations. The Nova Scotia Agricultural College faculty and staff will officially become employees of Dalhousie on September 1, 2012 - and my colleague, the member for Yarmouth will have things to say in terms of the agreement and the Nova Scotia Government Employees Union.

The legislation makes NSAC faculty and staff employees of Dalhousie under the terms of their existing collective agreement, and they will remain eligible for the province's pension plan. Dalhousie will be given legal access to Nova Scotia Agricultural College information, contracts and assets needed to ensure university operations will continue uninterrupted.

The formal agreement enabled through legislation addresses details of the merger such as the transfer of land, buildings, and equipment that support the ongoing delivery of academic programs and research. The agreement will be made public before the effective date of the merger. As we all know, of course, this has been ongoing for a considerable number of months now, but we all know the kind of detail work that was required on behalf of the department and Dalhousie in order to make this as smooth a change and transition, and very positive for both institutions.

The Nova Scotia Agricultural College has an operating budget for about \$33 million and Dalhousie will receive the government funding provided to the college as in the past, primarily through the Department of Agriculture, which was \$17.1 million last year. It will also receive \$6.8 million in funding in its educational programs through the university memorandum of understanding with the Department of Labour and Advanced Education, as well as revenues from other sources such as tuition and fees. The Department of Agriculture will provide a one-time allocation of \$7.5 million over three years for transitions costs such as IT conversion and urgent faculty renewal projects.

The Nova Scotia Agricultural College, founded in 1905, will become Dalhousie's Faculty of Agriculture under the proposed name of the Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, or Dal AC. The institution employs about 300 faculty and staff and has an enrolment of about 1,000 students.

In essence, Madam Speaker, we're certainly pleased to support the bill; however, we are an adamant supporter of agriculture and the Nova Scotia Agricultural College. As this whole merger started to be developed and evolved, as more and more information came out, the one thing that I heard loud and clear from all those who graduated from the Agricultural College is that the name and the sense of place would continue to have the character of its past and traditions and its place in developing agriculture in this province. That was an unequivocal statement said by so many.

We hope that the merger between Dalhousie University and NSAC is a beneficial one for both institutions and the agricultural industry as well. The research conducted at the institute in Truro was paramount to progress in agricultural sciences in Nova Scotia. At any time you go there for a visit you can see research that's in progress that has been going on for a number of years. And then you get some new research that is going on - two examples would be the SMART tree project whereby we're hoping to support the Christmas tree industry with genetic changes, genetic improvement of the strain of the fir tree so that it won't drop its needles for extended weeks. That, of course, could help the export of the Christmas tree industry, a very sustainable industry, gain new ground for that sector.

Also of interest that I've checked in on a couple of times is the biosolids study that's going on. Looking at it both from a possible fertilizer supplement or, perhaps, even ruling out its value to agriculture. Nevertheless science-based work going on around biosolids is being carried out.

Students from all over the globe come to the facilities in Truro to train and learn about agriculture sciences and becoming world leaders in their fields. We've been attracting a number of students from China and that group of students and arrangements and I guess we would say completion of their program that starts in China and completes with a degree here at the Agricultural College. Hopefully more of those agreements of understanding can take place.

It's important that the work performed in Truro continues to flourish. Dal has its own rich history and we believe it will help to foster the work and research done in Truro. When we consider that Dalhousie attracts the greatest amount of research dollars to our province, it is with every hope that in the areas of food science and biosciences that new dollars can come that will be directed to the agriculture sector. We'll continue to have a prominent place in bringing forth new products, innovations in agriculture.

We know this merger has been in the works for a long time and we wish as well to congratulate and commend the efforts of all those involved and with that I take my place.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: It's my pleasure to stand and speak for a few moments about the bill before us that will, in its end, solidify and finalize the merger between the Agricultural College and Dalhousie University.

I had the luck and the opportunity to be the Minister of Agriculture as well. During that time back in 2003 to learn all I knew of what the Agricultural College had to offer was an absolute eye opener for me who comes from southwestern Nova Scotia where there wasn't a whole lot of agriculture going on. To be sort of inducted into that institution, I think, was a phenomenal piece of interest for me for my term as minister.

To understand the tremendous amount of work done at that institution, to see the importance of the agricultural research that was being done there was absolutely amazing. I know that the previous member talked about the draw of research dollars to Dalhousie University but during the time - I think it's probably still valid - for the size of the Agricultural College, per student, there were more research dollars brought to that institution than any other institution in Canada because of the stuff that it does. Whether it's research on bio-nutrients, research on basic things like carrots and baby carrots, research on mink and Aleutian Disease or, whether it's research on aquaculture and nutrients and feed for that kind of agricultural, even though they're fish, agricultural crop.

I had the opportunity back then to work with the Agricultural College's first president. Prior to 2003, the administrative leader of the Agricultural College of course was the principal. Dr. Philip Hicks, I did have the opportunity to work with him and, of course, a wonderful group of administrators with the Agricultural College because again, let's not forget, at that time the Agricultural College was a full division of the Department of Agriculture in the Province of Nova Scotia.

I had the opportunity as well, on a number of occasions - I think it was three convocations but I'm thinking it might have been just two - that I was able to attend the convocation not only as a spectator but, as you know, for a long time the Minister of Agriculture was the chancellor of that university and I had the opportunity to convey the diplomas and the degrees at the Agricultural College. I thought that was a really interesting

thing to see all those young men and women who were either finishing their studies or just moving on with their diplomas into the agricultural sciences, whether they were moving on to the vet college or to further their education at Dalhousie University or other universities in Canada.

It was at that time where, through negotiations and discussions, we started to look at the opportunity of moving the department away from the Agricultural College to try to delineate between the two. I think my first chair was John Bragg - I think it was John Bragg, I can't quite remember back then, it was quite a long time ago now, when I think about it - that they were asking at that time, it's time that we have our own wings, that we get out from under the departmental, the government's hand and to be a true institution, to be a true university at the time.

I know that our government at the time provided them with the tools in order to move that forward. I know that my successor, the Honourable Brooke Taylor, did move on in that vein as well, to basically provide an independence to the university that they hadn't had before. I know that through the relationship that the Agricultural College has always had with Dalhousie University, because we all know that it was Dal for a number of years - and I can't recall how many years, but it's been a 20-year period probably that Dalhousie University had been conveying (Interruption) - since 1982, so much more than 20 years. See, that's what happens when the minister helps, just provides the information as it's needed. I've always enjoyed working with John - sorry, with the member or with the minister.

Madam Speaker, it's funny how you just get drawn off on different tangents on this one. But quite honestly, I think this is a good move for the Agricultural College but also in the broader community that it represents or helps. This is a leader in agricultural science all across Nova Scotia and the Maritimes, as well as a leader in Canada. I think that if we are to strengthen the agricultural industry, the agricultural community here in Nova Scotia, I think we need a strong AC. So I hope, though, that there are no real pitfalls along the way, that the Agricultural College maintains its quasi-independence, that we will always know it as the Agricultural College, that it doesn't necessarily become Dalhousie University at Bible Hill, or something like that. I think that would be frowned upon.

I think it's important not only to the agricultural community, but of course to Bible Hill and Truro and all of central Nova Scotia because it is a tremendous developer of good jobs, to be able to bring in the professionals that the Agricultural College has brought in over the years has been a tremendous addition to those communities and has strengthened them over the years.

So in closing, I just simply want to attach myself to the comments that I think this is a good move forward in the life cycle of the Agricultural College, I think it will continue the independence of this institution, and I think that it will continue the great tradition that

the Agricultural College has had since 1905. With that, I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to this issue today.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill.

MS. LENORE ZANN: Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I stand in my place today to speak to this bill. Being the MLA for Truro-Bible Hill, I'm thrilled to see all of the different changes that are coming to our area, which many of us feel are very, very positive. Truro and Bible Hill have been long-standing bastions of education and of the training of teachers.

The Agricultural College itself is 107 years old. I was very honoured to be able to attend the very final graduating class ceremony last Friday, along with the Minister of Agriculture, and to be able to read to the students the resolution I had done that very day in the House for them as the final graduating class of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College as we know it, before it becomes part of Dalhousie University and will be known as the Faculty of Agriculture for Dalhousie University. I'm telling you, the resolution went over very well with the students, the parents, and everybody else who was in attendance.

Truro itself has one of the two oldest teachers' colleges, and it's called the Normal College - the old Normal College. It's a provincially-designated heritage building. It's gorgeous. Many, many famous people have gone through its doors, including Moses Coady, who started the Coady International Institute in Antigonish. Margaret Atwood's mother and aunt both went to that school, and she has written about it many times in her books. In fact, her mother and father met there when her mother was sliding down the banister and bumped into a boy at the end, knocking him over. That ended up being Margaret Atwood's mother and father.

So the Teachers College, then, was formed from that original old Normal College, and a new building was built. The Teachers College in Truro, which my father, Paul Zann, taught at for many, many years, was renowned throughout the province as having one of the best programs for teaching teachers how to teach. I would say probably half to three-quarters of the teachers in Nova Scotia today went through the doors of that education establishment, and it was a very, very sad day when it was announced that the Teachers College was being closed. My father actually took an early retirement package at that time, but since then, I can't tell you the times that people have said that was the worst decision by a government - I believe it was a Liberal Government at the time - and it was the worst decision ever in Nova Scotia for the closing of an establishment. I hear it even today. The Nova Scotia Community College has sprung up in its place, and it is a fantastic institution. However, most people say, why can't we have the Teachers College back again, because they trained so many good teachers?

So when it was first announced that there was going to be a merging of the Agricultural College with Dalhousie University, there was a lot of fear. A lot of people

came up to me and said, oh, my gosh, this isn't going to be the same thing as the closing of the Teachers College, is it? I was glad to be able to say to them, no, this is the opposite. This is a good news story. This is a win-win for our area. Not only is it going to be strengthened by this joining with Dalhousie, but it's actually going to make Bible Hill go from a college town to a university town. So Bible Hill is now going to be a university town, and that is going to attract more teachers, more professors, more researchers, and more international students, and it gives it an even better name than I believe it had already - and it had a fantastic name before.

I know there is still a lot of fear out there among some of the staff members, but I believe in their union. I believe the NSGEU will fight for them and will get them the best possible arrangement going with Dalhousie who will be their new boss. I've met, several times now, with Dr. Tom Traves who is an amazing person and very compassionate. He has great hopes for the staff and for the facility. He recognizes the importance of each of these people to the success of this college which is now going to be a university, going forward.

I would like to mention a few names. Dr. Bernie MacDonald who has been the co-president for the last several years - my goodness what a wonderful man. He actually taught at the teacher's college with my dad before, and he is retiring and we had a special going away ceremony for him. Also Garth Coffin was a wonderful man and he ran that college for many, many years and he's a good friend of myself. He and his wife Trinkie do a lot of wonderful work for the community now that he is retired. He has been an amazing person to help run that college and make it become the success it already has been. The other person I'd like to mention today is Leslie MacLaren, Dr. MacLaren, who will remain on with Dalhousie University. She was the other co-president with Bernie MacDonald and she's remaining on board. Again, she is an amazing woman, I'm really pleased to see she is staying on.

The new Dean is Dr. Harold Cook who has a great respect and a lot of years behind him. I'm sure that he is going to do a great job there. Also, I just want to say that their connection to Kentville, there is a station there that does a lot of experimentation and research in agriculture, and is a very old one - my colleague from Kings North, actually that's in his riding - will be attached in a very great way to our newly formed Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture, and together the research that will be accomplished is going to be great.

As some people have already mentioned about the Christmas tree experimentation and the research there, there is also incredible research being done with sunflowers, blueberries; the types of things that grow every naturally here in nova Scotia. When you do the research you find out that they actually have some great health properties. For instance, they've discovered at the Agriculture College that sunflowers also have a natural insect repellent in them and so they are making these little devices that can be hung in peoples' kitchens which will repel insects in a natural way and there are no additives, no chemicals.

There are some companies in New Zealand and Scotland who are working with the college to develop these incredible, innovative techniques.

The farmers who grow the agriculture that goes into these different products are actually going to be receiving monies from the products. I think this is another way forward for our farmers to be able to add on value-added to their products, blueberries especially. Blueberries - as we know, many people like to drink the blueberry juice but what some people don't realize is actually the skin itself is what holds most of the nutritious value. The college is actually looking into making all kinds of products using the skin of the blueberry. Again, these are going to be value-added products that will be sold all around the world and there are many companies who are interested in working with Nova Scotia to help make our products number one products in the world.

There is also the Agri-Innovation Centre which this government has just built, and it is there as well. Now it is going to remain with the Government of Nova Scotia and with the Department of Agriculture. There is a lot of interest from research companies who want to have their stations based there to help be right in the centre of central Nova Scotia where all of this incredible agricultural growth is happening.

So I am proud and pleased to be the MLA of this area, especially at this time when there is so much interest in it and when this government obviously is putting so much time, effort and finances behind growing our agriculture of Nova Scotia and making our province one of the best in the world and putting our name on the global map.

With that, Madam Speaker, I take my place.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is something that I know we all hope will be productive and a beneficial move for the Agricultural College and Dalhousie and hopefully the sector as well. I just wanted to highlight some concerns that have been brought to my attention by the NSGEU, as the Labour Critic for the Liberal caucus.

I know the NSGEU has some specific concerns around a lack of provisions in this legislation to protect the employees who will be impacted by the move, specifically around the conditions of their employment and ensuring continuity of their benefits. I know that the minister has been made aware of these concerns brought forward by the NSGEU. As the Liberal Critic for this caucus, they are concerns I am sympathetic to and, as members of this Legislature, I know we all want to do what is best for those who are working in our various sectors and do what we need to do to ensure that their benefits and pay are protected.

According to the NSGEU, there aren't provisions in the current legislation that they feel protects their members to a sufficient degree. In fact, they referred to this being the weakest set of protections measures that they've seen in this sort of legislation. My hope, as the Liberal Labour Critic for our caucus, is that the minister takes these into consideration and addresses their concerns appropriately. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to thank everybody for their comments; certainly for their positive comments. I also want to acknowledge in particular the comments of the member for Argyle, only because they were complimentary to me (Interruption) I'm being heckled by my own side. I did want to make note that he was a former Minister of Agriculture and also the former member of this House from Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley, the Honourable Brooke Taylor. It was legislation introduced, I think, in 2007 that started us toward this and that Act is repealed in this legislation.

I also want to acknowledge the transition team that was put in place at that time, led by Dr. Bob MacKay, a former Deputy Minister of Agriculture. I think all of us agree that in these early days of the 21st Century that this is the place for the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, the most appropriate place for it to move to and I think because of the history has indicated from degree-granting, which started back in 1982 with Dalhousie.

I guess the fact that I will be the last minister who will have the NSAC as part of the portfolio of the Department of Agriculture - certainly it's important to me that this will be deemed as a good move and looked upon as a good move into the future. I think that from all corners that have had really anything to say on this, they see it as the appropriate thing to do and that Dalhousie's commitment to the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, which will become their Faculty of Agriculture, and I think it's their hope to use AC in the name, whether that will be agricultural campus or whatever, but that people will still want to refer to it as the AC and hopefully will be able to do that.

I think that the issues raised around the employees, I think the government has worked very hard to ensure the best for them, that they can take their public service superannuation plan and their service award. I think the member for Yarmouth may not be aware that some years ago - I don't know if it was entirely the NSGEU, but certainly there was a movement on the labour side for Section 31 of the Trade Union Act in a move out of government that the employees would be protected and that they could take their contract with them. That's exactly what happens in this case, so I don't necessarily agree that there's a need for other legislation.

I thank the members for their comments. We all look forward to a positive future for the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and the students who will become the farmers, the agrologists, et cetera, and contribute to the economy and the lifestyle of people in rural Nova Scotia. With those few comments, I move second reading of Bill No. 84.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill 84. Would all those in favor 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. 86.

Bill No. 86 - NewPage Port Hawkesbury Pension Plans Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Madam Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 86.

It is my pleasure to speak today about Bill No. 86, an Act to Provide Protection for the NewPage Port Hawkesbury Pension Plans. Under the Pension Benefits Act, the administrator of the pension plans, Morneau Shepell, must prepare a financial report within six months of the change of ownership that compares the value of the plan's assets with its obligations. The Superintendent of Pensions would review that plan, and on approval of the plan, Morneau Shepell would purchase annuities for the current members of the plan. All four plans are underfunded, which means the plans do not have sufficient assets to provide 100 per cent of the benefits that members expect to receive.

Our government recognizes that buying annuities in today's market could mean a significant loss of benefits for NewPage employees and pensioners. On average, the loss would be in the vicinity of 40 per cent. If annuities were purchased at this point it would lock in the loss of value that the plans have seen in recent years, and this, in turn, would mean reduced benefits for plan members. Our government is taking steps through this bill to give these women and men an option that could result in some market recovery and some restoration of lost value.

Recently both the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union and the non-unionized salary workers have been fully briefed by the plan administrator. We are now acting at the request of those two groups. This legislation will extend the windup by

up to 11 years, providing some time for the plans to recover some of their lost value, which would mean somewhat better benefits for plan members. Morneau Shepell suggests that recovery may be as high as 5 per cent.

Employees can still retire under this option but take a reduced pension, and will have to wait up to 11 years to realize their final pension payment. If this bill is passed, retirees already in payment would see a decrease in their benefits when the bill is proclaimed, which we forecast to be around July 1st. Will the plans recover all of their loss over the next 11 years? It's unlikely. Is there any guarantee that the markets and interest rates will rebound over 11 years? No one knows where the markets will be at that point. Overall, the markets tend to grow, and we are hopeful that continues; in addition, this legislation allows a more aggressive investment strategy, allowing for up to 40 per cent to be invested in equity, up from 30 per cent, in the hope that will generate a greater return on investment and better benefits.

We understand that some pensioners may not want to take this risk and, as a result, retirees will be allowed to invest their share of the pension's plan assets in an immediate annuity purchase. These amendments would retain the private administrator, Morneau Shepell, which will provide plan members with annual updates on their plan and their entitlements.

In closing, I want to reiterate a commitment made by the Premier that taxpayers' money would not be used to prop up the NewPage pension plan; pension plans are, after all, an employer's responsibility. The Premier and our government have honoured that commitment, yet we have taken measures to respond to concerns raised by the NewPage pension plan members and to provide them with some element of control over their benefits.

Again, Madam Speaker, I move Bill No. 86 for second reading.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 86 as the MLA for Richmond which, as most people in the House would know, is where the actual mill is located, because while it is referred to as NewPage Port Hawkesbury, it's actually located in Point Tupper, Richmond County, and not Port Hawkesbury, which has caused some confusion.

Madam Speaker, I have to say I was a bit surprised by the title of the bill because it's called an Act to Provide Protection for the NewPage Port Hawkesbury Pension Plans. Well, we can only hope that it's going to provide protection because the minister in her own comments recognized that the workers, in essence, have decided to take a risk in asking for an extension of their windup - and by meaning, risk, there is the unfortunate possibility that investments could actually decrease rather than increase. So one can only

hope that by choosing to say it's an Act to provide protection for the NewPage pension plans, it will actually achieve that.

What brought us to this bill here today, Madam Speaker, is the fact that in September 2011 the operators of the mill in Port Hawkesbury, NewPage, filed for creditor protection due to an overwhelming amount of liabilities that had been incurred. Needless to say, that certainly created a shock to my community, my riding, and certainly the entire Strait area, and a significant portion of Nova Scotia which benefits from that mill. Since that time we have been, I believe, working collectively to try to better understand what the causes were that NewPage had this amount of liabilities and wasn't able to continue operating; to try to find new ways of addressing those concerns so that a new operator would be successful; and certainly to address the concerns by the employees themselves.

I'm pleased to say that I joined the Leader of the Official Opposition, the Leader of the Liberal Party, when we met in the Strait area with the Mayors and Wardens Action Committee which was formed to bring together the municipal leaders from the Strait area to discuss this most important situation. Following that, we also had the opportunity to meet with the executive of the union representing the vast majority of the workers at the NewPage facility and certainly pledged to them that we would do everything we could to address their concerns and, as well, try to find a new buyer for that facility.

So, Madam Speaker, as we know, through the creditor protection process, a new potential buyer was identified and negotiations have been ongoing for quite some time with the Pacific West Commercial Corporation, which was the successful company chosen to try to put together a deal to buy the NewPage facility. There's a number of elements involved before a final deal will be approved. The list of those include a new power deal with Nova Scotia Power, a new labour agreement with the workers, a new deal with the Province of Nova Scotia regarding Crown land rights. I believe there's a number of other smaller agreements that will be negotiated as well by Pacific West, also known as the Stern Group, before the sale is finalized.

Now as far as the workers, one of the issues which has been on top of their minds is not only the loss of their employment, but, as well, equally troubling for both the current workforce and the retirees is the state of their pension plans. Madam Speaker, it's no secret that the pension plans that were being administered under NewPage were significantly underfunded. There are a number of factors that led to that but certainly market conditions in the last number of years were a significant blow to those very pension plans.

Madam Speaker, we speak of these pension plans and I think for many people it's trying to fully understand what does it mean? What type of money are we talking about? I want to take the opportunity just to put on the record and for the members of government and members on all sides of the House, to better understand exactly what we're talking about here. The pension plan for the mill workers - these are the actual employees, the tradespeople who work the mill itself - their pension plan has \$180.4 million currently, yet

it has a shortfall of \$93.4 million, which puts it at a funded percentage of 66 per cent. That is significantly lower than where it should be.

For the office workers, their pension plan has assets of \$17 million and a shortfall of \$11.5 million, so their funded percentage is down to 60 per cent. For the woodland operations, that I understand only joined the pension plan a number of years ago, they have assets of \$14.2 million, with a shortfall of \$9.7 million and they are at the worst funded position, at 59 per cent.

There is another pension plan, which is what is referred to as the salaried employees, which in essence was the management of the mill. Those numbers haven't been made readily available but it's my understanding that they as well are under 70 per cent funded.

This is a significant drop from where they need to be. The combined - just those three pension plans, of the mill, the office and the woodland - the deficiency is \$114.5 million. Madam Speaker, that is a tremendous sum of money. Needless to say, this has caused a great deal of concern for workers, for retirees, for in some cases the widows and spouses and certainly for families that have been affected. As I've said many times in this House, the Strait area relies very heavily on these retirees because we have so few private pension plans in our area, to start off with. The few that we have outside of the mill are teachers and a few government employees that we would have and a few federal government employees, but no numbers of any significance. The bulk of our retirees who have private pension plans were retirees from both the NewPage mill, formerly known as Stora and Stora Enso.

So having this type of shortfall will have a significant impact on the economy of the Strait area. For the workers the question is, what can be done? The minister has gone out of her way yesterday and today to again point out that the government was not prepared to put any tax dollars into the pension plan. So be it, we'll discuss that a bit further, later.

So what else is available to them? Last week they had a presentation at the fire hall in Port Hawkesbury where everyone was brought together, the employees who last worked at the mill when it was operating, the retirees, their spouses in some cases, some of the widows who rely upon these pension benefits and they received a presentation from Morneau Shepell along with representatives from both the local union executive, and I believe the national representatives were there as well. One of the options that they provided to the workers was this whole idea of extending the windup of the pension plan.

When we think of windup, it is usually something that you crank and you wind it up and it goes. With pensions this is a different terminology because we have very specific rules for this type of pension plan, which is under the control and supervision of the superintendent of pensions. When the company ceases to exist and there is no sponsor to take over the pension plan, the superintendent has a specific period of time to bring the plan

to an end because of the fact that no one is putting any more money into the plan and there is no sponsor.

In this case, without these changes that the government is proposing in Bill No. 86, once the sale would have been finalized, there would have been a specific time frame - I believe in the range of six months - in order for the superintendent to bring the plan to an end and start purchasing annuities on behalf of the workers and that the plan itself would cease to exist as it was known.

In this case it is important to note that there have still been contributions made to the plan because during the hot idle stage there had still been workers who have been there and as part of their employment they have continued to pay into the pension plan, but certainly nowhere near the investments needed if the plan was up and running, in order to sustain it.

The option explained to the workers is you can request that the House of Assembly pass legislation to extend the specific windup period. We made it very clear, in our caucus, that we would be more than open to such legislation and would be more than happy to work with government in developing that. One of the proposals that we first heard about was that it would be for an eight-year period. Bill No. 86 goes a bit further; it goes for an 11-year period. The explanation that was given to us is - why 11 years? Well, because recently, on April 17th, the union at the former NewPage facility approved a contract with Pacific West Commercial Corporation for a 10-year period.

So the thought behind 11 years was let's make sure that they get the 10-year contract in, and depending on negotiations for the new contract, there may be some decisions made about the pension plan that would allow the flexibility of continuing that plan or having someone take over that plan. That door has been left open. It's hard to say whether there is any true hope that at some point the new company will take over the plan, but the door has been left open. I'm pleased to see that July 1, 2023, is the maximum date at this point that the plan could continue.

Now, it's always an option, should the markets really rebound and that the returns become either the 5 per cent that's hoped for or even greater, that the union and the administrator, Morneau Shepell could come back and say, okay, we think we've gotten as much return here as we can expect based on markets alone, we're prepared to wind it up. It may not last the entire 11 years, but it may go up to that date.

One of the other concerns that the workers brought to me - I had a number of them from Richmond County meet with me in my office, one gentleman from Inverness, and a number of phone calls as well - was the question of what's the date that will be used to start the windup process? The concern was many feared that it would be the date that NewPage went into creditor protection, which was September 30, 2011. That date is critical because it is at that date, once it's determined, that the pensions will start to be reduced based on the

unfunded liability which will be in the range of 70 per cent, so a possible 30 per cent reduction.

Initially there were concerns that the date chosen would be that September 2011 date and the fear that was there was that there would have been a clawback for all those who had been receiving benefits during the period of September 2011 to now, and that they would have to pay back that money. Needless to say, when you are a retiree on a fixed income, having to pay back money - which would have been in the thousands of dollars for most of them - caused a great deal of concern. So I'm pleased that it has been indicated by the minister, and I believe by her staff, that it is the intention that the date chosen is a date in the future. In this case, I believe July 1, 2012, is the date that will be looked at.

Now, what happens on that date? On that date, Morneau Shepell, the administrator of the pension plans, will look at what is the unfunded liability and say, based on this, here is what we feel reduced benefits should be. From that date forward, the pension cheques, as the retirees have known them, will be reduced. The 30 per cent figure is what has been bandied about; time will tell whether it's that high or whether it's a bit lower, but hopefully not greater.

The workers know their pensions are going to be reduced. There is no question of that. The idea is that if the plan, based on markets, is able to bring higher rates of returns going forward, then at that point, once the decision is made to wind it up, their pensions could potentially increase. We already know that our retirees and those who are contemplating retirement, or nearing it, have to understand that they are going to be faced with a significant reduction in their benefits. But the fact that that is in the future, at least, is a very positive thing. I'm certainly pleased to see that the minister has said that date in her comments so that the workers will understand it's a date in the future, not a date looking back, which potentially would have led to overpayments.

As part of the discussion, my understanding from the presentation that was made was, should the decision be made as a collective to all go in as part of this extended windup, or should there be a decision permitted for each individual employee and retiree? The minister has solved that problem, because the legislation specifically states that each individual worker and retiree will have the option of deciding whether they want to have their pension continue as part of this extended windup or whether they wish to have their pension be wound up immediately and have the option of purchasing annuities or other insurance avenues to invest their specific contributions to the pension plan.

I'm pleased to see - I think the minister has indicated that 60 days is what is contemplated from the time. My understanding is that what will happen next is Morneau Shepell will be sending out to each and every retiree and employee an exact accounting of where their pension benefits stand: how much they've paid in, how much is specifically available to them. Once they've received that, which will be at some point in the next number of weeks, I would say, the workers will have 60 days to make a decision: do they

want to take the chance with the extended windup and hope that markets will improve, or do they want out?

I'm pleased that that is actually in the legislation so that there isn't that concern. It would have been extremely difficult had it been left to the workers sitting in a room with hundreds of people making a decision - are we all in, or are we going to allow people to opt out? I think that would have been an unfair process, especially under such stressful times, so this obviously clears that up. But it raises a concern as well, in that if too many people opt out it may not be feasible to even go forward with the extended windup if there aren't sufficient assets left in the pension plan.

This legislation is enabling, but we still have to wait to see if enough of the plan members decide they want to leave their pension funds in the plan in order to continue with the extended windup. Only time will tell as to what decision is made there. It's an individual decision that each and every plan member will have to make, and I wish them well in making that decision.

One of the other issues which I wanted to point out before I get to the last point that I wanted to make is going back to talking about the magnitude of these plans and the importance to the economy of the Strait Area. The report from Morneau Shepell that was presented to the employees gives a glimpse of the economic impact of these pension plans in the Strait area. It says that from September 30, 2011 to March 31, 2012, a six-month period, the total plan overall had returns of about 6.5 per cent, which is not bad, that's actually quite good and I think the workers were pleased to hear that. The plans increased in those six months by \$7.8 million, but it's important to realize that as well, in that six-month period, the payout to retirees was \$11.9 million, so that's for a six-month-period. If you double that, one can say that those pension plans are providing approximately \$23.8 million to the Strait area economy each year. That is a tremendous amount of money and losing 30 per cent of that would have a significant impact on our economy which is why I've raised that numerous times this session and will continue to raise that because that is something of tremendous concern.

Now the question is, other than Bill No. 86, is there anything else the government could be doing to help the pension plan? There are very few defined benefit pension plans left in Nova Scotia that are not within the government sectors or the university sector, so the universities, municipalities, provincial government, federal government still have defined benefit plans in many cases, but as far as private industry there are fewer and fewer left that have defined benefit plans. The Stern Group has indicated that they plan on having a defined contribution plan, so they will not be continuing with this type of plan. So there are few out there to start off with, so when we're talking about how many are there, there are not many left in the private sector.

The minister and the Premier have gone out of their way to say no government money will go into these pension plans. Now when we look at the amounts of money that

went to Bowater, over \$50 million to potentially \$90 million, I know for the workers they found that extremely frustrating in that, when there's that kind of money around why could there not be some help for them? In the end I believe most have said, we agree, direct government money would not be appropriate to put into our pension plan.

I've heard from a number of workers who have been trying to find creative ways of - are there any other options out there to try to put more money into the pension plan? Before I go into that, I want to commend the minister because in Bill No. 86 there is a specific provision that says there is the option that in the future, as part of this extended windup for the 11 years, more monies could be put into the pension plan. So one has to ask, how could more monies go into the pension plan as the workers won't be paying into it directly because they'll be on a different plan under a new operator? Some have suggested quite possibly the union at some point in time may decide that it wishes to put money into the pension plan. There may be other sources as well that may want to, so that option is there and that's a good thing. The option is there through legislation to top up to have more monies going into that pension plan.

The question is, is there any other creative way that can be found to allow monies to flow into that pension plan during the extended windup? Now that hasn't been an easy question to answer, but I do want to say now that I have informed the government of a proposal which I believe may be a creative way of allowing for funds to flow into this pension plan that would not be directly coming from the Province of Nova Scotia. I am hoping to hear back on that proposal soon because it's my understanding this bill will quite possibly be in front of the Law Amendments Committee as early as tomorrow morning, so time is certainly of the essence.

In these types of situations we have to be as creative as we can and I do want to take this opportunity to recognize both the Stern Group, especially those who have been negotiating the different aspects of purchasing the mill, as well as Nova Scotia Power. If one looks at the power arrangement that they have reached, it's something that's never been done in our province before. In fact, I'm not sure if it has really been done in too many other jurisdictions. They are awaiting a ruling from the Canada Revenue Agency; they are awaiting the ruling of the Utility and Review Board, but this is a real innovative way of paying their power bills, it will be done through a dividend process.

It's quite complicated and I'm not going to try to explain it here because following the briefing that was given to me from Nova Scotia Power, it was challenging enough, but it's clear that they've thought outside the box and they have tried to find a creative way of addressing the high cost of power, which this mill will be the single largest consumer of electricity in Nova Scotia again, once it starts back up.

I tried to find a way, and I'm hoping the government is also trying to find a way, of thinking outside the box to see if there's anything that can be done to try to flow monies into this pension fund, based on the unfunded liabilities of over \$100 million. Maybe it

won't be a lot of money but I think the message from the workers is that anything that could help - and the other portion of it, I should say, is that this would only be for the period of time that the windup continues, so if the windup lasts only a year, it will only be for a year; if it lasts 11 years, hopefully it will be for an 11-year period.

That option has now been presented to the government. As I said, I am hoping to hear from it soon, in the spirit of trying to work towards a solution. I won't get into the details now but I am hoping to be able to hear back, one way or the other, whether it's something that can be done or cannot be done or that the government doesn't wish to do, whichever one that it is.

Madam Speaker, I'm certainly trying my best to try to hear the concerns of the retirees, of the current plan members, the anxieties that they have. I think we all have to work co-operatively to try to find solutions and that anything we can do to help them is going to benefit not only those plan members, it's going to benefit our entire region.

So with that, I, again, am pleased and commend the minister for bringing forward Bill No. 86. As we said, we were more than happy to support the wishes of the workers. None of us can predict what the markets will be, moving forward, but we can certainly hope and are optimistic that the markets will improve and that the pension plan for the NewPage workers and retirees will increase its assets and the unfunded liability will decrease as a result.

Madam Speaker, I do look forward to this bill moving forward to the Law Amendments Committee stage and any presentations we may receive at this point. This decision from the workers was a difficult one. It's one that I know they have wrestled with. I commend them for the leadership they have shown and I'm certainly happy to be part of the process that's going to put in place the exact requests they have made to this Legislature. Merci beaucoup.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was very pleased to see this legislation come forward. It's very similar in intent to the amendments that I proposed to the Pension Benefits Act last December. It looks good to me and overall I think it's something that the pensioners and those active at the mill who are members of the pension plan, are going to be pleased with.

I guess the only thing I would say is that I guess at the time I was very surprised that the government voted down those amendments, but I'm not going to belabour that point. I think the important thing for those involved is that with this bill being introduced, it gives them a chance to accomplish what I was hoping we would get to accomplish, and that is to give them a chance to have their pensions recover with the markets over time. That's the kind of flexibility, Madam Speaker, that those people need right now. I think it's prudent.

We talk about risk and the risk to those who may decide - you know we talk about the risk about keeping the money invested and allowing the chance for the markets to recover, amounts over time, but I want to point out another risk, that's the risk that pensioners would not have the income they need to cover basic living expenses. I think particularly for those who are on survivor pension benefits, getting 60 per cent of their deceased spouse's pension, for them to take a 30 per cent or 40 per cent hit to that reduced pension is quite significant for them and I think that needs to be pointed out - and giving those people the chance to continue a pension without it being placed in an annuity gives them a chance to recover that amount and address that risk of not having enough money to be able to pay for basic living expenses.

Madam Speaker, I think with this legislation it's going to remove some of the uncertainty that these people face, and I think that is a good thing. That's what I was trying to do last December, to remove that uncertainty and the stress that the pensioners were facing and, at the end of the day, it's nice to see that the idea has been embraced here in the Legislature - and it looks like it will be supported by all sides.

What does it mean for people who are not pensioners who are living in the local area? As the member for Richmond pointed out, there's a tremendous impact on the local economy. Upwards of \$7 million a year would have been lost forever - and that's every year, \$7 million lost to the local economy. Now, with this legislation, we have a chance to recover that amount of income coming into our communities. And we know that most of our pensioners spend a lot of that money around the local area, so that's good for our local economy.

Madam Speaker, I think about the different members because there are different members in the plan and, when I think about them, some of them are still actively employed and will be moving on to Pacific West Commercial Corp.'s new operation. Some of them are actively employed and will not be moving on, and I know that is not going to be easy for them - my office has offered to help those people get connected to the retraining opportunities that are available to them. And we also think, of course, of the people who are on pension right now.

Those three groups of people may look at this legislation differently because they have their own interests at heart, and well they should, because when we think about pensions, it's their retirement income and it's something that they need to have security in.

So when I think about the legislation for those who are active, they do have the option of opting out of the plan. I know some of them want to be able to do that because they want to be able to have more control over their specific pension assets, and they can move that out by way of a commuted value into a locked-in retirement account and, of course, they can choose how to invest from there. They may choose a similar investment mix as is found in their current pension plan and that way, by keeping that same mix, as markets recover, technically they should be able to recover their pensions. So I know that

opt-out clause, as they were referring to, is important to them, and I know this legislation accommodates that.

The retirees, of course, will have a chance to either continue in the plan, which I expect most of them will want to do, but they do have the option to opt out as well. Of course, the only bit that is a bit inflexible compared to what I had proposed, but I don't think it's going to be a big issue, Madam Speaker, but those who are retired, if they choose to opt out, they do have to select the annuity - that is their only option. They don't have the same flexibility of somebody who's active and who wants to opt out - but let's not get into the detail too much more than that.

Once again I'll say it's good to see this legislation coming forward, and I would encourage the government to look at Bill No. 62. That's a piece of legislation that I introduced in this sitting and that gives members of defined benefit pension plans an annual report.

I heard great frustration from pensioners at NewPage, wondering what had happened inside their pension plan. This could be resolved, Madam Speaker, by ensuring that members have a report every year - and that wouldn't just help NewPage pensioners, that would help anybody with a defined benefit plan. People working in our provincial government, for instance, would benefit from that, but certainly in the NewPage case, members were quite bewildered that just a few short years ago their pensions were fully funded, and now to see they have dropped so much.

There were decisions made and they were asked to be part of those decisions on things like early retirement, solvency flexibility for their pension funds - and I think we would do a service to anybody with a defined benefit plan by giving them the information so that they can make decisions, and explaining to them as they make those decisions how they will impact their plan. For instance, if a company is getting smaller and a lot of early retirements are offered, that puts more strain on the pension plan. While it's good for the organization's operational abilities and may keep a company going longer, it does put strain on the pensioners' pension plans, so I think it's important for them to understand that before they're asked to make a decision on it.

I would encourage the government to look at Bill No. 62 and consider debating it here in the Legislature, calling it for debate and passing it, because I believe it would be helpful and appreciated by anybody who is a member of a defined benefit plan.

Madam Speaker, I am going to close up by saying that I look forward to consulting with people who are members of the NewPage pension plan and finding out if they are, indeed, supportive of this legislation before casting my vote on it, but it does look good. It is nice to see that if the pensions are taken care of as best they can be taken care of, then we give those people a chance and we can start to look at the future of the mill itself.

I know there have been recent developments, of course, on the labour front. Many workers have made great sacrifices to come to that agreement and only they know how significant those sacrifices have been. I know the power arrangement needs to be approved by Revenue Canada and by the Utility and Review Board, which looks very positive and, of course, an agreement on wood fibre, which we know is in the works. Those three things seem to be shaping up positively and we look forward to the long-term feasibility of Pacific West Commercial Corp.'s paper mill in Point Tupper. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Madam Speaker, I would thank the honourable members for their very thoughtful comments. I close debate on second reading of Bill No. 86 and look forward to the bill passing into the Law Amendments Committee. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: 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. 87.

Bill No. 87 - Good Forestry Management on Crown Land Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to move second reading of Bill No. 87, an Act to Amend Chapter 114 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Crown Lands Act, to Enable Good Forestry Management on Crown Land.

This bill includes amendments to the Crown Lands Act and also repeals the Stora Forest Industries Limited Agreement Act. I would just like to say a few words about that aspect of the bill first.

The Stora Act was a piece of legislation that is now outdated, it actually dates back to 1959 and it was really a licence for one company. It was created to support Stora, the company which owned and operated the pulp mill at Port Hawkesbury and that mill later,

as we know, became known as NewPage. As all members will know the mill is now up for sale.

The Act was created to grant authority to the owner of that mill to harvest timber on lands in the seven eastern counties of our province in northeastern Nova Scotia. So in actual fact, the Act was a licence for a particular company running a particular mill and it was a licence in the form of legislation and that situation needed to be fixed.

The Act is old and outdated and doing away with it at this time, we believe, is the right thing to do. The time for this change is right for two reasons: first, the opportunity presented itself when the mill owner announced it will no longer be in operation; and the second reason is for the changes to the Stora Act, which met the needs of the previous era but not for today.

Our government is modernizing how forests are managed, and that direction is made clear in our Natural Resources Strategy, which we launched last August 16th in the Town of Port Hawkesbury. Repealing this Act will put the authority to manage these forestry lands back into the hands of government when working with a company seeking access to Crown land timber.

As mentioned, this bill we are proposing will amend the Crown Lands Act. The amendments help address the Natural Resources Strategy's goal of advancing sustainable forestry management in the province. The proposed amendments stem from the message which the province heard loud and clear from Nova Scotians during the extensive consultations that led up to the Natural Resources Strategy. The strategy processes included more than three years of collecting input from individual Nova Scotians from various groups and organizations. We learned through that strategy process that Nova Scotians want government to change the way their natural resources are managed to ensure that they are sustainably managed for the future. We heard from the people, and these legislative changes are just one example of responding to what was heard in that consultation. People do want change, and we are providing that change.

Government has taken the right steps by amending the Crown Lands Act to clear the way for new long-term forestry licence agreements. Forestry licence agreements with companies are licensed to have access to Crown land timber. The agreement states the terms and the conditions by which a forestry company may operate on Crown land. Currently there's no legislative authority that allows government to enter into long-term licence agreements with forestry companies. Only short-term agreements are currently allowed under the Crown Lands Act.

The amendments we are proposing will extend the length of the term of forestry agreements that the Minister of Natural Resources can enter into. Long-term agreements, we believe, are important. They are important for long-term planning and sustainable

forestry management, both for government, which plans and oversees management of our forests, and for the forestry companies, which are integral to that management.

These amendments recognize the reality of forestry in our province. Long-term stability is important in forest management today, both ecologically and economically. These changes will allow government to insert terms and conditions into harvesting licences that are modern and necessary. Right now licence agreements with companies that are accessing Crown land for timber come with a limit of just 10 years plus a one-time renewal of an additional 10 years.

These amendments that I'm introducing here today will allow for a Crown land lease of 20 years with options for renewals. This will give forestry companies and government an opportunity to better plan ahead with greater foresight for sustainable forestry. This will be useful for long-term licence agreements with any company.

The short-term agreements were not allowing enough time for good planning. I note that my colleague, the Progressive Conservative member for Cape Breton West, expressed his agreement with that point in today's media. He commented that he likes the extension to the 20-year term. I thank him for that support, and it is certainly something that we as a government are supporting as well.

Amending the Crown Lands Act will benefit Nova Scotians by giving government the control, through the terms and conditions of long-term forestry agreements, to manage and allocate Crown timber in the best possible manner. With these amendments we are listening to the desires expressed by Nova Scotians by meeting the strategic action of the province's Natural Resources Strategy.

I just want to take a second to quote from our strategy. The strategy calls on government to “. . . revise the way forest resources on provincial Crown land are allocated and managed in order to improve the economic, environmental, and social benefits to Nova Scotians.” That's from *The Path We Share*, Page 40.

That's what these amendments will help to do. In fact, I note also that the critic from the Official Opposition, the honourable member for Dartmouth East, commented to the media that he saw good potential in having longer licensing terms for forestry companies if the licensing agreements with forestry companies are strong.

I guess we agree, Madam Speaker, that this bill does hold good potential and it will, in fact, help to enable strong licensing agreements between the government and companies. I'd like to wrap up these few brief remarks by saying that public input is a key part of this process. These amendments stem from our Natural Resources Strategy, which was based on extensive public consultation. Also, the content of long-term forest management plans are consulted upon by pulp companies in the province right now. As

well, companies are required, under a certification standard, like FSC certification, to have public input.

Now when forest utilization licence agreements are to be signed, government will act on behalf of the people of this province to ensure a thorough review of the terms and conditions is conducted. Madam Speaker, the province is introducing these amendments for all Nova Scotians to protect forestry jobs while managing our forests in a sustainable way, for now and into the future. So with those few brief remarks, I will take my seat and listen to the comments or interventions of other honourable members. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise on Bill No. 87, on behalf of our Natural Resources Critic, but again, certainly this bill is going to have a significant impact on my riding and the County of Richmond because I'm sure the minister may have missed my comments earlier, but I noted that he indicated that the bill from 1959 was for a specific company at the mill in Port Hawkesbury. It is in Point Tupper, not Port Hawkesbury, so I would remind the minister of that once again.

The other thing, Madam Speaker, is, the minister has referred to this initial Act in 1959 as being called the Stora Forest Industries Limited Act but my understanding from my history is that when that mill first opened, Nova Scotia Forest Industries I believe is what the title was, and over the years the name of the Act was changed because of the fact that the company that was operating it had changed as well. So I have to say that goes by history because I'm happy to say I was not here in 1959 when that bill was brought. The minister indicates that he was but I'm happy to say I wasn't.

One of the concerns I have, and something I've noted, especially under the current government we have in Nova Scotia, is the headings they give to bills. In this one they chose the heading of Good Forestry Management on Crown Land Act. Now the unfortunate thing I find with that title is that it would leave the assumption that we didn't have good forestry management on Crown land prior to this legislation, which I think is an extremely unfortunate suggestion to make because I'm sure the minister would join me in recognizing both NewPage and their predecessor, Stora and Stora Enso, for being leaders in forest management here in Nova Scotia, because of the fact that one of the main reasons that the mill - the old NewPage mill - is so attractive to investors is not only because of the \$1 billion supercalendered machine that was put there back in the late 1990s, but the fact is that they are one of the few mills in North America that can say, if they did not plant another tree, they have a 25-year supply of wood on the Crown lands here in Nova Scotia, on the private lands that they've worked with as well, because of the silviculture they have done over the years. That is something I think we want to commend.

My understanding, Madam Speaker, is that the Stern Group that operates other mills has a very good reputation when it comes to stewardship and forest management and

they've made it very clear that they intend to do the same thing with their Crown lands that they will now have licences with, as a result of this legislation with the government. While the title says, "Good Forestry Management", maybe it should say, "a continuation of Good Forestry Management on Crown Land Act because of the fact that Stora has been recognized through ISO and through a number of other certifications, along with NewPage, for their forestry and their management. Certainly the hard-working men and women in the forestry and woodlands division should be commended for that as well.

Madam Speaker, there has been a perception out there that the new operator of the mill at Point Tupper will require less access to Crown lands. Now why is that impression out there? Because they've publicly stated they will only operate - the Stern Group has indicated - the supercalendered machine and not the old newsprint machine. Immediately there was this perception amongst a number of people, if you're only operating one machine you'll only need half the wood fibre that you have needed for both machines.

We now know, as we're discovering, it seems to be almost on a weekly basis, new aspects of the way it was operated before under NewPage and the problems they encountered. What very few Nova Scotians know, and I'll be the first to admit I was not aware as a local member, was that NewPage, at the end, was buying over 30 per cent of their wood fibre from outside Nova Scotia.

Now, Madam Speaker, one doesn't need to be an economist to know that that's going to be much more expensive than wood that you could harvest in and around the lands where the mill is located in Point Tupper. The Stern Group has made it very clear that they will be looking for all of the Crown lands that Stora would have had access to under the old legislation.

Those are negotiations which I understand are still ongoing with the Department of Natural Resources. They are a critical element in the Stern Group's proposal to purchase that mill and have to be put in place. I can't urge the minister and his staff enough to try to ensure that those negotiations are successful and that they are done in the near future. The minister has referred a number of times to the Natural Resources Strategy and I know that there a number of groups that have already called upon the minister and this government to take this opportunity to use some of the lands that were under the jurisdiction of Stora, as part of the old agreement, to make them into protected lands.

Now that is something that the minister is going to have to deal with and is going to be a challenge, but I know, for example the Mayor of Port Hawkesbury, Billy Joe MacLean, was very quick to respond in stating that those lands are crucial to the success of the new buyer of that mill. I would hope that the minister uses the right balance in ensuring his obligations to try to have more land set aside as protected land while at the same time ensuring that he's not putting in jeopardy the ability for the company to succeed. They have made it very clear from the power arrangement that they reached to the labour agreement

that they reached, that they are looking to save in every single area of their operation, and the cost of wood fibre will be one of those as well.

There are other concerns for Nova Scotia because of the fact that the agreements that are put in place to allow companies to go harvest on Crown land come at a price. It's what is referred to as stumpage fees. These stumpage fees are paid by operators such as NewPage and Stora, and now, presumably, the Pacific West and Stern Group. They are paid to the Department of Natural Resources. Now my understanding is a portion of that goes to silviculture, which means the replanting of trees on these lands, which is certainly something that we wish to see continue, but it is my understanding that the remainder goes to general revenue. There is a financial aspect of this as well for the province in working out these new licensing agreements that are being proposed under this legislation.

When I heard of this new licensing agreement I was curious, does anyone with a chainsaw, can they apply to the province to have a licence to cut on Crown land? The answer that I was given, which I think is an important distinction, is that apparently the only people who did have agreements with the Department of Natural Resources and who would be eligible under this new bill are people who will be doing something with the wood such as mills, sawmills, those who do hardwood flooring and other specialties, but it's my understanding there has to be a processing element to the business before they can qualify to be able to enter into these licensing agreements with Natural Resources to harvest timber on Crown land - if that is not the case, the minister can certainly clarify that.

So it's not everyone who will be entering into these agreements with the Department of Natural Resources, it will be a select group of companies. But one of the figures that I was told is that under the old Stora agreement, which is being repealed here, it gave the mill in Point Tupper access to almost 75 per cent of Crown lands in Nova Scotia. That is certainly a significant number, to say the least, and now that the company has said for the future to be able to be successful and economically viable, they will be looking for that same level of access to the Crown lands.

So naturally we'll be watching very closely to see what agreements are going to be reached between the Stern Group and the Department of Natural Resources, but again, as I mentioned, time is of the essence. We are hoping that once the URB and Revenue Canada have made their rulings on the power agreement that everything else will be in place. The labour agreement is in place. I know there are a few other negotiations taking place but I would certainly hope that negotiations on Crown lands would not hold up the restart of that mill, because I can assure you everyone in my riding and in the entire Strait area wants to see that mill up and running as soon as possible.

While we are supportive of the changes of Bill No. 87, I remain cautious while those negotiations are still underway. I am looking forward to hearing of their successful completion in the very near future. So with that, Madam Speaker, the Official Opposition, the Liberal caucus, will be supporting Bill No. 87 going to second reading, and we do look

forward to the Law Amendments Committee stage to see what presentations may be presented again.

I'm happy to remind members again that the mill is located in Point Tupper, Richmond County. Merci.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Madam Speaker, I'm very happy to stand today in my place to talk about Bill No. 87, the Good Forestry Management on Crown Land Act.

Madam Speaker, the mill in Point Tupper has an effect on all of Cape Breton Island, and certainly there are a number of people in Cape Breton West whose livelihood is directly connected to what takes place in the mill. As the minister indicated, this is a bill that has been a long time in coming and it's a bill that I think is a very good bill in a lot of ways. Still, the devil is always in the details and we always have to wonder what's going to happen there, but when it comes to the idea of managing our forests, that's never a bad thing.

When it comes to the idea of making land available to other people who are processors who need fibre in order for their businesses to succeed, like Finewood Flooring in Middle River, who before this change came into place would actually have to look to Stora to get permission to harvest properties of their leases so that they could get fibre to do what they do so well at Finewood Flooring. So this is a good change. The fact that the time has been extended, I think that's important, too, because we need to have time to get in to do the right type of forest management and harvesting practices. It takes awhile for that to happen and so the extension to 20 years makes some sense.

I would hope - and as I said earlier, the detail is where we have to look - that when a licence is granted, that indeed there will be some very specific measures put into that so that we know what type of harvesting is going to take place, what type of reforestation is going to take place, and what is the silviculture and what is the management plan for that piece of property, because this is a resource that needs to be replenished. It is a resource that brings hundreds of millions of dollars into the province's economy so we need to be sure that when we're giving licences to people, we're making sure that they are indeed looking after the resource - the resource that belongs, Madam Speaker, to all Nova Scotians, not to any particular government, but to all Nova Scotians.

So it's very important that that resource is being managed and managed properly. I think it is something that we need to look at as people who are here to make decisions. We also have to be sure that the people who own the lands, the public land, they have input into how things are being operated.

I know that the licence agreements are important for Stern to move forward, and as my colleague, the member for Richmond said, it is very important for that mill to get up and running, because it does have a very big impact on a number of people. But at the same time, to know that they need the same amount of lumber and fibre that they needed prior to the closure of NewPage, it is important that we manage that, and manage it well. I hope that this will give us this opportunity.

The one thing that is a bright light in all this is that Stern has said they will need as much fibre and that they will also need the number of contractors that have been in place over the last number of years - probably more, but they will need the private contractors and the ones who were working on Crown lands. Those are the people who also put a lot of money back into our economy and those are the ones who would be in the constituency of Cape Breton West, and how they were impacted is because they are contractors.

That's not only in Cape Breton West. In all the four counties and in Guysborough and Antigonish Counties and up to Pictou County and probably further, it is and does have a significant impact on our economy. So when we heard that this bill was coming, we thought it was a good idea. We had been talking to a number of people who are operators of small mills, who are doing value-added products, and as this bill will now allow them to have more opportunity to get that land, I think it's very important.

The other thing that was mentioned by my colleague, the member for Richmond, and I know from the minister's office when we had discussions there, is that not just anyone is going to be able to get leases on the Crown lands. It's going to have to be someone who is going to be producing and having a value-added product, who is going to make the most out of what is being made available to them. At the same time, when it goes back to the regulations, I hope there will be things in place to make sure that the proper management programs are in place and that harvesting techniques are in place, and of course, to make sure that we have that resource replenished on a continuous basis, so that there is a long-term future for anybody who is involved in the forest industry.

It is important for us, as legislators, to be sure that we manage things in a proper way. When it comes to the Crown lands of the Province of Nova Scotia, there is a role for us to play, and this is part of that role. I want to congratulate the minister on bringing this bill forward.

I also want to say that there are a number of private woodlot owners in the Province of Nova Scotia who need to be recognized and need to be looked at. They need to be heard not only about harvesting practices within their own lands but also about the harvesting practices that are done on Crown lands. Again, this is a resource that belongs to all Nova Scotians, so it's important that there's input from more than just large companies and government. We need to talk to the private woodlot owners, to the citizens of Nova Scotia, to make sure that we move forward.

As I indicated when I started, I think that this bill on the surface is a good bill. We are certainly going to be supporting it as we move through this session. We are looking forward to it going from second reading into the Law Amendments Committee, where I hope we'll hear from a number of people, Nova Scotians who will come and let us know what their thoughts are. The devil is in the details, and I hope that the minister and his government will listen to individuals whose livelihoods depend on a successful forestry industry. Again, this industry is very important to all of us on Cape Breton Island, and the mill in Point Tupper is very important to the future of where we go, in a lot of ways.

So thank you, and with that, Madam Speaker, I will take my place.

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

The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to thank the honourable members for Richmond and Cape Breton West for their interventions. I guess I'll also thank the member for Richmond for the little history and geography lesson.

I do recall the mill at Point Tupper, having been there at probably about eight or nine years old in 1960. My dad was a contractor and a pulp mill truck owner, and he shipped wood from Pictou County down there. I can recall going with him a few times to deliver pulpwood to the mill at Point Tupper and it was always an exciting trip because there was no Trans-Canada Highway back then, you went the old Route 4 twisting and winding through Pictou and Antigonish Counties. The roads were - well I don't have a memory of the roads, but it was a long trip, much quicker today with the modern highways, but it has memories for me from half a century ago.

I do want to thank the members for their support and their thoughts on the forest industry in our province and how this forestry utilization licensing agreement will allow for sustainable forestry management and its part of The Path We Share, part of our Natural Resources Strategy and I think it's a better way to go than we've had under the old Stora Act.

With that, I look forward to the bill moving forward to the Committee on Law Amendments. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 87. 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. 88.

Bill No. 88 - Maritime Link Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Madam Speaker, I feel something like it's a doubleheader in baseball, back to back at any rate.

I'm pleased to rise here today to move second reading on Bill No. 88, an Act to Ensure Regulatory Review of the Maritime Link that I introduced here on first reading just yesterday. We have brought this bill forward to provide greater certainty to all members of this House and the people in the province that the Maritime Link project will be reviewed by our provincial regulator, the Utility and Review Board.

With this bill, we are committing to an open and transparent review that is reflective of the size and the scope of this project. We're taking the necessary steps to ensure that we manage the regulatory approval process in Nova Scotia in an efficient manner that provides certainty and predictability for our government partners and for corporations involved.

The Maritime Link project is an important component of the Lower Churchill project, Muskrat Falls in Labrador in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Lower Churchill project will provide Nova Scotia with access to an abundant supply of clean hydroelectricity for many years to come. In fact, this project will result in the province having a source of reliable power at fixed electricity prices for 35 years. This initiative will give Nova Scotians more electricity choices in the future. It would also contribute significantly to helping us meet our environmental and renewable targets, making us less reliant on fossil fuels.

We've said it many times, that the Lower Churchill project is really a game changer for Nova Scotia and for the entire Atlantic Region. It is a very complex project involving multiple governments: the Government of Nova Scotia, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, our federal government, and also corporations. Nova Scotians need assurance that it will be in their best interests. This bill does just that.

I want to speak a little about the benefits of the project before I get into the particulars of the bill. The Maritime Link portion of the project will strengthen the connections throughout Atlantic Canada and provide the opportunity for all of us to benefit from Newfoundland and Labrador's abundant hydroelectricity resources. As a result of this project, we will have a better connected system and be part of an energy loop instead of

being at the end of the line. This will provide Nova Scotia with greater options for purchasing power from different sources and possibly even at cheaper rates. The bill we brought to the House will enable us to realize these benefits and ensure hydroelectricity flows into the province as scheduled in the year 2017.

Of course, Madam Speaker, we would rather have that access to the power here right now, today. However, this is a massive project and it will take a few years to complete. With such a massive project, the province is committed to a rigorous review of the project to determine whether the costs are reasonable and the project will therefore achieve the benefits anticipated by Nova Scotia ratepayers.

The Premier has been very clear on this point and he mentioned it again last week in the House. Madam Speaker, the Premier committed to taking all measures necessary to provide absolute certainty that the URB has the authority to conduct such a review. This bill will provide that authority and ensures that the Maritime Link project will be subjected to an open, transparent review process by the URB. Regulation-making authority is also part of this bill. The Governor in Council will consult with the chair of the URB and then make regulations establishing a hearing and approval process for a project of this magnitude.

Regulations, Madam Speaker, will also include the criteria and the conditions by which an application related to the Maritime Link project is to be reviewed and approved. This may include amongst other things: determining when a hearing is required, establishing the subject matter to be considered at a hearing, setting out criteria for approval by the board, and establishing the timing of the various steps of the hearing and the approval process. The URB will be consulted on any draft regulations made under the bill and the draft regulations will also be made available for public comment this Spring.

Before I take my seat, Madam Speaker, I want to reiterate that this is a tremendous project for our province. The benefits go far beyond our long-term deal on the power. The project also helps us achieve energy diversity, energy security, and energy stability. So I'm certainly looking forward to the other members and their reiterations on this. So I'm pleased to move second reading of Bill No. 88.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in my place today to say a few words on Bill No. 88, the Maritime Link Act. While the minister refers to his two bills as somewhat of a doubleheader, I see it more as trying to put a good face on a strikeout. We do support the bill because, in fact, the bill was our idea. This bill could effectively be called 'the Premier has to backtrack on what he said' bill.

In Question Period, one week before this bill was introduced, the member for Dartmouth East asked the Premier if he would introduce legislation to make sure the

project would come under the scrutiny of the URB. The Premier said it wasn't necessary. The Premier, once again, was clearly wrong. He knew he was wrong and that's why this legislation is before us today. It's good legislation. This is necessary to make sure the URB will examine the project and decide whether or not it is good for Nova Scotia. We have always supported this project. We have always said that this is a new era for renewable energy in the province.

In fact, before the 2009 election, our Leader was the only Leader to travel to Newfoundland and Labrador and speak with then Premier Williams about the project. The Progressive Conservatives and NDP did not. However, we said the project had to be carefully looked at so that costs wouldn't be borne by Nova Scotians. We also have been concerned that the energy won't be delivered until the distant future. There have already been a number of hurdles to clear since the MOU was signed and there are many left to clear. In the meantime, we are bound to the monopoly of Nova Scotia Power, which the NDP continued to do nothing about.

Why can't the NDP Government look at other sources of renewable energy and buy from them? Quebec is a good example. We've repeatedly asked the Premier to examine buying renewable energy from Quebec and filter it through New Brunswick. The Premier refuses to do so. He wants us to remain an energy island for as long as possible.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. It's getting difficult to hear. The honourable member for Kings West has the floor.

MR. GLAVINE: And I'll repeat that: Quebec is a good example. We've repeatedly asked the Premier to examine buying renewable energy from Quebec and filter it through New Brunswick. The Premier refuses to do so. He wants us to remain an energy island for as long as possible, it would seem. Otherwise, why not investigate this option?

The Premier made a grandiose announcement with the Province of New Brunswick about investing in the grid between the two provinces. Why not try to deliver some renewable energy to Nova Scotia in the interim, while we wait for the energy from Muskrat Falls to come to our province?

We support this bill. We believe in the Muskrat Falls energy project. It's just too bad we have to say "told you so" to government. With that, Madam Speaker, I take my place.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I can tell that it's getting late in the day because things are getting silly in here. I can't imagine why, and I'm seeing the silly over there. I'm not making fun of you guys, not at all.

I've said this before a few times in this House, that nobody has the only right on good ideas. I think all Parties in this House have spoken to this issue on a number of occasions now. I can say that our Party will be supporting this bill because it is something we've talked about for a really long time as well.

It was interesting that just last week I had the opportunity to attend the Public Accounts Committee and to ask questions of the chairman of the URB. I asked him point blank, what needs to happen in order to initiate a review of the Muskrat Falls project so that we, as Nova Scotians, can know what we're truly buying into? It all sounds good when we talk about it in global terms but when it gets down to the brass tacks, what does it actually mean to Nova Scotians? Does it mean a better power rate or doesn't it?

I heard the minister say that it possibly could bring us better power rates, but from everything that we've looked at from the report from Newfoundland and Labrador, that is not quite correct. We probably will be paying more for this steady stream of electricity.

We have said all along that we needed to review this, especially through our work yesterday in Opposition Day, where we brought our bill forward, which was the Capital Projects Review Act, in order to discuss this. That brings this forward in this, so I'm glad to see it happen. I did find it a bit amusing last week when the Premier came out and said, after the URB meeting, after we had the meeting in Public Accounts Committee, oh, we don't have to worry about it. It'll happen.

They asked him if he needed to bring in legislation. He said no, I don't think we need to do that. Then here we are where the legislation comes in and is being discussed on the floor of this Legislature. So again, Mr. Speaker, and just to appease the member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville, I do agree with the bill that is before us today, and our caucus will be supporting it, even though I do enjoy the humour in this whole process. Thank you very much.

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

The honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Thank you. As Minister of Energy, I am pleased to thank the honourable members for their overwhelming support for this bill. It's wonderful to see and we appreciate the support. As our Premier said, this will be a game changer for Nova Scotia and certainly for Atlantic Canada. It's a nation builder for our country. So I appreciate the support and am looking forward to seeing it go on to Law Amendments Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 88. 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: That concludes the government's business for today. I would like to thank all members for participating in today's debate. (Interruptions) You know what Mr. Speaker, it warms my heart that the member for Glace Bay applauds me so because there was a time last week when we didn't get along as well and I was worried. But I will sleep much better tonight. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, I understand what a wrap sign is, don't I, Kelly.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for the day. Tomorrow, after the daily routine we will be going to third reading of Bill Nos. 84, 86, 87, 88 and whatever other bills may present depending on how the day goes and we will also be dealing with Private and Local Bills for Third Reading.

I move the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again tomorrow at the hour of 9:00 a.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 subject matter for late debate has been chosen and was submitted by the honourable member for Dartmouth East.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

EDUC.: GOV'T. (N.S.) - FUNDING RESTORE

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to rise in my place today. First of all, the late debate topic:

“Therefore be it resolved that through its \$65 million in cuts to public education that this NDP Government has shown no respect for teachers in Nova Scotia and that during this Teacher Appreciation Week, the Liberal caucus reaffirms its call on the government to restore education funding.”

The reality is we do move into Teacher Appreciation Week, we have heard now from five school boards across the province and we are up to 446 teaching positions lost in the province because of the government cuts. We’ve heard from the Annapolis Valley losing 23 positions, South Shore 20, Tri-County 11, Strait Regional 30, and Halifax Regional School Board 152. Every position that is lost we know and we have accounted for those lost though natural decline of enrolment but what we now will have in our schools are larger classes and teachers, therefore, who will be less responsive to students.

I remember my last year teaching, before going into administration, walking into a class on the first day of school and one of my classes had 38 students. I remember the response from a Grade 12 student by the name of Michael Fleury, whose father now happens to be head of the Nova Scotia School Boards Association, he looked around and he said how many are in this class, Mr. Glavine? I said there are 38. Well, he said, that’s not fair to you and it’s not fair to us.

We will have larger classes in Nova Scotia next year. In fact, we can have as high as 29 in a Primary class in our province next year. We’re going to have, in addition to larger classes, we will have more combined classes.

Teachers are more than just the catalyst and the workers for high educational standards and good outcomes. That’s why there is a Teacher Appreciation Week, because good teachers, maybe not at every turn in a child’s life, will get that kind of appreciation. All of us, I think, everyone in this Legislature and every one of us Nova Scotians - or from wherever our elementary and middle school and high school teachers that we look back on - there are some special teachers, teachers who have had a profound impact on our lives.

I think back, especially, to one of my Grade 10 teachers, the year my father passed away, and how that teacher was central to my life, not only as my English teacher, but one who took time, many days afterward, to see how things were in my life. The one thing about 99 per cent of the teachers that I’ve associated with during my career, they felt a true sense of vocation, a true sense of calling. It’s like the teachers right now in B.C. who have been asked by their union to work to rule and many teachers continue to do the extracurricular, to stay after school for their students, to constantly go the extra mile.

I don’t think we have that great appreciation by this government for public education and for the role of teachers, day in and day out, who are involved in a child’s development in their education to opening up their world each and every day.

I said in somewhat of a joking manner this morning at caucus when we were putting in for late debate and I said, we all have great stories of appreciation of teachers past. One of our staffers sent along their little story of appreciation and I just thought I would read it into the record, she took the time to write it and she says:

My teacher appreciation story. . .

In Grade 10 I had a gym teacher who saved my life. I was 140 lbs overweight and had accepted that I was the fat girl that would never be chosen for teams and everyday [sic] would hope to be invisible to avoid teasing and bullying.

I had to take a Grade 10 gym credit - I would have avoided the credit had it not been mandatory.

My gym teacher, Mr. Mitchell, saw my potential to live a healthy lifestyle and encouraged me to think more of myself and stop treating myself and my body so poorly.

Mr. Mitchell taught me how it takes a few steps to climb a mountain... but the trick is taking the first few steps. Mr. Mitchell believed in me and he convinced me to believe in myself.

I lost the weight, gained confidence, learned the value of a healthy lifestyle and there isn't a kilometer I run when I don't think of the impact Mr. Mitchell had on my life and the healthy habits that I am now able to share with my family.

I am now training for my second half marathon and I thank Mr. Brian Mitchell retired teacher from Forest Heights Community School for every step.

Every one of us in this House and all of us, I'm sure, as Nova Scotians, can tell similar stories. They inspire us, they teach us and they truly love us and we must appreciate the teaching complement in this province and not reduce it and not hurt public education in the way we're currently seeing. I'll share my time with my colleague, the member for Halifax Clayton Park.

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

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I was very inspired by that last reading that we just had from my colleague from Kings West. Certainly the issue of education is paramount in our province. We know that's the future, it's the key for our development and our success as a province. We have had a reputation as a province within Canada that more

than held its own, that punched above its weight in terms of the education ability and the young students that we graduated here in our province, but the system is under a lot of stress, and that is really what the resolution says today.

It says that we are calling - we, the Liberal Party, are calling - upon the government to restore the \$65 million in funding that has been cut over the last two years. That loss of funding is having an impact in every single school board in the province, but I would like to speak a little bit about the Halifax Regional School Board and the schools in the riding that I represent.

Just to follow up with the theme of teacher appreciation, because that week is coming very soon, I think that it's important that as a member of the Legislature I take the time to offer my personal appreciation not only to the teachers who directly impacted my education but to the teachers throughout my riding who are working so hard every day. The time that they spend in preparation outside of the classroom often goes unacknowledged. Their hours are long and they work hard to teach our children, to maintain discipline, and to try to address so many of the social problems that we have.

We've been talking in the Legislature about bullying and how we want the schools to do more. We're asking through legislation for more vigilance on the part of schools and school administration and so on, and I can tell you teachers feel that they are doing so much that is really societal, that isn't about education. It's taking their attention away from some of the special needs that they would like to have the time to address with their children, some of the extracurricular things they want to do with the young people. I think that a week like Teacher Appreciation Week is the time to acknowledge how much they do.

I would also like to acknowledge the amount of their own money that they spend. I had a resolution here a couple of years ago calling on the government to offer a tax credit to teachers, because we know from a lot of studies that have been done that teachers spend anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000 a year of their own money to buy supplies and to enrich the classroom experience. They're buying books and they're buying materials that are needed, and we owe them thanks for that as well. The government's approach, saying that the number of our young people in the province is down, the number of students is down so therefore they want a similar decrease in the funding, just doesn't hold water.

Mr. Speaker, recently I visited École Rockingham School and was welcomed by Principal Lynn Douglas at Rockingham for the day that all MLAs were invited to do in their riding, an MLA day in the schools. Rockingham is a wonderful neighbourhood school. It has French and English. It's a wonderful community school, and at that school I visited with a number of the classes, sat in and listened to the teachers as they taught, and could really see the stress and the demands placed on teachers. Certainly I came away with a direct understanding that there is more to education than what some of us may remember - reading, writing, and arithmetic. As I mentioned, there are the social issues and so many

other things we're asking of our teachers. So with that, I am very pleased to acknowledge teachers in our province.

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

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Mr. Speaker, as usual, I'm proud to stand here today in my place to speak about this resolution that stands before us. I do appreciate the collegial debate that's going on here today as far as recognizing teachers. This being Teacher Appreciation Week, I know that all of us have had teachers who have had an important role in our lives.

I think I would be the member in the Legislature who has most recently left the high school system in our province. I remember so far back, the amount of time and effort that teachers in our lives have spent doing the things that really mean a lot to the students in our system.

A quick little story - my wife, as you know, is a teacher as well. She has done some substituting, and she actually went back to the elementary school that I went to. I think that of the 15 or so teachers at that school, at least a third of them are still there and most of them taught me. So of course they were following my career and maybe giving my wife a little bit of a hard time.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to talk a little bit about the kind of negative part of this resolution and it is to talk a little bit about the number that is actually in the resolution - it says \$65 million. Well, we know that last year our government, and we've asked all government entities to ensure that we live within our means, to realign the way that we spend in this province, and one of the things we do know is that last year our government reduced funding to school boards by \$17.6 million and this year by \$3.4 million.

Mr. Speaker, just so you know, \$17.6 million plus \$13.4 million is \$31 million, which as we know, as we continue this little bit of a math lesson, is less than half of what the Opposition is continuing to say by using the number of \$65 million. School boards were faced with an average reduction this year of around 1.3 per cent, which is below the provincial enrolment decline of 1.7 per cent.

I also want to take the time to remind members opposite of the importance of some additional numbers, those additional numbers being, despite the fact that being left with an education system that had a tide of money coming in and a swell of students going out, our government has maintained the lowest class sizes in a generation and has raised the per-student funding to the highest level ever - ever.

To recap, Mr. Speaker, lower class sizes and highest per-student funding ever, higher than the Tories were when they were on this side of the House, and much higher than when the Liberals were in power.

Mr. Speaker, there are 30,000 fewer students in our classrooms today than there were 10 years ago - 30,000 fewer. Let's have a little bit of a visual: that's filling the Metro Centre three times, fill it to capacity three times over, three people in every seat - three people in every seat.

Now I know the honourable member for Kings West is kind of chirping over there, so I want to remind him of a few things that have happened over the past number of decades, just a few things, I think, when the Liberals were in power. But I think he was a Tory then, so we'll remind him of that. When the member for Colchester North was with the other Party and she was the Minister of Education, she mentioned something here - now of course this is now that she's a Liberal. This is a quote from the Metro news, on January 20, 2011. She said, "Kids who are in French immersion, early French immersion, by the time they get to Grade 6, they're fully bilingual . . . Is French immersion something that needs to stay on the table from P-12?"

That's what she said, and I'm going to table that quote, Mr. Speaker. So the question I have to ask the Liberal Party is if they were in power, they would more than likely get rid of French immersion - is that something they're going to do? I think that's exactly what they would commit to doing; that's exactly what they would do - cut a program that keeps on continuing to grow. That's something that would be irresponsible from the Liberal Party.

Mr. Speaker, let's go back to the 1990s for a moment. Not only did the Liberal Government of the day try to pay people to leave the system - another quote from The Daily News from January 2, 1996, and it says, "For example, the government will spend \$20 million in a buyout package . . ." - in a buyout package for teachers, telling them to leave the province. Leaving the province, and that is irresponsible. I will also table that since the Opposition loves to table things.

I have another one that I will table, Mr. Speaker, and this is from May 17, 1996, when I'm sure some of the honourable members on the opposite side were in the classroom. I'm sure they will remember this. I know many members on this side of the House were teachers in the classroom during this time of the Liberal reign. It says, "The NSTU and other public-sector unions have been under a three-year wage freeze that expires next year." They froze teachers' wages and they made them work for free. That's what they call Savage Days. That is something that is irresponsible.

I have something else from a news article from February 7, 1995. It talks about how in the day the Liberal Government sold off all of its band equipment and made students pay for playing instruments. That is irresponsible.

Mr. Speaker, some of the things I want to recap here is just to ask the Liberal Party what they would do. They talk about the HST. Would they lower it immediately? And if so, how would they pay for those programs? They don't have a plan. They don't have a vision.

I can tell you that on this side of this House, Nova Scotia is going to be a better place to work, a better place to play, and a better place to do business because of the Party on this side of the House.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: It's my pleasure to rise this evening to speak on this resolution:

“Therefore be it resolved that through its \$65 million in cuts to public education that this NDP Government has shown no respect for teachers in Nova Scotia and that during this Teacher Appreciation Week, the Liberal caucus reaffirms its call on the government to restore education funding.”

Mr. Speaker, I see the member who just spoke got up and left. I guess he didn't want to hear . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. You cannot say whether members are in the Chamber or outside of the Chamber.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, we heard a math lesson that \$17 million plus \$13 million-plus was equal to \$31 million, which was what they cut. But they didn't have anything in there about the inflationary costs that the school boards and the schools had to absorb as well, which has been estimated to be up to \$35 million. So \$30 million plus \$35 million is actually \$65 million. That's where the number came from, in case the math didn't add up there.

The PC caucus would like to acknowledge their support of teachers across this great province and across our country and the great job they do preparing our students for not only their own future but for our future. Without these students becoming productive members of society, we wouldn't have future doctors. We wouldn't have future lawyers, politicians, and/or valuable people to work in the new shipbuilding industry.

Teacher Appreciation Week is about saying thank you for the important jobs teachers do in raising and preparing our children to become thoughtful, caring, and contributing members of society. And how do some of these teachers get their appreciation? They get it though job cuts - not just due to decreased enrolment, but we're told it's to help balance the budget. We heard talk as well about wage freezes and teachers back in - I think he might have said the 1980s. I believe that some of these teachers who are losing their jobs because of cuts to the education system would much rather have their wages frozen than have their jobs lost altogether. I believe the buyout package he talked about was to allow younger teachers to step into the system and be productive members of society.

I'd also like to praise staff, including bus drivers, educational assistants, custodians, and administrative staff who further facilitate the growth of the most important years of our young Nova Scotians. Budget cuts we have seen by this government have not been for the betterment of the education system or for the upbringing of our children. The impact of these cuts will resonate in cost and repairs to our education system for future governments and future school boards. The NDP claims to be in support of our children but their actions speak louder than words. We've had massive budget cuts and massive job losses.

We heard earlier today from the member for Truro-Bible Hill that she wished the teacher's college was still in existence, still there. Where would these teachers work? I can tell you where they're going to work, they'd work out west like some of the other people we prepare through our system here because there are no jobs. The cuts to this education system are just doing that to our students. They're causing our teachers who work in the system now, and the new teachers, to have to go away to get work.

We've seen some NDP MLAs ignore invitations to participate in our Take Your MLA to School Day, a real chance for some MLAs to get a first-hand view of what teachers in our system have to go through. I participated in the MLA school day and I was in with a lovely teacher from Ferrisview Elementary School, Ms. Anita MacNeil, who had a classroom - I believe at that time I think there might have been 20, I'll say though I could be wrong. In that classroom was a person with special needs. She had a teacher's assistant who was assigned to look after this child with special needs and the challenge for that teacher, with the different makeup of students in that class, was enormous.

I got to observe how she dealt with the situation and if we were to increase the classroom sizes, like the cap that's put in place now, and she gets another seven or eight students in that class and one or two of them have, not just a special need but a need for a little extra attention, it's going to be devastating on our system.

We've seen drastic budget cuts without any direction from the department, putting the onus and responsibility on the school boards themselves. When the school boards made those difficult decisions that didn't follow the plans, they claimed the school board was making fun of them, playing games. We on this side of the House take our education system seriously. I don't feel that playing games with our kids' education is something that we'd even think of, let alone follow through on. When they didn't get the results they thought they were going to get, they sent in another bureaucrat to do the bidding for them.

Most recently we've seen cuts to the Halifax Regional School Board, who received almost \$20 million in cuts when you consider inflationary pressures. With that drastic decrease over two years, there's simply no feasible way not to directly impact the classrooms. If we impact the classrooms, we impact the students with these cuts. We saw 154 job cuts to the Halifax Regional School Board and only 25 of them were the result of a declining enrolment. Also gone will be 21 school-based support positions, including support personnel to the teachers.

The Chignecto-Central Regional School Board is cutting 125 positions after cutting 43 last year. The Strait Regional School Board will cut 48.5 positions and 30 of them are teachers. The Tri-County Regional School Board will cut 42 and 22 of them are teachers. We have a trades department in the school I came from, Memorial, that has been there since 1979. For all those years they had a coordinator of that program to try and develop and control and help drive that program forward. Because of the cuts this year, the coordinator of that program is getting his position cut in half.

What are they telling the teachers and the students in that school? That they only deserve to drive half-forward? This trades program is one of the best in the province. They consistently do very well in skills competitions and by losing half of this coordinator, what's it going to mean to that program? With the podium this government is standing on, pretending to prepare for the shipbuilding contract, we see them trying to get in the way of this program at Memorial.

It is mind blowing to think that the minister and the Premier consider this a step forward and publicly tell the taxpayers and parents that the cuts will not impact their students. All they have to do is listen to the people - the students, the parents - across this province. Students were marching in protest, parents were going to the school board meetings. If that's not affecting our child's education, I don't know what is. Yet with all these cuts, we see over \$600 million going to capital purchases, an announcement of new schools, but the cuts to the front lines continue.

Not only have the cuts continued to force inflation, inflation costs have further exhausted the resources available to the education of Nova Scotia children. If we remove the funding to public schools, the expenditures from the Department of Education have actually increased.

We have heard some educational professionals weighing in that education is not a priority for this minister and this government. How do they think the board was going to deal with the massive funding cut without losing teaching positions? If we're losing teaching positions, we're losing valuable educators in our system.

The minister's department has cut \$65 million from the education budget over the last two years, at a time when Nova Scotian is already the second lowest in funding per pupil in Canada. These cuts will mean the loss of as many as 700 teaching positions. The minister is supposed to be advocating for education, not destroying it.

The minister also continues to make statements about Nova Scotia's education system that are not supported by facts. The province's students do as well or better than most other provinces in international test scores.

Mr. Speaker, the NSTU has publicly called and asked for the minister's resignation. The Premier says the union's resignation call is really not worthy of a comment. Recently

in a local paper, the Director of Autism Nova Scotia said that education plan forgets about students with special needs. We heard that there's a plan on the way. To make these cuts without a plan to deal with the children with special needs is remarkable. The people need a plan to be able to proceed, to proceed with plans in their lives and their students' lives.

Mr. Speaker, the government has completely lost touch with reality and truly lost the trust of Nova Scotians and the education system will be years behind, if the current NDP continues down the path they're going. In short, Nova Scotians no longer believe the NDP Government is committed to education in our province. These cuts will hurt all students and all Nova Scotians and we figure that's just wrong. Thank you.

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

Just for the record, we had a procedural error during the late debate. It was stated that the two members were sharing the time of the first member from that caucus to speak. There is no sharing of time during late debate. What happens is that the second member can get up after members from the other caucuses have had their turns and use the remaining time. The only time we have sharing of time is during the one-hour period that is allotted to caucuses during Supply - just for the record.

The adjournment motion was made earlier for us to rise. The House will now rise, to sit tomorrow between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

We are adjourned.

[The House rose at 5:19 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1014**

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the mission of the East Coast Music Awards is to foster, develop, promote and celebrate the East Coast music industry and its artists locally, regionally, nationally and internationally; and

Whereas the East Coast Music Awards presented the 2012 Industry Awards on April 14th to celebrate and recognize the importance of music in all of our communities; and

Whereas Pam and Alan Samson of Queens County received the Volunteer of the Year Award for their work coordinating the photography team that covers the East Coast Music Awards;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Pam and Alan Samson for their involvement and dedication to music in our province through photography and the East Coast Music Awards.

RESOLUTION NO. 1015

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas recycling and composting is an essential component in ensuring a clean environment for future generations; and

Whereas every year, the Resource Recovery Fund Board Nova Scotia, in cooperation with the province's 55 municipalities, organizes the Nova Scotia Recycles Contest to encourage participation in recycling and composting programs and to celebrate the ongoing role of Nova Scotia youth in making this province a recognized leader in waste reduction; and

Whereas of the 713 Region 6 entries from Grade Primary to 12, Ella Stevens of Mill Village Consolidated School, Queens County, was awarded runner-up in the Grade 2 to Grade 3 category for her button design in the 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Ella Stevens for her entry in the Grade 2 to Grade 3 category of the 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest.

RESOLUTION NO. 1016

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas recycling and composting is an essential component in ensuring a clean environment for future generations; and

Whereas every year, the Resource Recovery Fund Board Nova Scotia, in cooperation with the province's 55 municipalities, organizes the Nova Scotia Recycles Contest to encourage participation in recycling and composting programs and to celebrate the ongoing role of Nova Scotia youth in making this province a recognized leader in waste reduction; and

Whereas of the 713 Region 6 entries from Grade Primary to 12, Nicholas van Dyk of North Queens Community School, Queens County, was awarded first place in the Grade 12 category for his research essay in the 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Nicholas van Dyk for his winning entry in the Grade 12 category of the 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest.

RESOLUTION NO. 1017

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas on Friday, April 20, 2012 the Municipality of St. Mary's held their volunteer dinner and awards ceremony at the Sherbrooke Lions Club; and

Whereas Donna Kaiser, Volunteer of the Year, was invited to display her provincial certificate of recognition which was presented to her in Halifax on April 2, 2012; and

Whereas Donna's contributions to her community include active membership in the Port Bickerton Community Club, the Port Bickerton Fire Department and St. Paul's Anglican Church, as well as being president of the Women's Institute for the past six years;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Donna Kaiser on being Volunteer of the Year and thank her for being a valued volunteer in her community and area.

RESOLUTION NO. 1018

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas the art students at Duncan MacMillan High School will be making poppies to be used at the opening ceremonies of the Dominion Convention in Halifax, June 2012, in celebration of war veterans across Canada; and

Whereas both the junior and senior art students from Duncan MacMillan High School are canvassing their local area for the names of past and present war veterans; and

Whereas the Duncan MacMillan High School junior and senior art students will be making poppies that will display the war veterans' names, their dates of service on the front, and the artist's name on the back;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the junior and senior art students at Duncan MacMillan High School on their important involvement in the Dominion Convention opening ceremonies and wish them every success as they complete this worthwhile art project in honour of their local war veterans.

RESOLUTION NO. 1019

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas in February 2012, Deacon Clara Jordan was recognized by the community for her contributions to the Sunnyville Baptist Church as part of African Heritage month; and

Whereas Deacon Clara Jordan was elected Deacon of the Sunnyville Baptist Church, and she takes her role very seriously dedicating herself to preparing sermons, visiting those in the hospital, as well as the sick and shut-ins; and

Whereas Clara Jordan was elected as Deacon of the Sunnyville Baptist Church in 1987, and was the first female to hold this position at this church;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Deacon Clara Jordan on her dedication to the Sunnyville Baptist Church and the members of her congregation.

RESOLUTION NO. 1020

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas Barry and Emily Lumsden joined the Home Routes concert circuit; and

Whereas the Lumsden's have already featured over five acts in their home including such names as Nathan Rogers, Mark Reeves, John Mann, Gillian Boucher and the band Old Sledge; and

Whereas Barry and Emily Lumsden offer the house concerts to between 25 to 30 guests, giving locals not only the enjoyment of great music but adding another social event to the area;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Barry and Emily Lumsden on their enrolment in the Home Routes concert circuit and wish them well on all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1021

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas in their final year as corporate sponsor the EnCana Corporation was able to assist in the Eastern Counties Regional Library's Annual Share-a-Book Campaign, and helped them raise a total of \$16,427 in 2011; and

Whereas EnCana Corporation, which is the owner and operator of the Deep Panuke Natural Gas Project has held a 10 year commitment to the Eastern Counties Regional Library, and since 2002 EnCana has donated \$80,000 to the Eastern Counties Regional Library through the Share a Book Campaign; and

Whereas in the 2011 Share a Book Campaign, EnCana Corporation made a donation of \$4,000 and a pledge to match all donations up to \$6,000, for a total of \$10,000;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Eastern Counties Regional Library on another successful year of their Share- a- Book Campaign and wish them well in future years of the event and all other fundraising events.

RESOLUTION NO. 1022

By: Hon. Wayne Gaudet (Clare)

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

Attendu que le Centre provincial de ressources préscolaires (CPRPS) est un centre qui offre des ressources en développement de la petite enfance; et

Attendu que les services offerts par ce centre jouent un rôle clé dans le développement linguistique et culturel des tout-petits; et

Attendu que le Centre provincial de ressources préscolaires fête cette année son vingtième anniversaire;

Par conséquent qu'il soit résolu que les membres de cette assemblée se joignent à moi pour féliciter Mme Suzanne Saulnier, directrice générale et le personnel à l'occasion de leur 20ième anniversaire.

RESOLUTION NO. 1023

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas on January 28th, the Kaiser family and the local community participated in a milestone celebration; and

Whereas December 22, 2011, marked the 60th Wedding Anniversary of Eric and Jessica Kaiser of Port Bickerton; and

Whereas Eric and Jessica Kaiser's children and spouses, as well as their grandchildren and great grandchildren, celebrated this milestone with an open house at the Port Bickerton Community Centre;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Eric and Jessica Kaiser on their 60th Wedding Anniversary and wish them the very best.

RESOLUTION NO. 1024

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas on Sunday, December 18, 2011, the 6th Annual Christmas Concert was held at the St. Paul's Church in Mushaboom; and

Whereas the men's band The Roll of the Sea, attended the 6th Annual Mushaboom Christmas Concert and performed traditional Christmas songs and harmonies; and

Whereas the choir director and guitarist, James Milligan, performed a beautiful solo and the concert was conducted with a chorus of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate The Roll of the Sea and James Milligan on their much appreciated performance at the 6th Annual Christmas Concert in Mushaboom and wish them well with future concerts and endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1025

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas during Christmas week the Sheet Harbour Lioness Club delivered handmade Christmas gifts to the residents of the Duncan MacMillan Nursing Home; and

Whereas the local Sheet Harbour Lioness Club visited with the residents of the Duncan MacMillan Nursing Home and together with another local women's group, delivered Christmas gifts of handmade lap robes; and

Whereas the Sheet Harbour Lioness Club supplied funds for materials to allow enough lap robes to be made for residents of the Duncan MacMillan Nursing Home;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly acknowledge the dedication to community that the local Sheet Harbour Lioness Club displayed by donating funds which allowed each resident of the Duncan MacMillan Nursing Home to receive a lap robe for Christmas.

RESOLUTION NO. 1026

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas our communities are defined by the small businesses and entrepreneurs that line our main streets; and

Whereas Stacy Smart-Chandler of Liverpool opened the doors of her new art supply store, Conopeum Art, on April 7, 2012; and

Whereas Conopeum Art is a fantastic addition to Liverpool, a community rich in artists and craftspeople;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates Stacy Smart-Chandler of Conopeum Art for her entrepreneurial spirit and contribution to the business and arts community of the Liverpool area.

RESOLUTION NO. 1027

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas South Queens Junior High School in Liverpool has begun to implement an innovative, inquiry-based model of education; and

Whereas engaging students in community and addressing active citizenship are important aspects of the Global Issues Module within this style of learning; and

Whereas Global Issues students Lori Anthony, Kelsey Everett, Jayme Jesso, Hannah LeBlanc, Jacob Mooers, Kendra Mueri, Alexis Rowter and Bailey Selig, have extended their project in fundraising beyond the end of the school term to continue raising money for UNICEF and the Red Cross beyond the \$500 mark they successfully reached, clearly demonstrating an understanding of the role citizenship plays in global issues;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Lori Anthony, Kelsey Everett, Jayme Jesso, Hannah LeBlanc, Jacob Mooers, Kendra Mueri, Alexis Rowter and Bailey Selig for their active citizenship and involvement in fundraising as a result of the Global Issues Module offered at South Queens Junior High School.

RESOLUTION NO. 1028

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas participation in a choir can provide incredible experiences for those involved; and

Whereas the Queens County Girls Choir travelled to Florida in March 2012, to perform at Disney World and take part in a performance workshop hosted by the Walt Disney Company;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the Queens County Girls Choir for their participation and performance at Disney World in Florida.

RESOLUTION NO. 1029

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas Queens County played host to the 2012 Nova Scotia Provincial Starskate and Synchronized Figure Skating Competition on March 3rd - 4th ; and

Whereas this exciting event brought spectators and athletes from all over Nova Scotia together in the spirit of community and competition; and

Whereas Queens County was effectively showcased as a destination for future dynamic and vibrant events;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Queens County for its success in hosting the Nova Scotia Provincial Starskate and Synchronized Figure Skating Competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1030

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the Queens County Blades Skating Club played host to the 2012 Nova Scotia Provincial Starskate and Synchronized Figure Skating Competition on March 3rd - 4th; and

Whereas this exciting event brought spectators and athletes from all over Nova Scotia together in the spirit of community and competition; and

Whereas Queens County Blades members Bailey Selig, Clare Amirault, Chloe Pitre, Lauren Amirault and Emily Dixon successfully competed with medal winning performances;

Therefore be it resolved that this House recognize and congratulate Bailey Selig, Clare Amirault, Chloe Pitre, Lauren Amirault and Emily Dixon for their success at the 2012 Nova Scotia Provincial Starskate and Synchronized Figure Skating Competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1031

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas athletic competition in our provincial schools is important to the development of our future leaders in Queens County; and

Whereas the North Queens Senior Boys Basketball Team succeeded in winning the Western Region Division 4 Boys Championship; and

Whereas the North Queens Senior Boys Basketball Team consisting of Tyler Smith, Cody Mailman, Cody Atkins, Logan Mansfield, Dana Canning, Damon Wamboldt, Ben Holdright, MacKenzie Carver, Kyle Weare, Josh Reid, Nicholas Kempton and Tristan MacCarthy, along with Coach Andrew Johnson and Assistant Coach Channing Carver went on to place fourth in their provincial division;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the North Queens Senior Boys Basketball Team on their successful 2011-12 season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1032

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the First Nations people were the first people to develop a method to tap maple trees and process maple syrup; and

Whereas the first Mi'kmaw Maple Syrup Festival was held at Kejimikujik National Park on March 17, 2012 where the legend of maple syrup was told; and

Whereas more than 500 people attended the Mi'kmaw Maple Syrup Festival which included a medicine walk, tree-tapping demonstrations, live music and activities for all ages throughout the day;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Kejimikujik National Park for highlighting the relationship between Mi'kmaw people and maple syrup through the Mi'kmaw Maple Syrup Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1033

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas volunteers are the heart and soul of our communities, donating their time and talents to make Nova Scotia a fantastic place to live; and

Whereas Martin Hilliard of Milton, Queens County is one of 69 outstanding volunteers recognized at the 38th Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony held on April 2, 2012; and

Whereas Martin Hilliard continues to be involved with his community on a volunteer basis as President of the Queens County SPCA, and as chairman of the International Ukulele Ceilidh in Liverpool;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly congratulates Martin Hilliard of Milton, Queens County on having been recognized for his contributions of time and talent to his community through his volunteer efforts.

RESOLUTION NO. 1034

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas we know that every day, four Canadian are killed and 200 are injured as a result of impaired driving crashes and the Lunenburg/Queens chapter of MADD Canada provides support to the victims of this crime; and

Whereas the Lunenburg/Queens Mothers Against Drunk Driving Hockey Challenge, an annual benefit hockey game between the Sobeys' South Shore Wild and the RCMP Bisons, took place on March 10, 2012 to raise funds for the Lunenburg/Queens chapter; and

Whereas the event resulted in the raising of \$2,120 for the Lunenburg/Queens chapter of MADD Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and thank the Sobeys' South Shore Wild and the RCMP Bisons for their fundraising efforts on behalf of the Lunenburg/Queens chapter of MADD Canada.

RESOLUTION NO. 1035

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas volunteers are the heart and soul of our communities, donating their time and talents to make Nova Scotia a fantastic place to live; and

Whereas Linda Frail of Westfield, Queens Count is one of 69 outstanding volunteers recognized at the 38th Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony held on April 2, 2012; and

Whereas Linda Frail continues to be involved with her community on a volunteer basis having initiated several programs including a breakfast program at the North Queens Community School and the Seniors-A-Day-Out Club, introducing the Santa Clause Parade

and a Memorial Tree-lighting to her community, and including her ongoing involvement with her community's Meals on Wheels program;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly congratulate Linda Frail of Westfield, Queens County on having been recognized for her contributions of time and talent to her community through her volunteer efforts.

RESOLUTION NO. 1036

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the Mayor of the Region of Queens Municipality has a new title; and

Whereas John Leefe has been appointed honorary colonel of the West Nova Scotia Regiment; and

Whereas this appointment will allow the honorary colonel to help units with their traditions, procedures, dress and finances in western Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly congratulate and recognize John Leefe on his appointment as honorary colonel of the West Nova Regiment.

RESOLUTION NO. 1037

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the main lodge of White Point Beach Resort was destroyed by fire in November 2011; and

Whereas among the items lost were White Point's adored collection of "Little People" by folk artist Joe Winters; and

Whereas Joe Winters has completed and presented the first of a new series of "Little People" to delight future guests of White Point Beach Resort;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Joe Winters for his creative work in restoring the White Point experience.

RESOLUTION NO. 1038

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the presence of Gay/Straight Alliance groups in high schools is important to fostering security and self esteem, as well as solidifying the identity of our youth; and

Whereas the main goal of Gay/Straight Alliance group is to spread awareness and acceptance of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth, helping to create a positive high school experience for all students; and

Whereas the students of Liverpool Regional High School have founded a Gay/Straight Alliance group in their school, acknowledging the importance of mutual respect and acceptance in society;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the members of the Gay/Straight Alliance at Liverpool Regional High School for taking steps to create a positive and secure experience for all students.

RESOLUTION NO. 1039

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the main lodge of White Point Beach Resort was destroyed by fire in November 2011; and

Whereas among the items lost was a treasured and unique quilt, depicting images of the grounds, buildings and icons of the resort and surrounding area; and

Whereas Queens County quilter, Bev Crouse, has come forward to spearhead the creation of a new quilt, a project that will include the opportunity for anyone with an interest in taking part to add a stitch or two;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Bev Crouse of Queens County for her contributions of time and talent to this quilt project, a symbol of community support and the White Point experience.

RESOLUTION NO. 1040

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas participation in a winter sport such as hockey is a wonderful way to stay active, in addition to bringing communities together as spectators for games and tournaments; and

Whereas the Queens County Bantam B Cougars hockey team has enjoyed a successful 2012 hockey season; and

Whereas the Queens County Bantam B Cougars not only hosted the 2012 Provincial Championship Tournament, they also earned the second place overall ranking in the championship final;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the Queens County Bantam B Cougars for their successful season and participation in the 2012 Provincial Championship Tournament.

RESOLUTION NO. 1041

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas outdoor sports and activities such as golf encourage physical activity as well as healthy social interaction; and

Whereas the White Point Golf Course is a nine hole golf course steeped in history, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, and designed by renowned golf architect Donald J. Ross; and

Whereas on April 6, 2012, the White Point Golf Course opened its 80th season of golf, lessons, tournaments and clinics;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates the White Point Golf Course for 80 years of providing a scenic golf experience.

RESOLUTION NO. 1042

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas we know that in the past year approximately 2,650 Nova Scotians lost their lives to cancer and approximately 6,700 new cases were diagnosed; and

Whereas the curling community of Liverpool, Queens County, held a Washer Toss for Cancer fundraising tournament on March 10, 2012; and

Whereas the event resulted in the raising of \$5,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognizes and thanks the curling community of Liverpool, Queens County, for their fundraising efforts to benefit the Canadian Cancer Society.

RESOLUTION NO. 1043

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas provincial Crown agency InNOVAcorp is an early stage venture capital organization targeting clean technology, information technology, and life sciences; and

Whereas InNOVAcorp's I-3 Technology Start-up Competition seeks out high potential early stage Nova Scotia companies to support and encourage entrepreneurial activity across the province; and

Whereas Van Dyk Specialty Freezing Innovations of Caledonia, Queens County, has placed second in its zone in this competition, highlighting its role as the type of innovative company that will fuel future economic growth;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Van Dyk Specialty Freezing Innovations of Caledonia, Queens County, for its innovative drive and competitive entrepreneurial spirit, essential components in the future of Nova Scotia's economic growth.

RESOLUTION NO. 1044

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas our communities' food banks are so important to those who utilize and rely on their services; and

Whereas when the donations that keep these food banks alive originate from the fundraising efforts of a child, they encapsulate the true spirit of kindness, compassion and goodwill; and

Whereas 4-year-old Tegan Whynot of Queens County has been selling her original paintings to raise money for the food bank to help families in need;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Tegan Whynot of Queens County for her fundraising efforts to benefit her local food bank.

RESOLUTION NO. 1045

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Woods Harbour resident Rachel Goreham has been recognized by the Balmoral Rebekah Lodge #39 for 75 years of continued membership in the Lodge, at a special ceremony in her honour; and

Whereas Rachel Goreham's connection to Balmoral Rebekah Lodge #39 goes beyond the many offices she has held during her own lifetime, back to 1905 when her grandfather, Arthur Goreham, donated the land to build the Woods Harbour IOOF Hall, which still houses weekly meetings for the Balmoral Rebekah Lodge #39 to this day; and

Whereas Rachel Goreham has also taken an active role in her community over the years for many other causes, including the Woods Harbour Do For Others Club and the Woods Harbour Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary, and was a founding member of the Woods Harbour Volunteer Ambulance Service;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly applaud Rachel Goreham for achieving 75 years membership with the Balmoral Rebekah Lodge #39 and for her years of dedicated service to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1046

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Cape Sable Island Elementary School teacher Leah Weare has been recognized for her outstanding commitment to Educating Students for Life with a 2012 Education Week Award; and

Whereas Leah Weare, who is a social skills resource teacher, is described as a daily support for her students, encouraging them to be tolerant and respectful of their differences and to celebrate the strengths in each other; and

Whereas Leah Weare is there for her students both in and out of the classroom, coordinating the school's Peer Mediation Program and training a team of students who encourage positive interactions within the school population;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate 2012 Education Week Award recipient Leah Weare for her outstanding contributions to her students and the education system.

RESOLUTION NO. 1047

By: Hon. John MacDonell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas amateur boxing is a long-respected, character-building sport; and

Whereas the 2012 Junior Youth Canadian Championship was recently held in Montreal; and

Whereas Wyatt Sanford of Kennetcook won gold in his weight class, while his brother Ryan won silver;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly offer its congratulations to Wyatt and Ryan Sanford on their medal wins and wish them continued success for the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1048

By: Hon. Denise Peterson-Rafuse (Education)

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

Whereas Linda and Denis Dineen immigrated to Canada from the U.K. in 2000, moving to Nova Scotia in 2008, and in May of 2010 opened Delish Fine Foods in Upper Tantallon; and

Whereas Delish Fine Foods has been selected as the Best British Shop in the World for 2012, through a competition that ran in the Telegraph, a newspaper in England; and

Whereas this win was based on comments sent to the Telegraph by expatriates and other customers who buy their favourite food from this store;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly offer congratulations to Linda and Denis Dineen and their staff on receiving this award and wish them all the best as they bring such British delicacies to the South Shore as Scotch eggs, Scotch pies, steak and kidney pie, and not-to-be-forgotten bread pudding.

RESOLUTION NO. 1049

By: Hon. Denise Peterson-Rafuse (Community Services)

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

Whereas on April 15, 2012, the Chester Clipper Jr. C Hockey Team defeated Nunavut in P.E.I. for the Maritime-North Hockey Championship and became the 2012 Junior C Atlantic Canadian Champions; and

Whereas president and general manager Jehad Assaff formed the team in 2008 with the help of community sponsors; and

Whereas the Chester Clippers had 28 wins and 0 losses in this past season and were ranked #1 in Canada for Junior C hockey;

Therefore be it resolved that this House congratulate all members, coaches, and staff of the Chester Clippers hockey organization and wish them all the best in seasons to come.

RESOLUTION NO. 1050

By: Hon. Denise Peterson-Rafuse (Community Services)

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

Whereas Bryler Publication Inc. launched a trial program with support of the Nova Scotia Department of Education called Booked for Kids by Kids, in January 2012, that encourages students to submit manuscripts in hopes that it will be selected to be published; and

Whereas there were three winners from my constituency: elementary school winners from Chester District School were Adam Sarty, author, and Matayla Hancock, illustrator, for their book and from Chester Area Middle School winner Hunter Chandler; and

Whereas royalties from the sales of their book are being placed in trust for university, college, or a continuing educational program;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Adam Sarty, Matayla Hancock and Hunter Chandler and wishes them all the best in future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1051

By: Hon. Denise Peterson-Rafuse (Community Services)

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

Whereas on April 2nd, 2012, in Halifax, the 38th Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony took place; and

Whereas Betty Eisner, who represented the Municipality of the District of Chester, received her volunteer award in honour of the many groups and committees she is a part of such as Daily Vacation Bible School, Clothing Depot, Chester Area Christian Women's Club, palliative care team at Shoreham Village for Special Care, Canadian Cancer Society and many others; and

Whereas Betty is dedicated to the service of others and the people of Chester Basin feel blessed to have her in our midst;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates and thanks Betty for all the wonderful contributions she has made over the years to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1052

By: Hon. Denise Peterson-Rafuse (Community Services)

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

Whereas East St. Margaret's Elementary School is located in the community of Indian Harbour and the principal and staff were looking for an innovative way of celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the community of Peggy's Cove; and

Whereas the fourth and fifth grade students undertook a project under the direction of artist Marlene York to create a mural that depicts the community including lighthouses, school, churches, and the Swiss Air Memorial, and took a year to complete; and

Whereas not only did the students learn the basic skills in painting but also learned the history of their community and will have the joy of seeing their work displayed through the Bay communities this summer;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate the students for their artistic talent and also Principal Dobrowolski and Marlene York, who brought this project to fruition for many to enjoy.

RESOLUTION NO. 1053

By: Hon. Denise Peterson-Rafuse (Community Services)

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

Whereas the Chester Municipal Community Wheels Program, a door-to-door wheelchair accessible van service for residents of the Municipality of the District of Chester, is closing in on their 5th year in operation; and

Whereas a brand new wheelchair accessible, four-passenger Ford van has recently been purchased and added to the existing 14-passenger multiple function activity bus; and

Whereas contributions from community sources such as the Chester Basin, New Ross and Chester Lions Clubs, the staff of the Hubbards Scoitabank, Colin MacDonald of Clearwater Seafoods, the New Ross Credit Union, Chester Pharmasave, Mahone Auto, and The Chester Sign Guy came together with funding through the Service Nova Scotia and

Municipal Relations Accessible Transportation Assistance Program to ensure that this new vehicle was outfitted with everything it needed to provide the best service possible;

Therefore be it resolved that this House congratulates the many staff and supporters of the Chester Municipal Community Wheels program for their hard work and dedication to their community, which makes this service possible to residents throughout the Municipality of the District of Chester.

RESOLUTION NO. 1054

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas on September 19, 2011, RRFB Nova Scotia launched its 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest; and

Whereas this year's contest challenged students to be "Super Green" in order to help us all reach the provincial goals of reducing our solid waste from an average of 420 kg to 300 kg per person per year by 2015; and

Whereas Janelle Delorey, a Grade 7 student from Fanning Education Centre, was recognized as Runner-Up Student for Grades 7, 8, and 9 at the RRFB Nova Scotia 12th Annual Awards Celebration at the Museum of Industry on April 19, 2012;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Janelle Delorey on the recognition of her entry in the 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest and for taking recycling seriously.

RESOLUTION NO. 1055

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas on September 19, 2011, RRFB Nova Scotia launched its 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest; and

Whereas this year's contest challenged students to be "Super Green" in order to help us all reach the provincial goals of reducing our solid waste from an average of 420 kg to 300 kg per person per year by 2015; and

Whereas Kiara Ayre, a Grade 4 student from Mulgrave Memorial Education Centre, was recognized as Runner-Up Student for Grades 4, 5, and 6 at the RRFB Nova Scotia 12th Annual Awards Celebration at the Museum of Industry on April 19, 2012;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kiara Ayre on the recognition of her entry in the 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest and for taking recycling seriously.

RESOLUTION NO. 1056

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas the Grade 1 class of the Evelyn Richardson Memorial Elementary School in Shag Harbour were the winners in their category for Region 6 in the 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest; and

Whereas all students in the class took part in the annual Resource Recovery Fund Board Nova Scotia contest, showing they were “Super Green” and winning a cash prize of \$500 for their school; and

Whereas ERMES Grade 1 teacher Denise Reashore was one of the honoured guests at the Region 6 Nova Scotia Recycles Honorary Dinner held in Bridgewater on April 18, 2012, accepting a prize package of recycled goodies on behalf of her students;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate teacher Denise Reashore and all the students in the Grade 1 class at the Evelyn Richardson Memorial Elementary School for their participation and award-winning accomplishment in the 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest.

RESOLUTION NO. 1057

By: Mr. Jim Boudreau (Guysborough-Sheet Harbour)

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

Whereas on September 19, 2011, RRFB Nova Scotia launched its 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest; and

Whereas this year’s contest challenged students to be “Super Green” in order to help us all reach the provincial goals of reducing our solid waste from an average of 420 kg to 300 kg per person per year by 2015; and

Whereas St. Mary's Education Centre Primary class and their teacher, Michelle Reid, were named the winners for Grade Primary and 1 at the RRFB Nova Scotia 12th Annual Awards Celebration at the Museum of Industry on April 19, 2012;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Michelle Reid and her Primary class for winning the 12th Annual Nova Scotia Recycles Contest.

RESOLUTION NO. 1058

By: Hon. John MacDonell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas building a business involves a type of person who is willing to risk a great deal personally; and

Whereas Susan Sangster of Enfield has built or expanded on at least three successful separate businesses; and

Whereas on March 21, 2012, the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce recognized Susan Sangster's business acumen by awarding her with Business Person of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly offers its congratulations to Susan Sangster on being recognized as business Person of the Year by the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce and wishes her continued success for the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1059

By: Hon. John MacDonell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas creating a successful business requires an entrepreneur with vision and determination; and

Whereas Heather Smith and her late husband Jack Robinson of South Maitland have turned Tidal Bore Rafting and Cottages into a world-class tourism attraction; and

Whereas on March 21, 2012, the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce recognized Heather Smith by awarding her with Entrepreneur of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly offers its congratulations to Heather Smith on being awarded Entrepreneur of the Year by the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce and wishes her continued success for the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1060

By: Hon. John MacDonell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas successful business people are often highly involved in their communities; and

Whereas Marsden J. Anthony, more commonly known as Junior, is Kennetcook's most ardent booster and supporter, both vocally and with what counts the most, his own cash; and

Whereas on March 21, 2012, the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce recognized Marsden (Junior) Anthony as Community Booster of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly offers its congratulations to Marsden J. Anthony on being awarded Community Booster of the Year and thanks him for his past and ongoing efforts to promote Kennetcook as a place to visit, live, and conduct business.

RESOLUTION NO. 1061

By: Hon. John MacDonell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas business communities form chambers of commerce to bring awareness to their issues; and

Whereas to be effective, chambers of commerce need members active in their communities; and

Whereas on March 21, 2012, the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce recognized Margaret Johnson of Shubenacadie with the Tom Parker Chamber Member of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly offers its congratulations to Margaret Johnson on being awarded the Tom Parker Chamber Member of the Year and wishes her well for the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1062

By: Hon. John MacDonell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas export markets are the lifeline for Nova Scotia's resource and manufacturing industries; and

Whereas National Gypsum of Milford Station has been a major employer and exporter of raw gypsum for many years; and

Whereas on March 21, 2012, the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce recognized National Gypsum as Exporter of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly offers its congratulations to the management and staff of National Gypsum on being awarded Exporter of the Year by the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce and wishes them continued success for the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1063

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Grace Leaman won the Astor Theatre Society Musical Theatre Junior Solo Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Grace Leaman for having won the Astor Theatre Society Musical Theatre Junior Solo Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1064

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Jessica Stevens won the IODE Cup;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Jessica Stevens for having won the IODE Cup during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1065

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Jordan Haughn won the Lion's Cup and a Bowater Mersey Paper Co. Ltd. Piano Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Jordan Haughn for having won the Lion's Cup and a Bowater Mersey Paper Co. Ltd. Piano Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1066

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Hanna Barnes won the RICJAC Irving Mainway Trophy;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Hanna Barnes for having won the RICJAC Irving Mainway Trophy during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1067

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Lauren Inglis won the Atlantic Superstore Trophy and Bowater Mersey Paper Co. Ltd. Vocal Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Lauren Inglis for having won the Atlantic Superstore Trophy and Bowater Mersey Paper Co. Ltd. Vocal Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1068

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas John Orme won the CD Hemeon Rose Bowl;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate John Orme for having won the CD Hemeon Rose Bowl during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1069

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Jordyn Duffney won the Khattar Cup and a Brady's Home Building Centre Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Jordyn Duffney for having won the Khattar Cup and a Brady's Home Building Centre Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1070

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Alyssa Oickle won the CD Hemeon Rose Bowl;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Alyssa Oickle for having won the CD Hemeon Rose Bowl during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1071

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Clare Amirault won the Astor Theatre Society Musical Theatre Senior Solo Scholarship and the RICJAC Irving Mainway Trophy;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Clare Amirault for having won the Astor Theatre Society Musical Theatre Senior Solo Scholarship and the RICJAC Irving Mainway Trophy during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1072

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Deena El-Ziftawi won a Lions Club Vocal Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Deena El-Ziftawi for having won a Lions Club Vocal Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1073

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Ella Stevens won the Kinette Club Memorial Piano Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Ella Stevens for having won the Kinette Club Memorial Piano Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1074

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Breah Himmelman won a Kinette Club Memorial Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Breah Himmelman for having won a Kinette Club Memorial Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1075

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Chloe Pitre won a Legion Vocal Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Chloe Pitre for having won a Legion Vocal Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1076

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Bryden McNamara won the MacPherson's Deli/Sears Senior Vocal Scholarship, Veinot's Footwear Ltd. Cup, Maddie Keay Memorial Scholarship, and Winds of Change Plaque in addition to receiving a recommendation to compete in the Provincial Music Festival;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Bryden McNamara for having won the MacPherson's Deli/Sears Senior Vocal Scholarship, Veinot's Footwear Ltd. Cup, Maddie Keay Memorial Scholarship, and Winds of Change Plaque in addition to receiving a recommendation to compete in the Provincial Music Festival during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1077

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Bailey Selig won the Evelyn Riser Memorial Trophy;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Bailey Selig for having won the Evelyn Riser Memorial Trophy during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1078

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes, like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Dr. John C. Wickwire Academy Senior Choir won the Kiwanis Trophy.

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the Dr. John C. Wickwire Academy Senior Choir for having won the Kiwanis Trophy during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1079

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes, like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Annalise Stevenson won the Lion's Cup, Kinsmen Piano Scholarship and the Maddie Keay Memorial Trophy;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Annalise Stevenson for having won the Lion's Cup, Kinsmen Piano Scholarship and the Maddie Keay Memorial Trophy during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1080

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes, like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Angus Stevens won the Music Festival Junior Piano Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Angus Stevens for having won the Music Festival Junior Piano Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1081

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes, like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Ben Hatt won a KMP Award and Clattco Construction Musical Theatre Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Ben Hatt for having won a KMP Award and Clattco Construction Musical Theatre Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1082

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes, like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Brent Raddall won the MacPherson's Deli/Sears Senior Vocal Scholarship and Stock Studio Trophy, in addition to receiving a recommendation to compete in the Provincial Music Festival;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Brent Raddall for having won the MacPherson's Deli/Sears Senior Vocal Scholarship and Stock Studio Trophy, in addition to receiving a recommendation to compete in the Provincial Music Festival during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1083

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes, like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Grace Cowling won a Legion Vocal Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Grace Cowling for having won a Legion Vocal Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.

RESOLUTION NO. 1084

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas music plays such an important role in the education and growth of our youth; and

Whereas music festivals promote and encourage the growth in music through local festivals in competitive and non-competitive classes, like the 2012 Queens County Music Festival recently held in Liverpool, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Gwendolyn Williams won Henneberry's Barber Shoppe Trophy and Brady's Home Building Centre Piano Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Gwendolyn Williams for having won Henneberry's Barber Shoppe Trophy and Brady's Home Building Centre Piano Scholarship during the 2012 Queens County Music Festival.