



DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2012

Sixty-first General Assembly

Fourth Session

2:00 P.M.

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 motion for late debate, a topic has been chosen and reads as follows:

Therefore be it resolved that the NDP Government take stronger action to ensure that as many Nova Scotians as necessary access the Heating Assistance Rebate Program.

It was submitted by the honourable member for Kings West.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Mr. Speaker, I hereby beg leave to present a petition from the residents of MacLellan Mountain Road. The operative words are:

“Repaving paved section of MacLellan’s [sic] Mountain Road, and gravel and grading of the remainder.”

It is signed by 68 residents and I, too, have affixed my name.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

The honourable member for Kings West.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition, the operative clause:

“That: We are adamantly against any increase in the existing residential rate structure for Nova Scotia Power Incorporated (NSPI) and that we feel with the huge net profits collected by NSPI under existing rates, and the protection of the Fuel Adjustment Mechanism that NSPI currently enjoys, any increase to current residential rates is pure greed and usury on the part of NSPI and its shareholders.

Therefore, your petitioners call upon the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to use its powers over the Board of Commissioners . . .” to reduce the current rate.

There are 101 signatures, and I have affixed my signature to it, and it is the first of many hundreds to be tabled during the session.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition, the operative words are:

“A Petition opposing the Boundary Commissions [sic] recommendation to split Shelburne County, joining Shelburne with Queens County, and Barrington with Argyle.”

Mr. Speaker, there are hundreds of signatures on this. I have affixed my name, and I wish to table it. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition of which the operative clause reads:

“We the undersigned electors, citizens and residents of the Province of Nova Scotia hold that the provincial electoral district of Yarmouth, encompassing the Municipal District of Yarmouth and the Town of Yarmouth, is a distinct community of interest with a shared history and culture and deserving of a unified political representation in our legislative assembly of Nova Scotia.

We firmly believe that the electoral riding of Yarmouth holds the desired population criteria set forth in the commission terms of reference. We urge the electoral Boundaries commission to maintain the electoral riding of Yarmouth as it is, and not to divide our community. We have a right that is legislated in the Commission’s Terms of Reference to have our collective interests as a community represented with one voice in our Legislative Assembly.”

Mr. Speaker, I have affixed my name to the signatures, of which there are close to 7,000 that were collected in three weeks.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

The honourable member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley.

MR. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition signed by 36 residents of Clifton, Colchester County. The petition follows a text which begins with the words:

“The attached is a petition to have the Shore Road, Clifton paved.”

I have signed the petition also. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

I would remind honourable members in the House of Assembly that when doing petitions and tabling petitions in the House of Assembly, there must be an ask of either the

government or an ask of the House of Assembly. I will review a couple of those petitions that were just tabled to see if they are in compliance with the Rules of the House of Assembly, and I will rule on them in the morning. Thank you.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Premier, as his delegate, I hereby beg leave to table a final report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission, in accordance with the House of Assembly Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1394

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

Whereas we just celebrated Respiratory Therapist Week from October 21st to October 27th; and

Whereas respiratory therapists provide advanced life support to patients in respiratory distress and during catastrophic events they are always at the patient's side; and

Whereas the respiratory therapists are an integral part of the health care team providing education, services, diagnostic, critical care and routine therapeutic support;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly celebrate Respiratory Therapist Week from October 21st to October 27th and recognize the important role that respiratory therapists have in providing advanced life support that contributes to patient care.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice.

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 Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, with the indulgence of the House, could we revert the order of business back to Statements by Ministers?

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request to revert back in the Order Paper.

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

The motion is carried.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend Nova Scotians exercised their democratic right and voted for municipal councillors, mayors, wardens and school board members right across the province. I want to thank all the candidates who put their names forward for consideration. Everyone here knows the time and energy needed to organize and run a campaign. It requires the support of one's family, a team of volunteers and a passion to be part of the solutions that will help improve the lives of all Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, all elections mark an opportunity for renewal. This past weekend was no different. In fact, there are a number of communities now with new leadership. The Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Yarmouth, Lunenburg, Queens, and Halifax Regional Municipality all have new leaders, and I look forward to meeting and working with each of them.

Some, Mr. Speaker, I already know quite well. I had the chance to speak with a familiar face from this House, the former member for Cape Breton North and the CBRM Mayor-elect Cecil Clarke, at an NDP fundraising event in Sydney earlier this week. (Interruption) I'm just saying. I am pleased to hear that he is eager to get going on his ideas to strengthen the Cape Breton region. He's already talking about working with another friend of mine - Mayor-elect for HRM, Mike Savage. Many years ago I was among those who canvassed to help Mike's father John as the mayor of Dartmouth. I often worked with

Mike during his years as a Member of Parliament on issues that are important to Dartmouth and to Cole Harbour. I am pleased to have the opportunity now to work with him once again.

As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, change seemed to be the theme in many of these municipal elections. In the Town of Bridgetown, Nova Scotians saw the return of a new elected mayor and council. Eighteen months ago that community faced a situation that the province had never before encountered - the entire council resigned. The province stepped in and appointed a CAO, mayor and council to provide much needed leadership and to help ensure the small rural community had a fighting chance at survival.

I'm pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that stability has been restored. The town hall in Bridgetown has new controls and oversights are in place to ensure transparency and accountability. I want to thank Mayor Fowler, councillors Allen and Thurber, and CAO Hiltz for their commitment and compassion over the past year and a half. To the many small business owners who refused to close up shop and leave town, thanks for believing in your community, and to the people and families of Bridgetown, thank you for demonstrating that when communities come together, there is nothing that can't be accomplished.

I also want to thank Judith Sullivan-Corney who provided much needed oversight and leadership for students and families in the South Shore Regional School Board after the entire board was dismissed earlier this year. Ms. Sullivan-Corney did a great job under difficult circumstances. A new school board has now been elected and tasked with ensuring the students and teachers in that region have the support they need to be successful in a future that promises to be bright.

Nova Scotia is on the precipice of some of the greatest opportunities it has had in its history - from shipbuilding to the Lower Churchill to the recently announced plans to develop a \$5 billion liquid natural gas export facility in the Town of Goldboro. My government is investing appropriately to help workers and business people prepare for these opportunities and we're offering support to help ensure these opportunities become reality. We're continuing to plan carefully and we will work together with our municipal partners to ensure that all regions are ready to make the most of these opportunities.

As Premier, I've made it my daily work to sell the many benefits of our province to the rest of the world. I'm already hearing about our new municipal leaders' enthusiasm to take up the charge to encourage investment and growth in their respective communities. I've said it before, Nova Scotia is stronger when all its communities, both urban and rural, are growing and thriving. I know there are people out there with ideas. I heard some great ones during my discussions over the last couple of weeks with business owners across the province. I want it known that my door remains open to all municipal leaders, the province will work with them as Nova Scotia enters this new era of opportunity and prosperity. Thank you. (Applause)

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

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I want to start by saying a phrase that you probably won't hear very often in this House - I want to associate myself with the remarks made by the Premier just recently. All of us, over the last weekend in our respective communities, witnessed our community colleagues putting their names forward on ballots to be the municipal politicians or to represent us at the school board level. I want to congratulate all of those who were successful and I also want to recognize those who were not, who also put their names forward and brought ideas, brought their own vision and passion forward for their collective communities.

The Premier spoke about Bridgetown - that's my home town. I live just outside of it, but I spent much of my growing-up years there and consider it my home town. It has been a difficult period of time for that community meeting many of the obligations that municipal governments across this province have had to come to terms with. Really though, Bridgetown is a snapshot of the difficulty that many small towns across Nova Scotia are feeling. It is my hope that as there has been a change at the municipal level in many communities that there is also a change in the relationship between this government and municipal units across Nova Scotia.

There was an agreement before with the memorandum of understanding and when that was cancelled by the present government, by the Premier, it sent many communities reeling, trying to figure out how they were going to come to terms with meeting their obligations to their respective constituents but also meeting the obligations that have been downloaded by this government. When I hear the Premier talking about his door being open to municipal politicians, I hope it is a sincere message he is sending to municipal leaders across this province that he's prepared to finally work with them as a partner and quite frankly give them the respect they deserve as an elected body across Nova Scotia.

I also have had the good fortune of serving on the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board. They've done a tremendous job representing students and families and communities across our region. Since being the Leader, I have had the privilege to meet with many school boards across Nova Scotia and know the commitment that school board members have to children and to learning across Nova Scotia. Many of the previous board members, some of whom have chosen not to reoffer, hearken back to the \$65 million cuts that have taken place in public education in this province under the NDP Government. It is my hope that, as the Premier said on Saturday night, there's a new beginning. I hope there's a new beginning between this government and elected school boards across Nova Scotia to make sure they put kids and learning first in this province and make it a commitment. Put kids first, making sure our province has an opportunity to capitalize and move forward.

What we have seen over the last three years - whether with municipal governments or school boards - we've seen a government that has been unwilling to respect elected offices other than the ones that are sitting on the government side of House. It is my hope

that last Saturday was a new beginning and a new beginning by this government to send a signal to all elected people across Nova Scotia that they actually want to work with them as opposed to download on top of them, Mr. Speaker.

Finally I want to close by thanking all Nova Scotians who worked in helping to make sure that the municipal elections went forward, that school board elections went forward. All of us have the privilege of sitting in this House but there is not a single elected Nova Scotian who has the ability to be elected without the support of family, friends and community members who believe in them and believe in their vision. Collectively, as a caucus, we want to extend congratulations to the municipal and school board people who were elected, to all those who put their names on a ballot and to all Nova Scotians who picked up their democratic right and participated in the elections over the weekend.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I too want to thank the Premier for his remarks here today and also extend my thanks, and the thanks of the PC caucus, to all of those winners and others who ran, the 850 men and women who took time away from their family life and their professional life to put their name on a ballot to represent their hometown, village, or municipality in this great province, or school board as well. We all know that one of the highest honours that can be given to one of our fellow citizens is to be nominated, to stand for office, to represent their home community and to be elected by their peers to represent them whether it is on a town or municipal council, a school board, a district or here in this House of Assembly. It is a high honour and I know that those who were elected feel the same incredible responsibility, the same trust, the same need for dignity and thoughtfulness that all elected people should feel when they are entrusted by their fellow citizens to represent them.

The Premier mentioned a number of specific individuals who are elected to new positions and others who are retiring from serving our province. For example in terms of newly elected members, the Premier recognized Mr. Clarke, the new mayor of CRBM who he met at an NDP fundraiser and all I can say to that is the way that his government is handing out money - hand over fist these days - I can't blame Mayor Clarke for going to that fundraiser, Mr. Speaker.

I do want to echo the Premier's gratitude to all those who are retiring from serving their communities. People like Wayne Folker in Hantsport, Keith MacCuspik in Victoria, Charles LeBlanc in Argyle, Jean Melanson after 33 years in Clare, or Wes Stubbart in Florence, Gordon Maclean in North Sydney, Brian Lahey in Albert Bridge, and my new good friend Sue Uteck here in Halifax all have served their communities well, Mr. Speaker.

I do hope - and Mr. Mombourquette in Sydney as well - I do hope that those who are elected to represent their municipalities hear the Premier's words today because their predecessors heard similar warm words when they were first elected four years ago but

have not had the same pleasant experience that the Premier is now proposing for their replacements. As we know, Mr. Speaker, it was the Premier and his government that actually ripped up a legal agreement, a memorandum between his government and our many municipalities, no longer accepting the provincial responsibility for the cost of provincial services like corrections, public housing or even education.

That decision, unfortunately, is going to make life a lot more difficult for the towns and municipalities of Nova Scotia who elected their representatives this past week. It will inevitably lead to higher taxes, a policy that has been attributed to the provincial government and one that will now be visited on our municipal governments because of the decisions of the Premier and his Cabinet.

In addition, the people who have been elected today to municipal office face the sad fact that outside Halifax 8,600 full-time jobs have been lost during the term of this government. In Cape Breton today the unemployment rate is 15.1 per cent; 13,000 of our fellow Nova Scotians have left the province for Alberta. People who remain in Nova Scotia earn \$100 less per week than the average Canadian. Prices are rising much faster than the national average while incomes are stagnant. That is the picture that the newly-elected municipal leaders face today, that they have to weigh against the warm words from the Premier.

The Premier is right when he says that Nova Scotia is stronger when we all work together, when all communities can grow and thrive as one. That is not the reality today. He has called for change in his statement – change, I have no doubt, will be coming. Let's all agree that we want to recommit ourselves, municipally and provincially, to building a better, more employed, more prosperous Nova Scotia. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond on an introduction.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Merci beaucoup M. le Président. J'ai l'honneur aujourd'hui de présenter des amis qui sont situés dans la galerie à l'est de l'Assemblée et je demanderais de se lever une fois que je les présente : M. Justin Mury, nouveau élu Président de la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse. Justin est natif de la communauté de Ouest-Archat, à l'Ile Madame, au comté de Richmond. Nous avons aussi la nouvelle Directrice générale de la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse, Mlle. Marie-Claude Rioux ; Micheline Gélinas, Directrice générale de la Fédération des femmes acadiennes et Natalie Aucoin, Directrice générale de la Fédération des parents acadiens.

M. le Président, nos amis sont ici aujourd'hui pour suivre les débats qui vont prendre place aujourd'hui, à l'Assemblée.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to point out some visitors we have in the east gallery today: Mr. Justin Mury, newly-elected President of the Acadian Federation; Marie-Claude Rioux, the Director general of the Acadian Federation; Micheline Gélinas, Executive

Director of Fédération des femmes acadiennes and Natalie Aucoin, Director General, Fédération des parents acadiens.

Mr. Speaker, they are here today to follow the debates that will take place at the Assembly. I would ask all my colleagues in the House to issue them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 94 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 1 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The House of Assembly Act. (Hon. Ross Landry)

Bill No. 95 - Entitled an Act to Ensure Greater Reliability, Responsiveness and Accountability of the Distribution of Electricity in Nova Scotia. (Mr. Andrew Younger)

Bill No. 96 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 380 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Public Utilities Act, to Eliminate the Guarantee on Nova Scotia Power's Profit. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

Bill No. 97 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 380 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Public Utilities Act, to Ensure Fairer Power Rates. (Hon. Charlie Parker)

Bill No. 98 - Entitled an Act to Require the Full Disclosure of Stranded Assets and Increase the Accountability of Nova Scotia Power Incorporated. (Mr. Andrew Younger)

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

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, could I make an introduction before I introduce my bill?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. MACLEOD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the gallery opposite, I'd like to introduce to you Mr. Sean Kirby, who is the executive director of the Mining Association of Nova Scotia. It's an association that contributes millions of dollars into our economy every year. I'd ask our members to give him a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

Bill No. 99 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 17 of the Acts of 1995-96. The Revenue Act. (Mr. Alfie MacLeod)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1395

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

Whereas municipal elections in Nova Scotia were held on Saturday, October 20, 2012 resulting in significant changes in the municipal political landscape; and

Whereas the Honourable Cecil Clarke was elected Mayor of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality with a solid majority of voter support; and

Whereas the Honourable Cecil Clarke has distinguished himself over the years in public life, both as a provincial Cabinet Minister and Speaker of this House of Assembly;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Honourable Cecil Clarke on his election as Mayor of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality 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 Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 1396

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

Whereas running for elected office is an important act of public service that strengthens our democracy; and

Whereas last Saturday, more than 850 Nova Scotians bravely put their names on ballots in 54 municipalities and eight school boards; and

Whereas all the candidates in our municipal and school board elections displayed courage and dedication to their communities by putting their names forward;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate all candidates in the recent municipal and school board elections for their willingness to represent their neighbourhoods and communities and for their contributions to making Nova Scotia's electoral process vital and relevant.

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. 1397

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

Whereas Noel Jones of Dartmouth did the incredible this week by walking on and making the University of Syracuse Division 1 men's basketball team; and

Whereas Noel's family never allowed his love of sport to overshadow the importance of a good education, helping him to earn a scholarship to the Halifax Grammar School where he was twice named the high school's Most Valuable Player; and

Whereas Noel's commitment to higher learning and determination to play basketball at the highest university level possible has helped him get to where he is today;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature recognize Noel Jones for his hard work and wish him and the Syracuse Orangemen great success in the coming season both on the court and in the classroom.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1398

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

Whereas on August 29, 2012, Nova Scotia lost a woman with unlimited energy, boundless happiness and a true friend to us all with the passing of Ruth Goldbloom; and

Whereas Ruth's fire and spirit to make our province an even better place to live was exhibited in her support of organizations such as the United Way, the IWK, the Kids Help Phone and Mount Saint Vincent University, to name just a few; and

Whereas Ruth's passion and legacy will be best remembered for her tireless leadership efforts which transformed Pier 21 into a national symbol of pride for thousands of new Canadians who passed through its doors in pursuit of a new life in our country;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly extend our condolences to Ruth's husband Richard, their children, Alan, Barbara and David, her 11 grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and honour her memory by being ever mindful of what's most important - family and service to community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1399

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

Whereas Raylene Rankin, a Cape Breton musical icon and founding member of the Rankin Family musical group, passed away in October at the age of 52; and

Whereas Raylene, a loving wife and mother, touched the hearts of so many with her beautiful voice and lovable personality, both in her home of Mabou and around the globe; and

Whereas Raylene never stopped counting her blessings despite the struggles her illness presented and will always be remembered as a true inspiration;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly send sincere condolences to the friends and family of Raylene Rankin and recognize that Raylene's determined spirit will live forever in her music.

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

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.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

RESOLUTION NO. 1400

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

Whereas today, October 25, 2012, the Special Olympics “Be a Fan Campaign” is asking you to lace up and wear red laces to support the Special Olympics; and

Whereas the day is meant to honour our athletes, volunteers and our fans of law enforcement by wearing red laces, we hope to raise awareness relating to sports opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities; and

Whereas the Special Olympics is one of the world’s most powerful social movements, one where people create a new world of inclusion and community and where every single person is accepted and welcomed regardless of ability or disability;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly lace up with red laces today, October 25th, and show their support for the Special Olympics.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1401

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

Whereas 50 years ago Mr. Ed Roach, a young businessman, channelled his anger to action and began a lifelong journey to ensure seniors had safe, comfortable surroundings that were affordable to all; and

Whereas Mr. Roach's passion resulted in the creation of a not-for-profit organization in 1962 that would eventually become Northwood; and

Whereas on July 17, 2012, Northwood celebrated 50 years of providing exceptional quality care and programs to its residents as well as to seniors living independently in their own homes;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly acknowledge and congratulate the staff, residents, and clients on this milestone 50th Anniversary and wish everyone at Northwood many more years of health and happiness.

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. 1402

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

Whereas October is Canada's Healthy Workplace Month; and

Whereas we take this time to increase awareness of the importance of workplace health and the long-term successes it can have for both organizations and the well-being of their employees; and

Whereas Excellence Canada provides healthy workplace tools, resources and best practice examples to increase the number of healthy workplaces across the country;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly encourage employers to promote healthy workplace practices throughout the year.

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. 1403

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

Whereas on June 8, 2012, 60 young Nova Scotians received Diamond Jubilee Scholarships in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee; and

Whereas the Diamond Jubilee Scholarships were awarded to Grade 12 students who are leaders in and have made significant contributions to their communities and the province; and

Whereas École Acadienne de Pomquet student and Student Council President Emilie Boucher, was one of the recipients of the Diamond Jubilee Scholarship for her activities in her school, in community sports, and her involvement in fundraisers such as the Relay for Life;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Emilie Boucher for her academic and extracurricular achievements, and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Clare.

RESOLUTION NO. 1404

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

Whereas Nova Scotians are struggling under this NDP Government and are facing layoffs and job insecurity due to the mismanagement of the economy; and

Whereas the NDP Government seems to only be able to write big cheques to big companies, with \$590 million handed out to six companies alone; and

Whereas in total, these companies laid off over 1,300 Nova Scotians after cashing the cheques handed to them by the Premier;

Therefore be it resolved that the member for Cumberland North urge the Premier to rethink his failed model of corporate handouts and work to diversify the provincial economy, and remind him that a strong economy is a diversified economy.

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. 1405

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 at the age of 95, Laura Wood, a grandmother and great-grandmother from Yarmouth County, travelled with family members to Newfoundland and Labrador in an attempt to shoot her first moose; and

Whereas Laura travelled to Grand Falls-Windsor with her son and nephew, and on the morning of the fourth day she shot her moose in one shot; and

Whereas Laura has been hunting deer since she was 16 years old and is very active and healthy, stating that she would do it again and go get a moose with horns this time;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mrs. Laura Wood for her remarkable accomplishments and wish her continued good health and good hunting.

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 Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 1406

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 on June 23, 2012, Betty Zinck from Blandford, Nova Scotia, celebrated her 90th birthday; and

Whereas the celebration took place at the Blandford Community Centre, which was filled with streamers, ribbons, flowers, balloons, and over 200 people who came together to celebrate with Betty; and

Whereas Betty was honoured by Rev. Marian Lucas-Jefferies, who thanked Betty for her tireless work at church events over the years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Betty Zinck on her 90th birthday and wish her health and happiness in the years to come.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Kings West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1407

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

Whereas the NDP Government has mismanaged the economy of Nova Scotia since taking power, resulting in the worst-performing economy in the country; and

Whereas in the last year alone 8,600 Nova Scotians have lost full-time work; and

Whereas the provincial economy is being downgraded by private and public sector analysts;

Therefore be it resolved that the member for Kings South remind the Premier and the rest of the NDP Cabinet that because of their mismanagement of the economy more Nova Scotians are being laid off amid job insecurity, and that part-time work is not a substitute for the security of a full-time job.

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 Cape Breton West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1408

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

Whereas Treaty Day on October 1st marked the beginning of Mi'kmaq History Month; and

Whereas we take this opportunity to increase awareness of the rich culture and heritage of the Mi'kmaq people; and

Whereas in October events were held all over the province to celebrate the traditions and history of the Mi'kmaq people;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly recognize the importance of Mi'kmaq History Month and thank those who took the time to organize events commemorating this significant part of our history.

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 Finance.

RESOLUTION NO. 1409

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

Whereas the Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia, which at that time included present-day Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Quebec, was founded in 1787, with Charles Inglis serving as the first bishop of the diocese; and

Whereas the Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island is observing its 225th Anniversary in 2012, with the Right Reverend Sue Moxley, former minister of St. Mark's Anglican Church in Halifax, serving as the current diocesan bishop; and

Whereas last Sunday, October 21st, retired Archbishop Arthur Peters, who had been the bishop of the diocese on the occasion of its bicentennial in 1987, spoke at a special service at St. Mark's Anglican Church to celebrate the 225th Anniversary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, its clergy and members on two and one-quarter centuries of service in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, and also congratulate Rev. John Morrell and his congregation at St. Mark's Anglican Church for their efforts to mark this milestone in the history of the Anglican Church in Canada.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 1410

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

Whereas volunteers play an essential role in countless community groups and Halifax West High School is home to a student-led volunteerism committee whose members have embraced this ideal at a young age; and

Whereas on September 30th, a Sunday, the volunteerism committee raised over \$5,000 for the annual Run for the Cure, putting them in top place for the fundraising in the school division for this event; and

Whereas this volunteerism committee has done amazing work to organize students to volunteer on a weekly basis to serve supper to the homeless, as well as volunteering in support of the Brunswick Street Mission and other causes;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate and thank the members of the Halifax West volunteerism committee - students Goda Galintye, Makayla Connors, Kiran Toor and Ellen Snook - for their leadership in the volunteer activities at Halifax West, and for organizing a team that won the top school fundraiser award at the CIBC Run for the 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 member for Cape Breton North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1411

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

Whereas early in October, a former Sydney Mines resident entered the record books as the second-longest-serving judge in the provincial judiciary; and

Whereas Justice Robert F. Ferguson retired one month short of 41 years of service to the Nova Scotia Supreme Court Family Division, just short of the record held by Justice Hiram J. Carver who served for nearly 42 years; and

Whereas Justice Ferguson was at the forefront in helping to develop and implement significant changes to how the Family Court operates;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate and thank Justice Ferguson for his years of service and leadership in the Nova Scotia judicial system.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

RESOLUTION NO. 1412

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

Whereas the Prime Minister's Awards for teaching excellence were presented to 94 teachers and educators from across Canada on October 4, 2012; and

Whereas the awards honour outstanding elementary and secondary school teachers who, through innovative use of technologies in the classroom, help students develop the knowledge and skills to succeed in the digital economy; and

Whereas Joe Cormier, the music teacher at Lockview High School in Fall River was recognized for his achievements in using a variety of techniques to record student band performances and local, provincial, national and international festivals for the purpose of providing critical analyses and constructive reflections;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in congratulating Joe Cormier on receiving this national honour and wishing him and his music program 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 Preston.

RESOLUTION NO. 1413

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

Whereas the NDP Government has mismanaged the economy of Nova Scotia since taking power, resulting in the worst-performing economy in the country; and

Whereas last year alone 8,600 Nova Scotians have lost full-time work; and

Whereas the provincial economy is being downgraded by private and public sector analysts;

Therefore be it resolved that the member for Timberlea-Prospect remind the Premier and the rest of the NDP Cabinet that because of their mismanagement of the economy, more Nova Scotians are facing layoffs and job insecurity and that part-time work is not a substitute for security of a full-time job.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Hants West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1414

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

Whereas Brad Jodrey retired this week from Nova Scotia's Public Service after working almost 30 years as an engineering aide with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal; and

Whereas Brad's employment involved a variety of challenging events over the past three decades; and

Whereas Brad is the proud son of Clayton and June Jodrey of Windsor, and he and his wife Karen have two sons, Brandon and Ben;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brad Jodrey on his retirement and thank him for nearly 30 years of dedicated service in the Nova Scotia Public Service.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1415

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

Whereas the educated opinion of world economists regarding investing in the future clearly states that the best investment governments can make is in education; and

Whereas the NDP Government has ignored that educated opinion and has slashed \$65 million from public education in the last two years; and

Whereas these cuts continue to have a negative impact on the delivery of public education and on the success of our students throughout the province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly ask the NDP Government to heed the advice of those economists, restore the \$65 million to public education and stand up for Nova Scotians by identifying education as a priority.

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 Minister of Education.

RESOLUTION NO. 1416

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

Whereas past District Governor Mark Durnford of the Coldbrook and District Lions Club received the Lion of the Year Award for District N2 on October 13, 2012, in the Fall cabinet meeting held in Kingston, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas this award is presented to a Lion in District North 2 who displays outstanding and dedicated service to not only their local community but also to the values of Lionism, including tolerance, friendship, fellowship, uprightness and stewardship of the less fortunate; and

Whereas Mr. Durnford has served these values and honoured those commitments to both community and organization for nearly 15 years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the contributions made by Mr. Mark Durnford to the Coldbrook and District Lions Club, as well as to his community and to those who reside there.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 1417

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

Whereas Mark de Jonge is a world-class competitive kayaker who trains at the Maskwa Aquatic Club in Halifax and boasts a long list of awards including bronze and silver medals in the 2003 and 2007 Pan American Games; and

Whereas Mark de Jonge, despite a 30-month absence from competition and nagging injuries including a broken finger in April, carried on training for the 2012 London Olympics; and

Whereas Mark de Jonge, at the 2012 London Olympic Games, in the men's K1 200-metre race, soared past some of the best paddlers in the world to bring home to Nova Scotia the bronze medal;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mark de Jonge on his bronze medal win, made possible, in his own words, by being dedicated, working hard and never giving up on your dream.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 1418

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

Whereas this evening marks the beginning of Eid al-Adha, an important Islamic holiday for many Muslims as it concludes the pilgrimage to Mecca; and

Whereas this holiday is marked by special prayer, by visiting family and friends, and by making generous donations to those in need; and

Whereas this holiday tradition reminds us all of the importance of sharing what we have and celebrating with those we hold dear;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House extend best wishes to Nova Scotia's Muslim community on the occasion of Eid al-Adha and reaffirm our commitment to fostering our province's great diversity.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 1419

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

Whereas spiritual worship has long been a mainstay of all communities in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Anglican Church has been an important part of the fabric of rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas on September 30, 2012, the congregation of St. Peter's Anglican Church in Upper Kennetcook celebrated the 150th Anniversary of the present church there;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate the congregation of St. Peter's Anglican Church in Upper Kennetcook on the anniversary of their church and extend best wishes for its continuing contribution to its community's spiritual needs.

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. 1420

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

Whereas on October 20, 2012, municipal elections were held across Nova Scotia; and

Whereas in the Halifax Regional Municipality, six official candidates and one unofficial candidate - a cat - campaigned for the job of mayor; and

Whereas Mike Savage was declared the successful mayoralty candidate;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Mike Savage on his victory and wish him every success during his term of office leading the Halifax Regional Municipality.

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. 1421

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 New Minas Fire Department in the Annapolis Valley is a well-trained fire department under the capable direction of fire chief Jim Redmond and his deputy Don Zwicker, who have a combined 75 years of service with the department; and

Whereas Chief Redmond says the department's 2nd deputy chief Mark Redmond, and department captain Joe Huntley are two of the most highly trained arson investigators anywhere in North America after taking national and international training; and

Whereas Chief Redmond has ensured pre-fire plans are ready for every major building in the commercial centre of the village;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly commend New Minas Fire Chief Jim Redmond, his deputy Don Zwicker, and all New Minas firefighters for their outstanding commitment to firefighting, training, and fire protection.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 1422

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

Whereas Barrington resident Darren Hudson captured his sixth Lumberjack World log-rolling title in Hayward, Wisconsin, on July 29, 2012, during the 53rd annual Lumberjack World Championships; and

Whereas Darren Hudson, a fifth-generation lumberjack, also won his 10th Canadian log-rolling championship in Kaslo, British Columbia, on May 20, 2012; and

Whereas Darren Hudson, who has travelled the world for the past 16 years performing and competing as a professional lumberjack, has also captured numerous other national and international titles in lumberjack sports;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly congratulate Darren Hudson for capturing his sixth Lumberjack World log-rolling title in Hayward, Wisconsin, on July 29, 2012.

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. 1423

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

Whereas Nova Scotians are struggling under this NDP Government and are facing layoffs and job insecurity due to the mismanagement of the economy; and

Whereas the NDP Government seems to be only able to write big cheques to big companies, with \$590 million handed out to six companies alone; and

Whereas in total, these companies laid off over 1,300 Nova Scotians after cashing the cheques handed to them by the Premier;

Therefore be it resolved that the member for Lunenburg West urge the Premier to rethink his failed model of corporate handouts and work to diversify the provincial economy, and remind him that a strong economy is a diversified economy.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I heard several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 1424

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 all Nova Scotians deserve a fair and open process for setting electoral boundaries, free of political interference; and

Whereas the process saw the NDP predetermine the terms of reference of the Nova Scotia Electoral Boundaries Commission in a secret Christmas holiday meeting, ignore the view of Nova Scotians at select commission hearings, and reject the independent commission's first interim report; and

Whereas this government went so far as to ignore the direction of the Speaker when he instructed in writing that no person or body was authorized to give direction to the Electoral Boundaries Commission once the terms of reference had been established by the select committee;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly condemn the NDP Government for botching the process of setting new electoral boundaries and for letting the people of Nova Scotia down by interfering in what was supposed to be an independent commission.

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 Minister of Energy.

RESOLUTION NO. 1425

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

Whereas Keirstan MacDonald of Braeshore, Pictou County, is an accomplished dressage rider, and this year qualified to be a member of the Nova Scotia Equestrian Federation Team of 16 athletes, jumping and reining at the Canadian Interprovincial Equestrian Championships in Bromont, Quebec, September 20-23, 2012; and

Whereas Keirstan, who has been riding horses since she was five, competed at the Canadian Interprovincial Equestrian Champions in Quebec, on her horse, Ka Moro, in the Junior Dressage Championships, and placed eighth in the individual awards; and

Whereas in the team awards, the Nova Scotia Equestrian Team won the overall silver medal for its members' performances in dressage, jumping, and reining;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate and thank Keirstan MacDonald and her horse, Ka Moro, for being part of the 2012 Nova Scotia Equestrian Federation Team and her dedication to her sport, and wish her continued success in her riding career.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

RESOLUTION NO. 1426

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 CBU Capers baseball team continued their winning ways in 2012 as they competed in the Canadian Intercollegiate Baseball Association's national championship tournament in Ottawa last weekend, October 19th to October 22nd; and

Whereas the 2012 Capers continued their Atlantic university baseball dominance, capturing their fourth consecutive Atlantic University Sport baseball banner and finishing this season with an 11-4 record, including series wins over UNB in the Atlantic semifinals and Crandall University in the Atlantic finals to win the Atlantic crown; and

Whereas after placing first in the national round robin, the Capers ended their season with silver medals, losing in the final to the St. Clair Saints - not bad for a group of ballplayers from Glace Bay, New Waterford, Sydney, and the Northside;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join me in congratulating head coach Adam Shibinnette, assistant coaches Jason Levangie and Paul Doucette, CBU Director of Athletics John Ryan, and the entire CBU Capers baseball team on their tremendous success, and wish them well with their studies and in sports in 2012 and beyond.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1427

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

Whereas Terry Paul is the first Aboriginal chief in Canadian history to be inducted into the Junior Achievement Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame; and

Whereas Chief Paul has been Chief of the Membertou First Nation since 1984; and

Whereas Chief Paul's hope is that this award will serve as an encouragement for others;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chief Terry Paul of Membertou First Nation on this and on all of his many achievements.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 1428

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

Whereas the honourable member of the Legislature for Dartmouth South-Portland Valley is a tremendous champion of public service who, as a lifelong volunteer, quietly models behaviour that inspires others to make a difference in our communities; and

Whereas the Inspire Awards are presented annually by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Halifax to outstanding community members who embrace the value of mentoring by inspiring others to achieve their goals; and

Whereas on October 17, 2012, the honourable member of the Legislature for Dartmouth South-Portland Valley was the recipient of the 2012 Inspire Award for Public Service;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize the honourable member of the Legislature for Dartmouth South-Portland Valley for her selfless devotion to community development and public service, which, coupled with her ability to think big and inspire others, has earned her the 2012 Inspire Award for Public Service.

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. (Standing Ovation)

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 1429

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

Whereas the Bedford Waterfront Development Corporation approved a plan to infill and develop a 39-acre site on the Bedford waterfront back in 1985; and

Whereas the community group Save Bedford Waterfront is concerned that this infill plan will envelop Crosby Island and the adjacent reefs; and

Whereas this member has asked the Premier to meet with Save Bedford Waterfront to discuss their concerns, but his reply sent yesterday does not indicate whether he will meet with them;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly urge the Premier to meet with members of Save Bedford Waterfront before the end of November 2012.

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 a No.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1430

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

Whereas Port Hood residents travelled across the water to Henry Island to celebrate the transfer of the Henry Island lighthouse from the Canadian Government to the Henry Island Lighthouse Preservation Society; and

Whereas the not-for-profit society is run by locals and the family of Bill and Jean Marie Baker, owners of Henry Island, who extended an open invitation to all to come and celebrate with music, great food and great company; and

Whereas the Bakers discovered Henry Island 20 years ago, have been improving the property ever since, and the lighthouse and surrounding property has never looked better;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge the kind efforts made by the residents of Port Hood in supporting Jean Marie and Bill Baker's wish to improve such a valuable piece of Inverness 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 Truro-Bible Hill.

RESOLUTION NO. 1431

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

Whereas Leo McKay, Jr., a writer and English teacher at the Cobequid Educational Centre in Truro, had his novel *Twenty-Six*, a fictional version of the Westray mining disaster, published in 2003; and

Whereas Leo McKay's novel has been chosen for the province-wide initiative One Book Nova Scotia, a program dedicated to developing literacy and building community; and

Whereas Leo McKay will tour Nova Scotia and do 12 official readings from his novel *Twenty-Six*, including in his childhood hometown of Stellarton;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Leo McKay, Jr. on having his novel *Twenty-Six* chosen for the One Book Nova Scotia reading initiative and thank him writing this meaningful account of the Westray mining disaster.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton South.

RESOLUTION NO. 1432

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

Whereas greater Halifax holds a very strong and proud military tradition; and

Whereas this past Spring, federal Conservatives cut \$1 billion out of the DND budget over the next three years, an amount which has recently been examined by an independent expert and determined to be more likely in the vicinity of \$2.5 billion; and

Whereas 62 employees at DND Halifax have already received pink slips and more are likely on the horizon as a result of today's Halifax ChronicleHerald story where Prime Minister Harper told his Defence Minister his budget cuts were not enough and more needs to be done;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House acknowledge the hard-working Nova Scotian men and women working in and for the military, condemn the federal Conservative cuts to DND, and be ever-mindful that more cuts are on their way courtesy of the Leader of the Third Party's good friend, Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

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 Cape Breton North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1433

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

Whereas in October, we recognize Learning Disabilities Awareness Month; and

Whereas during this month, we pay particular attention to children and adults with learning disabilities; and

Whereas the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada provides important information on learning challenges, practical solutions and tools for families and teachers to encourage best practices;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank the families, teachers and professionals who provide the assistance Nova Scotians need to succeed, and recognize that as elected members of this House, there is much more we can do.

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. 1434

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

Whereas the Agricultural Hall of Fame was established in 1968 by the Atlantic Livestock Council and has since expanded to honour all segments of the agricultural community throughout Atlantic Canada; and

Whereas each year, based on nominations received from farm and rural organizations, one person from each of the four Atlantic Provinces is honoured for their accomplishments at an induction ceremony and reception held during the month of October; and

Whereas Case van Dyk of Caledonia, Queens County, has received the honour of being named the 2012 Nova Scotia inductee to the Agricultural Hall of Fame at the October 18th ceremony and reception;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Case van Dyk for his numerous accomplishments leading to and including his induction to the Agricultural Hall of Fame.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

RESOLUTION NO. 1435

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

Whereas on July 20, 2012, the constituents of the electoral riding of Yarmouth were shaken with the news that the Electoral Boundaries Commission's second interim report included a proposal to eliminate the constituency of Yarmouth and divide our community in two; and

Whereas on August 13, 2012, over 2,500 community members from Yarmouth and area rallied together at the Yarmouth Mariners Centre to oppose this destructive proposal and ensure the provincial constituency of Yarmouth remains united; and

Whereas in its final report issued on September 24, 2012, the Electoral Boundaries Commission retained the constituency of Yarmouth in its entirety and in so doing renewed the hopes of Yarmouthians in our democratic process and our belief in the power of our own voice;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly, on behalf of the people of Yarmouth and surrounding area, thank Phil Mooney, mayor of the Town of Yarmouth; Leland Anthony, warden of the Municipality of Yarmouth; town and municipal councillors; the Yarmouth and Area Chamber of Commerce; the Yarmouth Historical Society; local businesses; and all the other community leaders, volunteers, and participants who acted immediately and fiercely to protect the future of Yarmouth's political representation in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly for their time, energy, passion, and perseverance.

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 Pictou East.

RESOLUTION NO. 1436

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

Whereas Allister MacDonald of Hillside, Pictou County, served 39 years as a municipal councillor in Pictou County and has retired as of October 20, 2012; and

Whereas Allister MacDonald served as warden of Pictou County for eight years, as a long-serving chair of the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library system, and as a member of the Library Boards Association of Nova Scotia and the Canadian Library Association; and

Whereas Allister MacDonald for 39 years was available to the people of District 10 on a continuous basis as their municipal representative;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate and honour Allister MacDonald of Hillside, Pictou County, for his service to the people of his district, his beloved Pictou County, and the Province of Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Clare.

RESOLUTION NO. 1437

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 NDP Government has mismanaged the economy of Nova Scotia since taking power, resulting in the worst-performing economy in our country; and

Whereas in the last year alone, 8,600 Nova Scotians have lost full-time work; and

Whereas the provincial economy is being downgraded by private and public sector analysts;

Therefore be it resolved that the member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley remind the Premier and the rest of the NDP Cabinet that because of their mismanagement of the economy more Nova Scotians are facing layoffs and job insecurity, and that part-time work is not a substitute for the security of full-time jobs.

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 Timberlea-Prospect.

RESOLUTION NO. 1438

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

Whereas the legislation reducing speeds in some school zones in Nova Scotia to 30 kilometres per hour has been well received by Nova Scotians; and

Whereas the success was the result of the professionalism of staff under the leadership of Sue McKeage at the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and Communications Nova Scotia, Marketing and Design; and

Whereas Ms. McKeage and her staff demonstrated initiative in the coordination of the campaign to inform Nova Scotians of this important piece of legislation;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate and thank Sue McKeage and the staff at Communications Nova Scotia and at the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal for their work on the implementation of speeds in school zones legislation.

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. 1439

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

Whereas Kentville's first police chief, Robert Barry, was appointed following incorporation in 1887, with a salary of \$30 a month plus a uniform; and

Whereas early policing in Kentville was shaped predominantly by Rupert Davis, who was appointed chief of police in 1894 and served for 37 years as a one-man operation until 1926, when the town council hired John Brown to work as a constable; and

Whereas community policing has broadened its scope of work with both the department members and Chief Mark Mander being exemplary leaders in their expanded roles;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank all who have served the Town of Kentville as police officers and congratulate the police department on the occasion of its 125th Anniversary.

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 North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1440

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

Whereas Scotian Gold Co-operative Limited, owned by approximately 55 growers, has been an integral part of the agricultural community in Nova Scotia since the operation began over 100 years ago as the United Fruit Companies, producing about 50 per cent of the total apple crop in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas led by the vision of the board of directors and its growers, Scotian Gold continues to look for new fruit varieties and improvements in storage and packing to ensure the freshest and crispest apples are delivered to the consumer; and

Whereas Scotian Gold was recognized as one of the province's top exporters at the 2012 Nova Scotia Business Inc. Export Achievement Awards;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature congratulate Scotian Gold Co-operative Limited for its long history of innovation and success, for the quality of its products, and for being named one of Nova Scotia's top exporters in 2012.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 1441

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

Whereas Halifax West High School's Community Involvement group demonstrates their belief that community involvement is something that should be part of a student's life at a young age; and

Whereas this group conducted a very successful Wake-a-thon, resisting sleep for an entire night to raise funds for the Brunswick Street Mission; and

Whereas this group has also motivated students to collect an outstanding number of items to donate to Brunswick Street Mission's Halifax Connects event for the homeless taking place this November;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate and thank the Halifax West High School Community Involvement group students - Sarita Pillay, Eliana Hobieche, Sarah Arab, Scott Sampson and Olivia Leblanc - for their amazing work that organizes the students of Halifax West High School to give back to their community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Lunenburg.

RESOLUTION NO. 1442

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

Whereas September 29, 2012, saw the Bluenose II, the pride and joy of the Town of Lunenburg and the ambassador of Nova Scotia, relaunched on the Lunenburg waterfront; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Shipyard Alliance partnered with the Petite Riviere Winery to produce a limited edition 2010 vintage red wine called Rebirth of a Legend, and the winery calls it the best red vintage of the LaHave River Valley in 10 years; and

Whereas only 240 bottles of the wine were produced with the label featuring a photograph of the famous ship the day she was painted by Mark Doucette, and each bottle has been signed and numbered by the artist, making it a truly wonderful piece of art;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize the Shipyard Alliance and the Petite Riviere Winery for their collaboration on a fine red wine to mark the relaunch of Bluenose II.

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. 1443

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

Whereas Nova Scotians are struggling under this NDP Government and are facing layoffs and job insecurity due to the mismanagement of the economy; and

Whereas the NDP Government seems to only be able to write big cheques to big companies with \$590 million handed out to only six companies alone; and

Whereas in total these companies have laid off 1,300 Nova Scotians after cashing the cheques handed to them by the Premier;

Therefore be it resolved that the member for Halifax Fairview urge the Premier to abandon his failed model of corporate handouts that has cost Nova Scotians so much in both jobs and taxes.

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 Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1444

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

Whereas the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal was created in celebration of Her Majesty's 60th Anniversary; and

Whereas the medals honour Canadians of all ages and occupations who have built, and continue to build, this caring society and country through their service and achievements; and

Whereas 33 of the 60,000 medals were given to the Canadian 4-H Council to honour the significant contribution of individuals to the 4-H movement in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Elizabeth Crouse from Valley, Colchester North, a former president of the Canadian 4-H Council and one of the 15 recipients who received their medal at the 4-H annual general meeting in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

RESOLUTION NO. 1445

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

Whereas despite the fact that the provincial constituency of Yarmouth was preserved in the Electoral Boundaries Commission's final report, issued on September 24, 2012, other communities have been hurt and divided by this process; and

Whereas our protected Acadian constituencies and African Nova Scotian constituency have been eliminated, leaving these minority ridings without the representation that previously existed; and

Whereas other communities, including those in Shelburne, Antigonish and the electoral constituency of Cape Breton Nova have been either divided or eliminated;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly always act in a way which preserves our communities, history, culture, and the integrity of our representative system so that we can actually have fair and effective political representation in the Province of Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

Earlier in the proceedings we had a resolution read by the Leader of the Official Opposition about the tireless work of Ruth Goldbloom. I'd now ask all the members of the Assembly to have a moment of silence for Ruth's dedication to this province, please.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Before we start the order of business, Oral Questions Put By Members, I will ask and remind all the honourable members that the use of BlackBerrys, laptops, and any other electronic devices is not permitted during Question Period, so they are to remain off during that time.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The time now is 3:37 p.m. We will end at 4:37 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM.: INVESTMENTS - JOB GUARANTEES

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the NDP Government agreed to give \$590 million to six large corporations. After receiving taxpayers' money, these six corporations laid off 1,310 Nova Scotians.

This is not a new trend. The government has signed deals with large corporations without any guarantees to protect the taxpayers of Nova Scotia. As the Premier watched large corporations lay off workers, he kept signing big deals with big business with no job guarantees. Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians can no longer afford Dexter economics.

My question to the Premier is, when will the Premier stop signing big deals with big business which lack job guarantees?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, of course all of the investments we make are designed to ensure that there are jobs in this province. I know that the Leader of the Official Opposition opposed our investment in Irving Shipyards, which will yield 10,000 jobs for the province. He opposed our investment in Port Hawkesbury paper, where more than 300 people are working today in that mill and another 700 are working in the forestry sector as a result of that investment.

Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Official Opposition had his way, they would be shutting off the lights in rural Nova Scotia.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, even Irving doesn't use the multiplier the Premier is using when it comes to what is happening in the shipyard. I'll remind the Premier that there are 300 families in the Strait area looking for work because he had no job guarantees when he was handing over \$155 million.

Mr. Speaker, I'll remind the Premier that after \$25 million spent in Queens County, all the workers got a pink slip. The list goes on. This government cut \$65 million from education, \$100 million from universities, and more than \$50 million from health care. While cutting these programs and raising taxes, this government gave \$195 million to six corporations that proceeded to lay off 1,310 Nova Scotians.

My question for the Premier is, how can the Premier justify gutting education while writing big cheques for big business?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, down in Queens County we purchased some of the highest-quality and most ecologically-sensitive land in the province. I was surprised to hear the Leader of the Official Opposition say that if he were the Premier, not only would he not have purchased that land but that the purchase of land for the purpose of protecting the province's most sensitive ecosystems would not be a priority of the Liberal Party. It doesn't really come as a surprise to me, but it was interesting to hear him say it.

Mr. Speaker, if it wasn't for this government and the investments we've made to create those jobs, thousands more people would have been laid off. The fact of the matter is, we have people working in the Strait today because of the investment we made.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, if it wasn't for this government, 1,310 other Nova Scotians would be working today. This government's track record is abysmal. Since taking office, the province has the worst economic performance in all of Canada. Not only is our current economic performance the worst in Canada but by putting corporate welfare before the education of our children, the Premier is eroding our long-term economic prospects.

So my question to the Premier, why could the Premier find \$590 million for six corporations to lay off 1,310 Nova Scotians but couldn't find \$65 million to ensure that our children get a quality education in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we are investing in good jobs for Nova Scotians. Just today, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce published a review of the commitments that we made during the last election. There is an interesting table on Page 3 in the review both of the circumstances when we came into power and the circumstances today.

So here are the facts, Mr. Speaker: population up, labour force up, employment up, unemployment down, average weekly wage up. I'll table that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

NSP - RATEPAYERS: OVERPAYMENTS - RETURN

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, a recent audit of Nova Scotia Power shows that ratepayers may well have been overcharged by the power company by over \$22 million, a finding in that audit that Nova Scotia Power tried to hide, and it was only because of the work of the PC caucus that information has now come to light and Nova Scotians know that they were overcharged.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians want their money back and so my question to the Premier is, will he take all the necessary steps to ensure that all of the money that is owed to Nova Scotians is returned to them?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the legislation is very clear. The Utility and Review Board reviews all the evidence before it. If there is an overcharge by Nova Scotia Power, that goes back to the ratepayers.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, here is some evidence that we can present right here in this House. Our power rates have gone up over 25 per cent in the last three years - a real hardship for too many Nova Scotians, too many families, too many small businesses. Here is another fact that is known in this House; Nova Scotia Power has already said if they owe the money, they want to keep it until 2015. Well, Nova Scotians cannot wait until 2015. That is why they look to their Premier and their government for relief.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians want their money back. Will the Premier make sure that Nova Scotians get their money back, not in 2015 but right now?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party knows that when the Progressive Conservatives privatized Nova Scotia Power, they set up this system, in fact, which operates in the way it does today. I want the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party to know that we are doing the best we can to clean up the mess you left behind but it takes time.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, here is another fact that is known in this House; the Premier, today, is the Premier, today, who is the one elected to represent Nova Scotians, today, and they have been overcharged by over \$20 million by Nova Scotia Power and they want someone to get their money back for them now, and that person is their Premier.

Will the Premier now take steps to get that money back into the hands of Nova Scotians, as he was elected to do? Yes or no?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, today we are dealing with a privatized electrical utility created by the Progressive Conservatives. We are dealing with the fact that they chained us to the international fossil fuel markets. Coal went up by 75 per cent, and that increased the cost of power. That is the mess that was left behind by the leftovers from the MacDonald Government, and yes, we're working hard to fix it.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

PREM.: NSP - PERFORMANCE/SPENDING AUDITS

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier. I'd like to thank him for continuing to adopt Liberal energy policies in his legislation. You know, on May 15, 2012, the Premier had this to say about performance audits and spending audits of Nova Scotia Power: "The Utility and Review Board said there are numerous audits that take place at Nova Scotia Power, that they have looked at in detail, that the cost of these audits do in fact get passed on to the ratepayers and that it was an unwise thing to do." I will table that.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier still agree with that quote that he said just a couple of months ago?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, what I agree with is that Nova Scotia Power should be audited in an appropriate fashion to ensure that they are providing the appropriate service to the people of Nova Scotia. What I disagree with is the Liberal plan, which is to deregulate the energy market and cause the cost of electricity in this province to ratepayers to go up anywhere from 30 per cent to 50 per cent.

MR. YOUNGER: Well, Mr. Speaker, when the Premier has nothing better to do than to resort to things he knows are false, then you know that the Premier is grasping at straws and knows he is on his last legs.

I didn't know the Premier was angling so hard for a job on the Nova Scotia Power board after he gets defeated. Mr. Speaker, it must be very humbling for the Premier to have to backtrack on his statements. In May, the Premier said audits were not necessary. Today they introduced legislation, bringing in almost word-for-word the legislation that we had. In April he said that legislation was not needed in order for the URB to examine the

Maritime link proposal, and then he had to backtrack on that a week later. He was wrong, and he has been wrong again.

Mr. Speaker, why does the Premier consistently misrepresent the Liberal energy plan and speak against our proposals, such as removing executive bonuses and doing audits, only to then adopt these proposals later?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. As I was listening to the question, I think that you imputed motive there; that is unparliamentary, so I'd ask the honourable member to retract that, please. Thank you.

THE PREMIER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're not misrepresenting anything. The fact of the matter is that that member actually tabled in this House the Liberal plan for deregulation. He said they wanted to adopt what had happened in New Brunswick, that they wanted to decouple the supply generation from transmission, that their plan - and the Leader of the Official Opposition, along with that member, has said exactly the same thing that Mike Harris said in Ontario, exactly the same thing that Ralph Klein said in Alberta when they brought about deregulation. They tried to assure people that they would keep the board.

And what happened, Mr. Speaker? Prices in those provinces went up by 30 per cent to 50 per cent. If the Liberals have a plan for energy they should produce it and stop hiding.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the Premier is right that we tabled the bill, and I will table a quote from the Deputy Premier endorsing it on November 1, 2006 - the exact bill that we actually tabled in the House. The fact is that the Premier has just demonstrated to every Nova Scotian that he has never read a single word of any of the bills that the Liberal caucus has tabled which outline that plan and are not deregulation. The Deputy Premier has actually endorsed that plan, and I've tabled that.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier now admit that he actually has never personally read any of the Liberal bills and simply relies on talking points rather than doing what a Premier should do and take the time to understand the issues?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I understand the issues too well. Unfortunately, this is a problem that the Liberal caucus has - they speak from inexperience. We know what they're doing. They want to haul people down the road of deregulation. They have said, if you can imagine, that they are going to cancel all of the energy efficiency programs saving Nova Scotians \$100 million a year. That, Mr. Speaker, is a "cut off your nose to spite your face, stick your head in the ground" policy, which is exactly what we can expect from the Liberal Party.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member from Dartmouth East on a new question.

PREM. - NSP: DEFENCE - EXPLAIN

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: My question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, the Premier knows that we have never once said we would cancel efficiency programs. The Premier knows that we have never once said that we endorse deregulation. The Premier's own staff have said on Twitter that they actually agree that we've never stated that we support deregulation.

Mr. Speaker, why has this government spent three years defending Nova Scotia Power when power bills are such a drag on small businesses - the real engines of economic growth in this province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we have cut the small business tax rate every year three years in a row. The Liberal plan that they have laid out so far is that they are going to deregulate the utility, they are going to cancel energy efficiency programs; they intend to have the rate of return set by the Premier and the Cabinet - their intention is to set them. If you can imagine the maintenance budget they intend to set - I wonder if they have any idea what they are talking about. It is clear that it's just the inexperience of that caucus.

MR. YOUNGER: I'm sure the Premier would be willing to table the proof of all those things, since that isn't in any of the bills that we've put forward or in any of the statements of any member of this caucus. Mr. Speaker, this government has spent three years defending Nova Scotia Power. The former Minister of Finance - and I'll table this - defended the rate of return of Nova Scotia Power at the same time - and I'll table this - that the consultant for the board called it obscene.

The fact is that there are businesses that are suffering in this province because of power rates, and those costs are passed on to consumers so that every single person in this province pays more for every good because power rates have gone up, and this Premier doesn't care. That fact is that he wants to talk about the rate of return. We've never said that Cabinet should set it, but we have said Cabinet should look at it and examine it.

When will this Premier stand up and change the way the rate of return for Nova Scotia Power is calculated?

THE PREMIER: I can't believe he just said that - look at it and examine it, but that's all; we're not going to do anything else. So they intend to deregulate the market so they can take their hands off it. They intend to - well, they said anything less than 7 per cent would not be significant, so one assumes that means they're going to set the rate of return. They are going to cancel the energy efficiency program, and they have a Leader who in the last leadership debate said that taking the HST off of home electricity, and I'll quote, was "bad, bad public policy," so I can only assume that they intend to put that back on. The fact of the matter is that the Liberal energy policy will increase the cost of power to the ratepayers of Nova Scotia.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I think Nova Scotians will believe the member over here who's actually tabling the Premier's own information, rather than the rhetoric that the Premier can't even back up. The Liberal caucus was on the record, in the last session and the session before that, saying we would not put the HST back on power bills - and the Premier is fully aware of that.

Here is what the Premier did. The Premier changed the legislation for Nova Scotia Power during his term in office so that Nova Scotia Power now can earn more profit by owning independent power projects - even the Tories didn't allow that. Why did the Premier feel that Nova Scotia Power should be allowed to earn more profit on the backs of ratepayers - something which has increased rates, something which he caused.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the member would understand that after the financial collapse of 2008 which, believe it or not, we had nothing to do with, there was no money to support independent power projects. If they wanted to get financing, they had to have some place to provide that. Nova Scotia Power did it in order to bring on more renewables.

But maybe it's just time that the Liberal Party set out what their actual plan is. Do they intend (Interruptions) Table it, table it. What we're doing - our renewable electricity plan - is in the public. It is capable of being debated, it is tested by experts. That's our plan. Let's see the Liberal plan and stop hiding.

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

PREM. - MUSKRAT FALLS: REVIEW - EXPAND

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, it's all very entertaining to watch the Leader of the NDP and the Liberal Party arguing about whose power plan is worse - 940,000 Nova Scotians know the NDP plan has driven up their rates by 25 per cent, and the residents of every other province and state where the Liberals' ideas have been tried have seen their power rates go up by 30 to 50 per cent. All we can conclude over here, when they criticize each other, is that they are both right.

Let's talk about something positive. Yesterday there was an announcement in Goldboro about a new LNG export terminal - welcome news for that area of Nova Scotia and, indeed, for all Nova Scotia to see a development of that size. Over the years Nova Scotians have become tired of watching their natural gas piped from our province to other places where it's used to generate electricity and lower power rates. They are going to be equally concerned about watching gas now flowing in the other direction and then exported overseas.

So we have an opportunity. We have a 100 years supply of natural gas that may well be flowing the other way into our Province of Nova Scotia, so let's not let that

opportunity go by. My question to the Premier is, will he grasp this moment and allow Muskrat Falls to be compared to all of the other alternatives for generating cheap, clean electricity, including natural gas?

THE PREMIER: . . . to be a complete comparison. I would just say this, though - I think Nova Scotians have learned their lesson, or at least, many of them have; obviously not the members of that caucus. It was the policy of the Progressive Conservative Party that chained us to fossil fuels like coal in the past. At the time the reason that was done was because coal was relatively cheap as a fuel source. The problem of course with fossil fuels is that they are variable and they are volatile, so that the prices of them can swing wildly - in fact, just as the price of natural gas has done.

One of the worst things that you could possibly do is tie yourself to a fossil fuel that has that kind of volatility. Why? Because you have happen exactly what has happened in the last three years - as the price of coal went up by 75 per cent, thanks to the decisions made by the former governments, the price went up to consumers. That's not because of anything this government did. It's because of decisions made by past governments to chain themselves to the fossil fuel market.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, we have heard the Premier talk about finding stable power rates. Nova Scotians now know that in his world, "stable" means going up by 25 per cent. We have had the Liberals now admitting they don't actually provide power rate relief - only that they, too, want stable power rates, which in their world means going up by 30 per cent to 50 per cent.

My question to the Premier is, if he is so sure, he should prove it; he should prove it because power rates are too expensive and a real hardship in Nova Scotia today but he won't prove it because he has rigged the review of Muskrat Falls to exclude the possibility of comparing it to cheap, clean, alternative sources like natural gas and now we have an opportunity because 100 years of gas is going to flow the other way through our own pipeline through our province. So if he really believes what he just said, why not expand the review of Muskrat Falls and allow it to be compared to natural gas?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Utility and Review Board will review the project in total. In fact, there have already been significant studies that have come out that have looked at a review of the project. They come to the conclusion that it will provide Nova Scotians, relative to the other alternatives, with cheaper power rates and stability over the long term.

Mr. Speaker, I would think that that is what the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party would want. One of the approaches that we take, which I think is the right one, is to ensure that we have a portfolio of energy so that there is wind, there is hydro, so that there is access to it. There will inevitably continue to be some coal in that mix and, of course, there will be natural gas, as there is today.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, now we're getting somewhere because there should be a portfolio of energy-generating alternatives available to our province. The Premier has already hitched his wagon to a gigantic mega project, Muskrat Falls, which is a 50-year decision that this province had to make in a very short period of time and yet he has rigged the review of Muskrat Falls because he insists that they can only look at alternatives that are consistent with his renewable energy plan.

Mr. Speaker, we all admit that natural gas is not renewable although it is very clean, although there is a 100-year supply, and although it is going to flow right through our province. So if he is so sure that Muskrat Falls is better than natural gas, why not expand the review that the URB is going to undertake? At the direction of his government, expand the review and allow them to look at natural gas as a cheaper, cleaner generation source for electricity?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I just don't think the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party understands the scope of the review. They have the right to look at any experts' reports they want. They can look at natural gas. I would just point out that Muskrat Falls supplies for us about 10 per cent of the total portfolio that the province will have. It will have the option to be able to buy, in addition to that 10 per cent - if it is at a cheaper price and lowers the rate for Nova Scotians, they will be able to buy the electricity that would otherwise flow through to other parts of the continent.

Mr. Speaker, that puts Nova Scotia in the driver's seat when it comes to energy. It strengthens the transmission capacity. It means that we will be able to buy electricity from wherever we want. Without the transmission capacity associated with Muskrat Falls, we can't do that but we will then be able to buy from Hydro-Québec, from New Brunswick, for that matter from New England if it were available. We will be able to take advantage of being part of an energy loop rather than being stuck at the end of the extension cord.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

PREM.: STERN - EFFICIENCY TAX EXEMPTION

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. On September 22nd, 2012 the Premier had to this to say about the deal he struck to save the mill in Port Hawkesbury and I'll table it. He said: I'm pleased to say we now have a new agreement that is a better deal for Nova Scotians. I'll table that.

Mr. Speaker, part of that deal exempts the owners from the NDP's efficiency tax that is applied to every power bill in the province, so apparently that is a better deal for them. Why does the Premier think that Stern should be exempt from the NDP efficiency tax when other Nova Scotia residents and businesses have to pay for it?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I understand and I know that at some point in time there will be an election and the people in the Liberal caucus will have to go to the people of the Strait area and Antigonish and Guysborough, in Inverness, in Richmond, and they'll have to explain why, when they needed the help of the people in the House of Assembly, it was the Liberal Party that stood against them, it was the Liberal Party that said you shouldn't be investing in jobs in the Strait area.

Mr. Speaker, they'll have to explain why it is that they have decided to do that. We have invested in the jobs of over 1,000 people in the Strait area, not because it was a political thing to do, simply because it was the right thing to do.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, well the fact that the Premier is incapable of even addressing the question ought to speak volumes to Nova Scotians. The fact is that he will not answer the question of why he believes a multimillion dollar company, that he has handed even more millions to, should be exempt from a tax that low-income Nova Scotians are forced to pay.

Mr. Speaker, let me ask the question one more time and maybe the Premier will explain it to Nova Scotians because if he honestly believes it's the right thing to do, then he should have an answer. Why does the Premier believe a multimillion dollar company, benefiting from millions of dollars of government handouts, should be exempt from a tax on power bills that low-income families and all the other businesses in the province don't have the same exemption from?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I just think it's ironic that the member can sit there or stand there and ask about energy efficient programs that they have committed themselves to doing away with. The simple fact of the matter is that low-income Nova Scotians are actually the ones who benefited the most as the result of energy efficiency programs in the province, more than \$60 million will be saved by energy consumers, over and above the \$40 million that was spent.

MR. YOUNGER: Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, we have never once proposed eliminating efficiency programs. In fact, I will table the statements of - Mr. Speaker, I'll even table the comments of the Leader of the Official Opposition in the last session who said we would just change it so that Nova Scotia Power has to pay the bill for the independent programs.

The Premier is just showing that he doesn't pay attention so I'm going to try one more time, Mr. Speaker, because the Premier has still not answered the question. Why does he think the Stern Group should be exempt from the tax when every other Nova Scotian and business is forced to pay for it?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I can tell you this, the energy efficiency programs that are promoted by Efficiency Nova Scotia were put together and recommended by an

independent panel of citizens. They said there should be an independent, arm's length organization. We supported that and we support conservation and energy efficiency in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you one thing, the people in the Strait region needed assistance in order to ensure that there were going to be 1,000 jobs saved in that area. They know one thing, if there's one person they would not want in charge in this province, it would be somebody who would turn their back on those people.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

N.S. ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMN.: JUSTICE MIN. DIRECTION

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Justice. In its final report the Electoral Boundaries Commission states on Page 5 that they received a letter from you, Mr. Speaker, as Speaker, stating the following: ". . . the terms of reference established in the Report of the Select Committee constitute the totality of direction to the Commission and no person or body is authorized to give further direction . . ." That's Page 5 of the Electoral Boundaries Commission Report that was tabled in this House today.

As we know, Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General on June 14, 2012, actually did give very firm further direction to the commission, sending them down this sorry road that we see today.

My question to the Attorney General is, in light of this revelation that no person or body is authorized to give further direction to the commission, does he agree that the further direction he provided was inappropriate?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure all Nova Scotians that this side of the House respects and values each of them and that their vote is worth - whether you're in Argyle or whether you're in Sydney, Yarmouth, or New Glasgow - your vote is equal value. When the Electoral Boundaries Commission presented their report, they were outside the parameters that this House set, it was my responsibility to put forth.

MR. D'ENTREMOUNT: Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General put his intervention and further direction in writing in a letter - and I'll table that letter. This is clearly contrary to the process outlined by you, sir, Mr. Speaker. So, to the Attorney General, did the Attorney General act out of anger or arrogance, or did the Premier or Cabinet authorize this inappropriate intervention?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for asking that very specific question. My reply to that was on principle of morals and ethics, that each person in this province has value, that the vote stands there. At no time was there malice or any

anger. It was a matter of fairness across this province in ensuring that everyone's voice has equal value.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, we're getting into "banana republic" territory here. We have one Party, the majority Party, deliberately interfering with an independent process - even worse, the independent commission, whose job it is to determine the boundaries for the next election. This is a shameful and sad day for a province that is home to parliamentary democracy in North America. We now know that shame rests solely on the shoulders of the Premier, the Attorney General, and members of his Cabinet.

Will he do the right thing today and apologize to all Nova Scotians, particularly Acadians, African Nova Scotians, and those in Yarmouth and Shelburne Counties who have had their voting rights trampled on so crossly, and for interfering with this important independent commission. Because of that, will you apologize and will you tender your resignation today because of it?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the member across there that the blood in my veins comes from the same historical period that his comes from. (Interruption) I want to also point out that we have fairness and equity, that each person in this province . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order, order. Order. Have a seat.

The Attorney General has the floor, please. Thank you.

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I believe in fairness and equity and that one vote is one vote.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay.

ERDT: EMPLOYMENT LEVELS - DETAILS

MR. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians are worried about whether they're going to have a job or not in this province. Last year alone, 8,600 full-time jobs disappeared from our province. Meanwhile this government has handed over a half a billion dollars in commitments to big corporations. My question to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism is, why does the minister think big corporations are more deserving than Nova Scotians?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, the member is trying to put words in my mouth. I don't ever recall saying that we prefer big business over small business. As a matter of fact, it's quite the contrary. We work with all businesses - small, medium-sized and large businesses. You will find that if you did an analysis of the number of transactions

that we've done since we've been in government, I bet you will find that over 80 per cent of the people we deal with are small and medium-sized businesses.

Our responsibility is to create jobs, Mr. Speaker. We are doing that but we aren't discriminating against the size of your business. I could tell you a story about Billdidit, a company in Sydney, Nova Scotia, that employs four people when they started with us - a small business. Today they employ six.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I think that it wouldn't be fair to say that 80 per cent of the money spent by this government on economic development is spent on small business because \$600 million of them went to six corporations. The reality is that this province has a terrible economic track record under this government. Nova Scotians are already being squeezed by this government's inaction on power rates and taxes, fee increases imposed by the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that last year alone 8,600 fewer Nova Scotians had full-time work and now face insecurity that comes with part-time or multiple part-time jobs. So my question is, why would the minister celebrate the fact that thousands more Nova Scotians are working part-time with little job security, while full-time work is disappearing under his watch.

MS. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I can stand in my place and I can proudly say that in June when we took over as government, to the point now, as of September 2012, we've created jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia. We've created over 8,000 jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, we have a plan - it's called jobsHere. I said three years ago when we first started with the jobsHere plan, we've got a plan. The plan is working and we're going to stick to it.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I can guarantee that no one is celebrating the job record of this government in this province. Despite the messages and the brochures and the commercials, no one is happy about job creation in this province so let's get the facts straight. Since this government has taken office, Nova Scotia has less job security and full-time jobs are being replaced with part-time jobs at an alarming rate. However, 8,600 full-time jobs have disappeared from the province. This minister has seen fit to hand over \$0.5 billion to six corporations and the result - even more jobs lost, at a total of 1,310.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians lost 8,600 full-time jobs in the last year. We have one of the worst performing economies in the country under this minister. My question to the minister, when will he admit that his corporate welfare is simply hurting Nova Scotians while helping big business?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, again, under our watch employment is up, unemployment is down. That's the trend that we started and that's the trend that we trust is going to continue.

You talk about jobs, Mr. Speaker. Now I listened to the member and maybe the member should go down to the Shelburne shipyard and make that same speech. Maybe the member should go to Cape Breton, to Port Hawkesbury, to NewPage, and make that same speech. Maybe that member should go down to A.F. Theriault & Sons in Meteghan and make that same speech.

Mr. Speaker, it's working; we've got a plan; we're sticking to it.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

N.S. ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMN.: REPORT - VALIDITY

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, in light I really didn't get an answer from the Minister of Justice, the Attorney General, on the process that we have all been subjected to in the Electoral Boundaries Commission report - that Acadians have been ignored, the rights of Acadians, the rights of large communities in geographical areas around Nova Scotia. Now, of course, the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture was out on the floor of this Legislature talking about the failed process.

Seeing that all this has gone on, Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Shelburne now has not been thoroughly talked to or been able to be consulted. I'm just wondering what the Premier's thoughts are on the issue of whether this Electoral Boundaries Commission report is valid or not?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Electoral Boundaries Commission, of course, submitted a report that was now consistent with its terms of reference. I would just point out that, as the terms of reference for this were being decided, it was that member and that caucus that took the position that there should be a 25 per cent variance. They didn't - until the very last minute - even speak out at all about the consistency.

Mr. Speaker, there were some eight drafts; there were some eight drafts and they never, ever mentioned it once. In fact, they proposed that there should be a 25 per cent variance. I believe the way the correspondence went was, we suggested 20 per cent and it was actually the member for Argyle who suggested that the variance should be 25 per cent.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the Premier doesn't know the truth because the member - maybe his members of that committee didn't tell him the truth on that. I hear the Minister of Finance chirping over there and talking about it as well. We know full well that when we were in that discussion, we talked about the protection of

those constituencies, the protection of Acadian rights in Nova Scotia, the linguistic rights of Nova Scotians. After that was taken care of, Leonard - I'm sorry. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Referring to a member by name is improper in this Chamber at any time. That includes every part of the debate. I would ask the honourable member to retract that, please.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I retract that.

MR. SPEAKER: And continue on with your question.

The honourable member for Argyle.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Thank you so much. I know the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage was a part of our discussions, and I know that maybe he's tending to forget some of the parts of that discussion. Of course, the important part was the protection of Acadian linguistic rights across this province, in making sure that those constituencies - the constituencies of Clare, Richmond, and Argyle - were there to represent them in this House of Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, only one Party wrote them off, and that was the NDP. So my question to the Premier is, in light of all this information, will he instruct his Minister of Justice to resign?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, in just a second I'm going to table this. This is actually - I guess it's a letter that came from the member for Argyle. It's called "PC position on deviation of average number of electors per constituency" He says, "In regards to the plus or minus 20%, we will have to disagree with you on this point. It is our feeling that plus or minus 25% needs to stay in the 2012 terms of reference."

He goes on to say that this is appropriate notwithstanding the Carter decision, Mr. Speaker. That was the position of the Progressive Conservative Party that they tabled. So I'll table it - maybe it will refresh his memory.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I can't imagine the crassness of this discussion. Taking that out of context is absolutely a disservice to Acadian linguistic minorities in this province. Had you been there for the discussion with the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage, the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island, he would have known that that was not what we actually meant.

Mr. Speaker, there was also a discussion of cultural linguistic minorities and the protection of their rights in this House of Assembly. So for the Premier to look for blame everywhere else, all he needs to do is look over to his right - look at the Minister of Justice

...

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: . . . look behind him and look at the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Will he ask for their resignations today?

THE PREMIER: Well, now that the member for Argyle has been caught in his own web of deceit, perhaps he should resign. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. (Interruptions)

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Talk to them and find out what it's about. Talk to them and find out what it's about. Why don't you learn how to be a Premier? You learn how to be a Premier.

MR. SPEAKER: I'd ask the honourable member for Argyle to stand up in his place please and retract those remarks and apologize.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: M. le Président, je vais remettre ces commentaires-là. Je dis, en face des acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse, que ce processus n'était pas acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all Acadians in this province, we know that our rights have been taken away, and I apologize maybe for the remarks in this House, but for a Premier to say it like that is absolutely - I just can't believe it, I just can't.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, I don't think that is much of an apology or, in a sense, retracting your remarks, honourable member, so I'm going to ask you to retract your remarks in this Assembly.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for the emotionalism of this. This has been very difficult for many, many, many of our constituents . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Retract what was said.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I'm not going to, if he is going to continue to do that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I will ask the honourable member to retract and if you're refusing or continue to refuse I'll have no choice but to order you to withdraw from the House for the remainder of today, pursuant to Rule 28. Again, retract the remarks.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I am trying to retract them but I am hearing lots of other comments along here. I apologize to the Acadians, I apologize to the Premier and maybe I was a little snippy on this one but this has been a very, very, very emotional process.

MR. SPEAKER: Well that was the third and final time - I'm directing you to withdrawal the remarks.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I retract my comments.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

EDUC. - PUB. EDUC. FUNDING: CUTS - RESEARCH

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is through you to the Minister of Education. The OECD has calculated the rate of return on investments in public education to be 8.8 per cent for girls and 13.6 per cent for boys, and I can table that chart. This is an impressive, and unheard of, rate of return.

Despite this information, the NDP Government has slashed education funding in this province to the tune of \$65 million over the last two years. My question to the Minister of Education is, will the minister tell members of this House what research she used when she supported the NDP's decision to slash funding to public education?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: We are investing in education in the Province of Nova Scotia. We have had an issue of declining enrollment and we are making sure that our investments are strategic and that our investments are going to guarantee that our children are going to be successful. Thank you.

MS. CASEY: The question was what research was used. The World Bank Education Strategy published in 2011 states, "... investments in quality education lead to more rapid and sustainable economic growth and development." I will table that.

Mr. Speaker, there is a body of evidence that supports investing in public education; this minister ignores that research. Would the minister please table the research that she used to support her government's decision to cut funding to education, something that is categorically opposed by economists around the world?

MS. JENNEX: I would like to remind the members of this House that this government did not take \$65 million out of the education budget. I would like to also add that the per student (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MS. JENNEX: Thank you very much Mr. Speaker. The per student funding in this province is higher than it has ever been. Thank you.

MS. CASEY: I would ask the minister to go back and do a little bit of math because every board in this province, and every parent, and every member of the NSTU knows exactly what that adds up to and in over two years it was \$65 million. It's only two-digit adding, so it shouldn't be too difficult.

Mr. Speaker, my final question. Knowing that slashing education funding cannot be supported by research, knowing that there are negative impacts from this government's cuts - they are being felt in schools, they are being felt in classrooms all over this province - will the minister tell members of this House if she plans to continue her third year of cuts to public education?

MS. JENNEX: Thank you very much. I don't need to take a math lesson from the former Minister of Education; we know that our results in math are lagging. We are making strategic investments in this province for our students and we just recently added 73 more teachers so that our children in Primary to Grade 3 all have classroom sizes under 25.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

**ACADIAN AFFS. - CIRCONSCRIPTIONS PROTÉGÉES:
MINISTRE - POSITION**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: M. le Président, je veux prendre cette occasion pour féliciter le nouveau ministre des Affaires acadiennes. Comme vous le savez, la communauté acadienne joue un rôle majeur dans l'identité de la Nouvelle-Écosse. Notre langue et culture est présente chaque jour dans les communautés à travers la province.

Malheureusement, la communauté acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse se trouve attaquée par le gouvernement Dexter avec sa décision de silence notre présence dans l'Assemblée législative. Est-ce que le nouveau ministre des Affaires acadiennes peut nous informer : quelle est sa position sur la question des circonscriptions protégées pour les communautés acadiennes de Clare, Argyle et Richmond?

HON. DAVID WILSON: Merci, M. le Président. Je veux aussi dire félicitations au nouveau Président de la FANE.

As the member opposite recognizes and knows, a question around the changes to electoral boundaries definitely should be answered through the appropriate minister. We respect the process, I respect the process, so I would ask the Minister of Justice to relay any answer, but it's unfortunate that the Minister of Justice is unable to understand the question

from the honourable member. So maybe I'd ask that he ask the Minister of Justice in English and maybe he could provide an answer.

MR. SAMSON: Avec tout respect, M. le Président, je ne pense pas que c'est nécessaire quand on pose une question, au nom de la communauté acadienne, au ministre des affaires responsable pour le bureau des Affaires acadiennes, de ne pas répondre, quelle est sa position sur la question des circonscriptions protégées, quand nous avons la communauté acadienne qui nous dit, c'est partie de notre culture, c'est partie de notre identité, même plus important, c'est partie de notre futur.

Je peux vous assurer, M. le Président, que je ne répèterai pas la question pour le ministre de la Justice, parce qu'à la fin de la journée, les acadiens regardent au ministre responsable pour le bureau des Affaires acadiennes, et alors, je demande de nouveau, est-ce que le ministre des Affaires acadiennes peut nous dire, quelle est sa position sur la question que la communauté acadienne a identifiée comme partie : leur culture, leur identité et leur futur. Ça, c'est la présence des voix acadiennes, ici, dans l'Assemblée législative.

MR. WILSON: Merci, M. le Président. Je peux dire une chose : l'Office des Affaires acadiennes travaille pour tous les résidents ici, en Nouvelle-Écosse, qui sont acadiens. Juste pas dans les communautés d'Argyle et Clare, mais aussi dans les communautés de Pomquet, Arichat, la communauté de Truro, la communauté de Halifax, ou on a la plus grande communauté acadienne ici en Nouvelle-Écosse. On travaille beaucoup avec tout le monde dans notre province, avec les services, dans l'Office des Affaires acadiennes et je vais continuer de travailler avec tout le monde : les résidents d'Argyle, les résidents de Clare, les résidents de Richmond, les résidents francophones et acadiens, tous dans notre province, ici en Nouvelle-Écosse.

MR. SAMSON: M. le Président, cette question ici, ce n'est pas une question du futur du député d'Argyle, ou du futur du député de Clare, ou du futur de moi-même, comme député de Richmond. Pendant le processus, les acadiens à travers de la province nous ont dit que les députés acadiens de Clare, Richmond et Argyle ne représentent pas juste leur communauté, mais ils représentent la totalité de la communauté acadienne à travers de la Nouvelle-Écosse. (Applaudissements)

M. le Président, ça serait un rêve d'avoir un député de chaque communauté acadienne, mais ce n'est pas possible. Mais maintenant, l'Assemblée et le processus que nous avons suivi pendant les dernières 30 années, nous assurer les voix, les acadiens, ici à l'Assemblée. Alors, je demande une dernière fois, au nouveau ministre des Affaires acadiennes, quelle est sa position sur la question des voix acadiennes assurées ici dans l'Assemblée législative?

MR. WILSON: M. le Président, c'est très important pour notre parti, le NPD, le Parti des Libéraux, le Parti des Progressiste-conservateur doivent travailler beaucoup avec

nos membres de travailler avec tout le monde qui est francophone, tout le monde qui est acadien, ici en Nouvelle-Écosse. C'est notre jobbe, c'est nos jobbes pour le ministre des Affaires acadiennes, que je parle et je travaille avec tout le monde, ici en Nouvelle-Écosse, qui est francophone, qui vient des communautés acadiennes, c'est important pour moi de continuer. Je suis allé, je pense vendredi soir, à la conférence francophone. C'est important de continuer de travailler avec la FANE, avec d'autres associations, ici en Nouvelle-Écosse. Donc, c'est ma jobbe d'être assis avec mes collègues du Cabinet, pour faire les investissements pour toutes les communautés, tous les résidents ici en Nouvelle-Écosse, qui sont français, qui sont acadiens. (Applaudissements)

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education. The classroom cap has increased under ...

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

The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During Question Period, the Premier made comments with regards to the work of the Select Committee for selecting the boundary review commission. In his comments, the Premier seemed to indicate that by supporting a 25 per cent variance somehow the PC Party or anyone else was, in essence, working towards eliminating Acadian representation. The Premier would know, in the first two previous independent commissions, the terms of reference had a clause that said notwithstanding the 25 per cent variance, that in cases of linguistic, cultural or geographic size, that the commission may go beyond the 25 per cent.

The decision to remove that notwithstanding clause was one made uniquely by the majority NDP members of that commission and to suggest anything other than that, I believe, would have been misleading the House, which is what the Premier did with his comments. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: It's not a point of order; it's a disagreement between two members in the House of Assembly. It's a disagreement between two members.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

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

MS. KELLY REGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sorry for the confusion - I saw the member opposite standing up and thought that it was the government's turn.

As most of you know, I come from the riding of Bedford-Birch Cove which is composed of two communities - Bedford and Birch Cove - which, historically, haven't always been linked. In fact, previously the riding was called Bedford-Fall River, I think there was Bedford-Musquodoboit before that. It's been a variety of different - we've been linked to a lot of different communities.

We have a pretty diverse riding in terms of who lives there. Initially, Bedford and Birch Cove started off - we were sort of cottage country for Halifax dwellers, but over time, we became suburban areas. In Bedford's case, we actually had a lot of industry at one time. We had a paper mill, hence the name Paper Mill Lake. We had a number of different industries - we had a fish hatchery, et cetera, et cetera.

Over time, though, those have given way to a more suburban character to the riding. A lot of the time lately, on Fridays or Saturdays, I go door-knocking in my riding just to find out what people think. Sometimes I have an item of interest to drop to them, and other times I just go with a survey, asking: What are your top three issues of provincial importance? I thought I would talk about those particular issues here today, the kinds of things I've been hearing at the door in Bedford-Birch Cove.

One of the things I've been hearing a lot about is the \$65 million cut from education. Initially, I think, parents weren't all that concerned, because it seemed to be quiet. What we were hearing late last school term, and certainly this school term, is a lot of concern around the impacts of those cuts. You know, \$65 million is a lot of money. It has been especially difficult in my area because my area is growing, and we see schools bursting at their seams.

We have a new high school being built, and that high school is being built for 1,200 students. There are already 1,300 students registered at the high school that is going to move over there, so you know what is going to happen. Yes, I understand that high schools can often take more students than they are built for, because not everybody is there for every class, but you have to ask, if there's 1,300 kids already registered at Charles P. Allen

High School, what is going to happen when we see even more kids crammed into that in the next few years?

We've been hearing conflicting messages. I was actually at the school earlier in October. I got to go for a tour. The new school is coming along nicely. It's ahead of schedule and it's on budget. I was in there, and it's a great facility. I am concerned about a number of things, one of which is, of course, the size of it, because unless there is a call for proposals and unless a planned new high school for the Ravines is accepted by the province, this school will rapidly become overcrowded and all the benefit that the kids who have been crammed into the current C.P. Allen - all the benefits that they have had over the last number of years will be lost. All the benefit from getting a new school will be lost, simply because they don't have the kind of space that they need. So that is a concern.

One of the things we wanted to do at that new high school was build a theatre. There is no theatre in the Bedford-Sackville area, and we had hoped to be able to do some fundraising and to build a theatre. We were told that we could not fundraise for capital projects, that anything like that would have to be done in conjunction with the municipality. In the end, we tried to fight against that; we didn't get anywhere. So instead, the municipality has done an area rate and we're going to have some upgrading to the cafetorium and we're very pleased with that, although it's not what we initially wanted, certainly.

Now we have an issue of a shed, and it's half-built; half has been built by HRM and half is sitting there with a pad. Oddly enough, the school was approached by HRSB to fundraise to build this capital project. We're saying, how can this be? Wait a second, we were told we couldn't fundraise to build a capital project, a theatre, and now we're being told we have to fundraise to build a capital project, a shed. That seems kind of bizarre to us.

I'm really hoping that one of these days we'll actually get an answer out of the Department of Education; I have asked the minister, and I got an answer back that they didn't seem to know what was going on. I would love to have an answer back from the minister about this: are we supposed to fundraise? And if so, why could we not fundraise for a theatre and why are we sitting there?

I went out the other day. The field is beautiful. The field is AstroTurf - paid for by HRM taxpayers, I might add - and there is half a building there, and then there is a concrete pad sitting next to this half building. It's kind of bizarre looking, and I guess they'll have to put up a little extra fence while we sit around and try to figure out what the heck is going on with this \$70,000 shed. Again, you have to ask yourself, why is it okay to fundraise for that and not for a theatre?

Certainly one of the issues that I do hear at the doors is the issue of education and class overcrowding. Recently we heard about some new teachers who are going into schools, and they are very welcome, but the problem with the way that was done - the

problem with denying that there was a problem - is that suddenly schools that were already bursting at the seams are even more crowded because you've added another classroom.

For example, in one of the schools in my district, in Grosvenor Wentworth, what we have there is a teacher - the music teacher - who is now going from class to class with a cart. You say, well, that's too bad, so sorry, whatever. But the problem is, he actually uses his Yamaha piano to teach music, and he can't shove that thing from classroom to classroom. It's an example of no planning and no leadership on this file. This should have been dealt with before the summer, because the fact of the matter (Interruptions) Pardon me?

AN HON. MEMBER: P3 schools, is that what . . .

MS. REGAN: Actually, the member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville was very quiet when we discussed the shed. I'd like to hear what he has to say about the shed and the missing half shed at Charles P. Allen High School, so if you'd like to talk, by all means, I'd like to hear your answer.

I guess we're not going to hear anything on the shed. Back to the school: what should have happened is that portables should have been put in there, but unfortunately, that didn't happen, so at the last minute we have teachers coming in in overcrowded schools because there was no plan.

We had a good idea of the numbers that were going to be at schools before September. We didn't have to do it - no, not "we" - the government didn't have to do it three weeks into the term. It could have been dealt with. It should have been dealt with. Instead, we had a last-minute demi-derriered plan to deal with this.

You have to ask yourself, is that quality education? Parents are concerned. When I go door to door, you know what I hear? They say, I can't believe that we're spending the second lowest of any province in the country. Then I tell them the reason it's only second lowest and not the lowest is because all the program funding that once went for things like math mentors and Reading Recovery has actually been moved over, has been cut totally, and that's been moved over. If that hadn't happened we would be at the rock bottom.

Recently the government, with great fanfare, announced that they were going to import the Alberta math curriculum because Alberta's math scores are much better than ours. People were saying, well, that's great, but the problem is it has to come with the kind of funding that Alberta gets. You can't just walk in the door and say we've got Alberta's curriculum and not give the kind of funding to get the results.

The other day I met with a businessman in Bedford who said he was so concerned about the kids who are coming out of school, they are lacking basic literacy skills, and this government is setting these kids up to fail because they are not getting what they need to be

able to succeed in life. If you can't read directions on a manual, if you can't read directions on what pills you are supposed to take, how are you supposed to get through life? These kids are coming out and they are not equipped with what they need.

There are lots of kids who will do just fine. No matter what school system you put them in, they will shine, but there are kids who need extra help and they are not getting it. The parents of kids with disabilities tell me how very disappointed they are by the kind of education they see for their kids and by the pulling of supports for those kids.

Also in my riding, what I hear about a lot is power rates. When I was going door-to-door that was something that was brought up to me - I guess I started going door-to-door in the winter so that is not surprising because it's very cold and we're all putting out a lot of money for heat. I actually was writing to a constituent who had written to me and I was telling him that there's a petition going around, you can get that. He's got that petition. He's going door-to-door with that; he's pretty steamed. So Nova Scotia power rates are a huge issue. Certainly they are a big issue, we know that. We are seeing the government actually start to move by, in a lot of cases, taking the things that we have been saying and actually moving on those and bringing in legislation around that.

Consistently, when I went door-to-door in the winter months, what I heard was this was one of the top three issues. The other issues might change. In families with younger children there was education in there but in house after house, whether they were young or old, a single person or a family, the cost of power was a huge issue. I think what was kind of frustrating about Question Period today was that we saw the Premier completely misrepresent our plan.

Now I should have come to expect that but what I would urge the members to do is take a drive down to Berwick and check out what happens in Berwick because they produce some of their own power there. This is the kind of thing we're talking about; it's a town producing some of its own power and rates there are 10 per cent less than they are down the road. I don't know what is so scary about this for the NDP but it works. I don't know why they think that this is a problem but it works. It is 10 per cent lower in Berwick than in neighbouring communities. What is so scary about that?

In Bedford-Birch Cove health issues are also a concern. Certainly what we've been hearing over and over again are wait time issues. I know a young woman who has knee problems; she's trying to get in to see a specialist. It has been months and months and still no appointment. She needs surgery. She can't do the kind of job she normally does because she can't stand for long periods of time.

In Bedford-Birch Cove Lyme disease remains an issue. In fact, on Monday night, together with the Bedford Residents Association, I hosted a showing of the movie *Under Our Skin*. I would urge the members of the NDP caucus to watch this movie. It's an hour and a half long, it's kind of long, but it does chronicle the paths of a number of chronic

Lyme disease sufferers as they travel through their road to recovery. At the same time you see what's happening with their doctors, and at the very end it deals with the medical community and how Lyme disease has been treated in the United States and who is actually treating, who is making the decisions about that - because one of the concerns that the movie highlights is that a lot of the people who are making the decisions about how Lyme disease is treated, actually have conflicts of interest.

To give them the kind of power to decide on whether Lyme disease is a chronic condition et cetera, if you're employed by an HMO, for example, is not right, and the problem is, we are taking those treatment guidelines from the United States and we're bringing them up here to Canada. So the result of that is we are following some concerning trends in terms of the way that we treat it.

I wish the Health - well, I guess I can't say that. (Interruption) Yes, I can't say that. I would urge the Health and Wellness Minister to make sure that he reminds Nova Scotia citizens that Lyme disease-bearing ticks are still active until there have been several days of temperatures at four degrees or lower. So, for example, last winter we had a winter where the onset of winter was quite late and the result was, we had Lyme disease-bearing ticks active quite a bit longer than you would normally expect. So I would hope that the Health and Wellness Department will be proactive this year and issue a warning to Nova Scotians to remind them that the ticks are still active.

I would also hope that they would let Nova Scotians know that it's not just in the endemic areas that you have to worry about Lyme disease-bearing ticks. Basically the ecosystem of the province is such that you can find a tick on you outside those areas. Those areas have expanded. There's a map that's on the Health and Wellness Web site that shows where the endemic areas are, but the fact is those areas are growing together and ticks can be found across much of the province. I was visiting a doctor in Cape Breton not long ago and he indicated to me that, in fact, there are Lyme disease-bearing ticks in Cape Breton, but there's no indication on that map that that's the case. He has seen cases of Lyme disease in people who most likely contracted it in Cape Breton.

One of the concerns that I hear from my constituents is that a number of them have been forced to go outside the province for treatment because the treatment that is the standard here in Nova Scotia, and across much of Canada, is a simple course of antibiotics. If you just get antibiotics for 14 days, you likely will not be able to shake the Lyme disease - most Lyme disease experts actually consider a 30-day course and, again, you have to catch it at the right time. It's a very complicated disease, it's not easy to treat.

One of the most concerning things I've heard from constituents about Lyme disease is the number who have actually told me that they were told that their Lyme disease was all in their head. They had had an initial treatment and they would seem to get better and then they would get worse again. Now, if you know how the Lyme disease spirochete works, it's like a syphilis spirochete. It's kind of like a corkscrew and what happens with those

spirochetes is, when they're being attacked by an antibiotic they actually will sometimes put up sort of a protective - I'm trying to think of the word - almost like a shell around them, a ball around them, so they'll be protected for about 30 days and then they will re-hatch and the spirochete is out there again. So you can't just say that one treatment will treat everybody, but that is in fact what a lot of Lyme disease patients are being told.

I can't tell you the number of people who have said to me, you know first of all it was actually a relief to know what they had when they had it, when they were finally diagnosed, because they thought oh, I'm going to get treated, then to find out that they get one treatment and when they go back for more and say it doesn't seem to be gone, I've got the same symptoms back, they are being told it's all in their head.

It's not in their head and to be told that - it particularly seems to happen to middle-aged women. I think there has been a history of them being told that things are all in their head in the first place, so I don't like hearing that when people are coming to me and telling me about their experience. So I would urge the members of the government caucus to watch that movie, *Under Our Skin*. It is American so there are some things that are different but I would urge them to get it. I think it's actually free on-line this particular week so you may be able to get it that way. If not, if you'd like to see it, I can certainly arrange for you to get it.

As I indicated earlier, long wait times are a huge issue in my riding, so is a lack of adequate housing. You would think that in an affluent area that wouldn't be an issue but the fact is it is really difficult to access affordable housing in this province. We have 1,800 families on the waiting list for public housing at this time. My concern is that in a lot of areas, like mine, we have apartment buildings going up and those are lovely apartment buildings but they are luxury apartment buildings.

I wonder, I often think back to when I was widowed in the early 1990s and I think what if I had had to actually pay for housing and child care and food and heat and clothing out of my salary? What if there had been no insurance, what would I have done? I don't think I could have done it and I had a very good job. I was a television director with a CTV affiliate. I don't know how I would have made it through and I don't know how single-parent families make it through today. Certainly we're seeing rents - I was hearing today about rents here in Halifax climbing and I can tell you that in Bedford-Birch Cove they are climbing as well.

Sort of an odd segue but one of the things we are seeing here are a lot more condos in our province. There are some condos that currently overlook the Bedford waterfront. The Bedford waterfront has become quite a hot button issue. For the members who don't know about this particular project, back in 1985 the Bedford Waterfront Commission approved a project to do some infilling along the Bedford waterfront and that would provide a number of different things for Bedford. In the first phase we had some townhomes, we had some low-rise apartment buildings, one sort of slightly higher-rise and

we got Dewolfe Park. We have some jetties, et cetera, and that has been a real addition to Bedford, having that park on the waterfront where citizens can gather, et cetera, has been a huge boon.

Fast-forward almost 20 years later and there is concern building around what is going in at that waterfront. Actually the day after I was elected in 2009, there was a public meeting where the Waterfront Development Commission, which has sort of taken over Bedford Waterfront Development Corporation, unveiled three plans. I was at that meeting. I think there were probably about 150 people there. I think there was a lot of positive feedback that night about what people saw but I think part of that was because there were three plans; it wasn't a final plan.

MR. SPEAKER: The chatter is getting a little loud so if we could keep the chatter down because the honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove has the floor. If we could keep the chatter down, that would be really good. Thank you.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

MS. REGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That night there were a lot of positive comments - I guess maybe it was an afternoon, I remember it being very light. It was in June. A year later when the final proposal came down, that night it wasn't as positive. Again, I think part of that was because you have a number of the options eliminated but it was a really dense plan and while there was more green space than there actually was with the DeWolfe Park plan, it didn't look like it because there was no central gathering point. The green space was dispersed; there were a lot of boardwalks, et cetera, and so that was the first thing I heard.

There was also the density issue. One of the things that I'm hearing a lot is concern about density in Bedford. A lot of the development is happening in Bedford. A lot of it is in Bedford West where I had a chance to door knock this summer and what a nice community that is. It's really coming along and I had a good time out there and those folks were very happy to remain as part of the Bedford community and not be hived off to another riding.

With the new plan for the Bedford waterfront, there are a lot of buildings on there and there's a lot of concern. Where's the park? Where are we supposed to gather? That kind of thing. Earlier this year a group - I guess it would have been last year - a group called Save Bedford Reef started up and now they were concerned, in particular, about Crosby Island, which was slated to be part of the original infill as decided by Bedford Waterfront Commission, and the ledges that are next to it, they were concerned about those being infilled and so I started meeting with them and asking questions and things like that.

Since then some citizens who are concerned about the level of development have met with them and they've joined together to create Save Bedford Waterfront. They have indicated they would like to meet with the Premier and I wrote to the Premier and I was

hoping he would say, yes, I'll meet with you because they wanted to stop the infill there. Thirty-nine acres of pyritic slate is a lot; it's a big area. Perhaps some of the concern around it is because we're just looking at this big expanse. It's sort of a moonscape right now and any development plan has been stopped because HRM has engaged in a traffic, transit and services study so everything is frozen while that's going on.

Then there will be another year of consultation in terms of the development. But that's municipal, that's not provincial. What these folks are concerned about is the infill and do we have to infill that much? I can tell you that I've heard from sailors who have said to me, you're infilling in my playground and I don't like this and I didn't agree with it.

In late September there was a public meeting at the Legion where members of Save Bedford Waterfront committee and the public had a chance to explain to the Waterfront Development Commission how they felt. Unfortunately it was on a night when I was in Cape Breton, the Member of Parliament was in Ottawa, and the local councillor was actually chairing community council that night so he wasn't able to come. But members of the community had their chance to say what they were concerned about. I would urge the government to pay attention to this group. You can only keep trying to pour so many people onto a small road like Bedford Highway. Anybody who drives out to Bedford on Sunday afternoon knows we've had a lot of development there and that road is not equipped to handle a whole lot more.

If there is going to be limited development down on the waterfront, and I hope it would be no more than limited development, but certainly we were hoping to have that theatre that we didn't get at the high school or a library or a ferry terminal or a train terminal there. But if that's going to happen at that waterfront, you don't want a whole lot more density going up down there. We want to see places where people can be active and they can get together. I can tell you, DeWolfe Park has been a huge boon to Bedford, but it's getting really crowded when we have events like Canada Day or Bedford Days. It gets really crowded. There is a need for another big venue park in Bedford.

That's not to say we don't have facilities in Bedford, because we do, and not to say we don't have facilities in Birch Cove, because we do. We have a wonderful facility in Maskwa on Kearney Lake. Of course, as I mentioned earlier today, Mark de Jonge won a bronze medal this summer, and Mark is from the Maskwa Club. I was there the night we did the big send-off; the Leader of the Official Opposition and the member for Halifax Clayton Park were both there as well. We were pretty excited to be part of that evening, to see Mark as he headed off. Amy Cotton was there too, a wonderful young woman who was heading over in Judo.

We were pretty excited that night, and the night of the semifinals the federal member for Halifax West and I went over early in the morning to see that race. People were so excited about that. Some of those kids slept overnight and then they got up at 5:30 in the morning to watch Mark race. Now, I have to say that we didn't actually go over at 5:30 that

Saturday morning, but we were up to watch the race. That was so exciting, sitting there at the end of the race, waiting there in anticipation, wondering "Did he make it?" He did, and he brought home the bronze.

I'll tell you, we were there for the end-of-the-year barbeque, and people are still on a high from that win. I think that it will have a huge effect for young people, getting them to enjoy paddling even more. To see someone that they know from around the club - and Mark is very approachable - was so nice for the kids and for the parents and the supporters at Maskwa.

We also have in my riding the BMO 4 Pad, the rink, which has made a huge difference for families who play ringette and hockey. It has been a huge boon to have that facility. I have to say kudos to HRM, who bore the vast brunt of that; for some reason the federal government refused to put any money in, and provincially we only put \$2 million in. So HRM taxpayers built that rink, and it has been a huge boon to our area.

When I was talking earlier about education I should have mentioned post-secondary education, because that is a big issue in the riding as well. It's a very middle class area, so a lot of parents are encouraging their kids to go for post-secondary education. As we all know, the cost of post-secondary education continues to rise, and it's a big concern to those parents when they see that \$100 million has come out of the universities around this province under this government. They know that that money is going to come from somewhere, and it may well be them.

They know that the education their kids are getting at the universities here in Nova Scotia is top notch. In fact, I got to attend a graduation this year, as my second daughter received her degree from St. F.X. That was a pretty proud day, considering she had overcome a brain injury to get stellar marks and graduate with her psychology degree. But a lot of parents are struggling with the cost of post-secondary education and it is tough to say, when parents come to me and say you know, my kid has graduated and they have \$30,000 or \$40,000 or \$60,000 in debt and they can't find a suitable job, they can't find a job related to their field of study, and so what are they going to do? They're going to go down the road and, you know, so often I'll run into friends and I'll say how's your son, how's your daughter? Well, they're out West - and I would hate it to be said of Nova Scotia that our number-one export is our young people but, boy, it sure does feel that way.

The Graduate Tax Credit that this government instituted, that's supposed to keep them at home, I'm telling you it is not doing its job. Studies that have been done in other provinces that have looked at it - sorry, that have implemented it - are pretty clear that it doesn't do the job that we want it to do. So, again, I'm not sure that that is a plus for families who are hoping to keep their kids here at home.

So, when I look at my riding I think it's a really prosperous place, but when I go - over the last couple of weeks I've talked to a lot of small business owners, and it started off

as just sort of a chance conversation with one business owner who has been in business for 20 years and he said, honestly, this has been the most difficult year I've ever had. There doesn't seem to be the kind of disposable income that there once was and he said, I don't know anymore, he said I thought it was just me, but he had sent a staff member off to a course on social media, and when this staff member came back she said, do you know what? All the businesses in the same industry as us, they're all saying the same thing too. That started me thinking, and I started popping in at a retail operation and talking to builders and just checking with different people in different industries, and I kept hearing the same thing over and over again - the money isn't there. People are tightening their belts; they're not spending any discretionary money.

I think that this may in fact be the result of the HST hike a few years ago, because if you suddenly have that increase in what's going out the door, you may not notice it right away and maybe you just go through your savings a little bit, but when everything is going up, when you have gas going up, when you have electricity going up, when rent is going up, eventually it has an accumulative effect. When tuition is going up, when clothing costs more, and we heard that during the winter clothing costs more - when all these things add up, it's making it harder and harder for people to make ends meet. And if people wonder, am I going to have a job tomorrow, they're not going to be spending any discretionary money; they're not going to engage in any discretionary funding. They are going to be guarding their pennies.

So when I look around my riding, I see a prosperous riding and I see some really neat people. We have a lot of immigrants in Bedford-Birch Cove. Some of the schools that I go into and there are many - one of the schools I went into, I think it was Bedford South, they had 50-something languages being spoken. I didn't even realize there were that many languages that existed, but there are huge numbers of immigrants here and if we want to keep immigrants here we have to have jobs. I'm concerned that without jobs we are not going to be able to attract, and keep, immigrants.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for offering me this time right now to speak about my riding. I'm very proud of my riding. I hope that what we see at the Bedford waterfront is going to be a gem, not just for Bedford, and there will be a development as well in the Birch Cove area but, again, that is under study as well. I do hope that when the government comes to look at the infilling question, they will meet with this committee and they will look at what comes out of the consultations and ask themselves, do we really need to infill?

I know there was a concern. What do you do with that pyritic slate if you're not putting it in the basin? Our caucus met with Irving last week and Irving indicated they are going to do a big infill for the shipping contract. I let them know that there is pyritic slate that we'd be happy if they took it off our hands, so maybe that will help.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for affording me this time and I would like to thank the members for listening.

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

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't even know where to begin. There are so many things I can talk about. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville thinks he has the floor.

MR. WHYNOTT: You know, Mr. Speaker, I didn't chirp when that member over there was talking and I ask the same respect. It's unfortunate that I'm standing here and listening to the things that are being said across the way.

There are a few things that I'd like to address and I'm only going to stand on my feet for a few minutes today and hopefully have the opportunity to continue at a later date. I can tell the people who I represent in Hammonds Plains, the families and the students and the community members who will be attending the new C.P. Allen High School - they will be getting the shed that the honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove was talking about. My community has asked for that. I have been championing that and we're getting that.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that the honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove never mentions - actually the Liberal Party never mentions this. They never mentioned the fact about the wonderful P3 contract that they signed when they were in government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, do you know that . . .

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: I was nine, I wasn't here.

MR. WHYNOTT: Okay, so that's an interesting point . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville has the floor and he requested that there be no chirping from any side of the House.

MR. WHYNOTT: Absolutely, I agree, Mr. Speaker. Do you know - it's interesting that the member for Yarmouth mentions that he was nine at the time. Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? I think I was eight at the time. Do you know that because of the decisions of the Liberal Party how much more money we are spending because of that botched system of P3 schools - \$20 million more today, because of the decisions of that Liberal Party.

Do you know the other thing, Mr. Speaker? That doesn't even include the amount of money that when this Party is in power, many years down the road, by about 2019-2020,

we will have to make a decision on whether or not we have to buy those schools from that developer. That's the decision we have to make, we would have to buy; we would have to make that decision.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the other interesting part of that is do you know how much we will have to pay for those schools at that time? The exact same amount if we were to build a school - that is how much we would have to pay. What they did is they delayed payments. They wanted to make it sound like - the province at the time - we're getting all these new schools, getting all these new schools. Those communities got those schools, those communities deserve those schools, absolutely. Those communities needed those schools. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, folks, order please. The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville has the floor. We have another half hour, folks - let's try to make it through it.

MR. WHYNOTT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So that's the reality that we're at. Those communities absolutely deserve those schools but, do you know what? The government of the day made the decision to delay the payments of those schools - adding another \$20 million today. That's how much more we're spending today because of the decisions of that Party across the way. You know what that shows is that that Party is not up to the job. They are not up to the job. They are not up to the job of doing anything but sitting on that side of the House.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, is I wanted to take an opportunity to talk about actually the great new school that is being built by this government - the replacement school for C.P. Allen High, which is being built along the Hammonds Plains Road, off Innovation Drive, next to RIM that we all see when we're going down the Bi-Hi. You know that that was . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: It's a P3.

MR. WHYNOTT: It's not a P3 school. That school is a \$38 million state-of-the-art facility, Gold LEED standards - probably actually is the most environmentally friendly school in this province, or will be.

You know, Mr. Speaker, that school was originally estimated to cost about \$34 million - \$34 million by the previous government - but the previous government didn't take in the fact that they actually had to buy the land. Oops, oops - what's the big deal? So the community comes together which is a great process. The community comes together as I know the member for Queens will know when new schools are being built - the community comes together and decides the site. They recommend three sites. The site that made the most sense is where it's being built and this government invested another \$4 million to buy

the land. A \$38 million school for the community of Hammonds Plains, for the community of Upper Hammonds Plains, for the community of Bedford.

Mr. Speaker, that is a good decision that this government has made, but the Party on the other side is not up to the job. They are not up to the job. The Liberal Governments for the past 20 years helped create the mess that we're working to clean up.

That Party over there (Interruptions) You know, Mr. Speaker, that Party over there will promise anything to anyone. It will promise anything to anyone - anything to anyone. So how are they going to pay for it? How are they going to pay for it, is my question. I just don't know how they're going to pay for it. It's unfortunate.

So the question that the Party opposite hasn't answered yet - the Party opposite has not answered this. Again, as I said, they're promising all of these things that really we don't know actually what they're promising, but we kind of get a sense of where they might be going. But do you know what? I can probably assume, Mr. Speaker, you know, I would suggest that the Liberal Party, if they had their way - and they don't, but if they had their way, they would get rid of the Affordable Living Tax Credit. Would they get rid of it? (Interruptions) I think they would. So that's \$70 million that's going into the pockets of everyday Nova Scotians that they're going to take back from them. They're going to take it back from them.

The other thing they would do is they would more than likely take away the Poverty Reduction Tax Credit which is \$3.6 million back into the pockets of Nova Scotians. Increases to income assistance, which was \$17 million back into the pockets of low-income Nova Scotians - they'll take that away from them as well. Increases for child benefits, the increases to child benefits, they would get rid of that, Mr. Speaker. And that's \$12 million - \$12 million they would take away out of the pockets of Nova Scotians. Seniors for the income tax reductions, the property tax reductions - that adds up to about \$15 million that they would take away from Nova Scotians. The caregiver program is \$5 million - \$5 million that they're going to take away from Nova Scotians.

The other thing they don't talk about is how they, how that Party . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Thirty minutes. Let's just bring it down a little bit and get through this first day, make Nova Scotians (Interruptions) Take a deep breath.

The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville has the floor.

MR. WHYNOTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville is levelling a lot of unfounded accusations at this caucus. All I would ask is that the member opposite provide any sort of documentation that can help prove his point. You can't just make things up in this House of Assembly and expect people to believe it. (Interruptions) Table the documents, then. If you believe it, table the documents.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order. That is not a point of order. That is a disagreement between two members.

The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville has the floor.

MR. WHYNOTT: Mr. Speaker, the document that I'm talking about, for the honourable member for Yarmouth, is called the budget. It's called the budget. It's tabled every year. That's the document I'm talking about.

I know it's the first day back at the House, and I understand how important these issues are to everyday Nova Scotians. I very much look forward to taking my whole hour that is available to me to speak on behalf of my constituents to ensure that we set the record straight between this Party and that Party. That Party on the other side of the House is certainly not up to the job.

Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of debate.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise to meet again on the morrow at the hour of 9:00 a.m. The House will sit until 12:00 p.m. The order of business on the morrow will be Bill Nos. 94 and 97. I move the House do now rise.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The adjournment motion was submitted by the honourable member for Kings West:

“Therefore be it resolved that the NDP government take stronger action to ensure that as many Nova Scotians as necessary access the Heating Assistance Rebate Program.”

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

HEATING ASSISTANCE REBATE PROG.: NDP GOV'T - ACCESS ENSURE

MR. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, this is a very interesting topic that has been brought up by my colleague for Kings West. I know in my own area we have a tremendous number of people who take advantage of this very important program, the Heating Assistance Rebate Program. Unfortunately, each year since the government has taken place, there has been a substantial amount of money left in the budget. I'll just give you an example: in 2009 there was \$4 million left in the budget, 2010 there was \$4.4 million, and again in 2011 there was \$4.4 million.

Now probably the main reason for that was that when the NDP Government came in place there was a \$450 rebate per household. They did, in turn, reduce that down to \$200. You see it down to \$200 now and that made a difference in people's lives.

Now when you look at what this government has done to hurt families, with the tax increases they've put in place, with the GST going up by 25 per cent - a 25 per cent increase, the provincial share of the GST is up 25 per cent - you take away \$250 out of a program and you still have a surplus, so what do you do with the surplus? Well it looks like they handed \$560 million over to big business. What we are saying on one hand is, we want to help Nova Scotians who need it most, and this program is a very good program, this Heating Assistance Rebate Program. It allows the people who can least afford to buy the heating fuels to get money back, or some of the money back they have to pay for that essential service in this province.

Instead, they took that \$4.4 million, turned it over to big companies. What did that result in - 1,200 lost jobs. For every job we've lost, well you paid \$47 million for every job you lost in the province. That's pretty interesting, but yet you can't give families in this province, the families that need it most, the low-income families, the families on Guaranteed Income Supplement, another \$200 or \$250 like it was when it was originally

put in place at \$450 instead of \$200. They don't even make a really strong effort to make sure that everybody is aware of this thing and they, indeed, get the benefit of at least a minimum of \$200.

Now \$200 doesn't sound like a lot of money but it is a lot of money. If you have a choice between heating your home or buying groceries or paying your power bill - that's another issue we'll be talking about at great length as time goes on here - but to pay your power bill, all the essential things you have to do. Never mind paying your rent, paying your insurance and paying the other things that you need to protect yourself and look after your family in this society that we live in today.

So you see on one hand the government runs a surplus in this program, a surplus of approximately \$4.4 million; on the other hand they take that \$4.4 million and give it to big business. What does big business do? They cut 1,200 jobs in the province. So is this a good investment? The \$200 a year - and \$450 would be better - would really help the people that we have seen.

We have people now coming into our office - never like we had before - a lot more people coming and looking for this program because they are suffering. People are really suffering under this government. As the taxes go up, all the fees have gone up - their income tax has bracket-crept every year so that's gone up. This GST has gone up two cents. Now two cents doesn't sound like much but that was a double-digit tax increase put on by this government that said they wouldn't do it - a 25 per cent increase in your GST. That's a lot of money and Nova Scotians don't realize that it was a 25 per cent tax increase, that's a double-digit tax increase.

As they become aware of it they become shocked and then understood why they don't have any money to spend, why they can't pay for the power, why they can't pay for the essentials they have in life and why they so desperately need any program that is in place to help them.

What is also happening is that a lot of people leaving the province, all our young people are leaving. I've talked to many of the contractors in the area who are still in business here - a lot of them have closed up but the ones that have, they can't find anyone to work. They can't find people to work, because why? Everybody has moved to Alberta. All the young people have gone to Alberta.

You ask why that is the case. Well, number one, they make more money there; number two, they pay less tax and they get a job. You try to get a job in this province now, the businesses are cutting back.

The Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism is proud of the big job he did today, that he had four people working in a business and he got two more now. That's very important. You need 10,000 businesses doing that and then you're making

progress but if you've only got one, that's a very poor example. As you see, the government can't even run a program like this and make sure that more money is put in the hands of the people that really need it. People can use this money to, again, buy groceries, help with their heating bill, pay the power bill, pay insurance - whatever they have to do to make sure they are surviving - pay the rent or help pay for the maintenance on their home, if they're lucky enough to have a home.

When you look at programs like this, they are very important to Nova Scotians, they are very important to our economy as you move forward. We have to help look after people that are on low income. We have so many people now that are retired and don't have the disposable income that they probably should have had; they didn't save when they were working - most people don't. You see what happens to them, and you see the stories and you hear the stories when they're in the constituency office of the people that work hard all their lives and contributed a tremendous amount to our communities and they don't get the benefits of what they should get from our government.

Again, after cutting this from \$450 down to \$200 and then there is a surplus in the budget, I think that that is a crime. It should be corrected and it should be corrected immediately and we should be able to see benefits to families even if we could spend the other \$4.4 million. Even if it made \$50 more a year to an individual family that needed it, even if we put it up to \$250 instead of the \$200 they cut it back to, it would make a difference because every penny counts now for families, every penny counts. You're seeing people now that aren't buying the things they used to buy. You go out on the highways, I know in my area I go on the highways and the traffic used to be horrendous late in the evenings when coming back from meetings here or other meetings that I would have and now the traffic isn't as busy as it was. That's an indication people aren't driving as much, they can't afford the gasoline, the tax on tax on gasoline is killing us, is killing our province, is killing our economy.

When you look at the things that this government has done to actually destroy the economy in this province, we've got the worst economic record in all of Canada. Now just think about that. If you've got the worst economic record in all of Canada, there is a reason for that and that has just happened since 2009 - 2009 - and it just so happens it's at the same time that the NDP got elected, so that is no coincidence. This government does not know how to create a job, they know how to throw money away, absolutely throw money away.

No innovation whatsoever when it comes to helping create jobs or create an environment for business to operate and thrive because if you can't get business in this province to operate, thrive and make money, and make money when you're paying your people a reasonable wage and work safely and do all the things that you should be doing, people aren't going to come here, they are not going to set their business up here. All kinds of businesses have moved just as far as Moncton, they can service Nova Scotia from Moncton. When you see that happening that means usually very highly paid jobs that go

from here simply to Moncton. That doesn't help Nova Scotia's economy but it sure helps New Brunswick, at our expense, and we can't allow that to keep happening.

We've got to make sure that our Nova Scotia business can be competitive. So you're giving them the highest power rates, highest tax rates, highest everything, highest fee rates and all the other things that are so detrimental to running the business and who did all that? This government over here, this government, this NDP Government did that. When you think about that, I just ask the families out there, do you wonder why you don't have the money to buy the groceries you had, you don't have the money that you used to have to pay your oil bill, to pay your electric bill and pay all those things. You remember before 2009 you could pay those bills, today you can't and you can't because these people on the NDP Government have made it impossible to survive in Nova Scotia and raise your family here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens.

MS. VICKI CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to speak about the important Heating Assistance Rebate Program. We all know it's a program designed to help low-income Nova Scotians pay to heat their homes. I want to let the member opposite know that we hear regularly from people who have received this most important rebate, and they tell us frequently that they appreciate the program and that every bit of this assistance helps them and their families make ends meet.

As we know, Mr. Speaker, higher fuel prices are a global concern, and Nova Scotia here is no exception to those global fuel prices. Through initiatives like the Heating Assistance Rebate Program, our government is indeed helping lower-income Nova Scotians who are struggling to make ends meet and to heat their homes. The Heating Assistance Rebate Program, also known as HARP, was first launched in October 2008. Our government was quick to recognize that it wasn't meeting the needs of many Nova Scotians who were struggling to heat their homes, so we actually increased the threshold for income earners. Single persons with incomes of less than \$27,000 and families with incomes of less than \$42,000, as well as Nova Scotians receiving income assistance or the Guaranteed Income Supplement, were and are eligible today to apply.

As soon as we were elected on this side of the House, our government also removed the HST from all home heating. That alone, with the extended threshold - which, I must add, the member opposite and his Party voted against - the HST removed from home heating and the rebate actually works out to be roughly \$400 in assistance to those eligible Nova Scotians. The program is application based, and everyone who applies must have paid some form of heating bill to qualify for this most-needed rebate. If I can table for the members of the House an application that SNSMR sends out to members - it's also handily put inside an envelope which is postage paid. It's a very easy application to fill out, and with that postage prepaid, applicants don't have to worry about that extra cost.

Mr. Speaker, our government also has made improvements to help more people, and the program now covers all forms of home heating. That is to ensure that we are helping as many Nova Scotians as possible. In 2010-11 the province helped about 50,000 households throughout Nova Scotia. Last year the uptake increased, and we are now helping more than 51,000 Nova Scotians.

Our government does know how important it is to get the word out about this program and make sure that all Nova Scotians who need to access this will get the assistance they need. One of the most significant ways that we reach out to Nova Scotians is by sending the previous year's recipients a pre-populated application to make it easier for them to apply for assistance, should they still require it. Every Nova Scotian, I want to stress, who received a rebate last year will receive one of those pre-populated forms. On Tuesday, October 23rd, we sent out more than 51,000 of these pre-populated applications to ensure Nova Scotians do indeed get the help that they need as early as possible for this 2012-13 winter season.

Mr. Speaker, we also make sure that the applications for the HARP are available on-line. They're available at all Access Nova Scotia centres, at all Department of Community Services offices, and at all MLA offices. In fact, members of this House should receive their applications as early as this week. We also send out applications to more than 100 community groups throughout the province, including Feed Nova Scotia, the Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank, family resource centres, various seniors' organizations, and farmers markets.

Also, along with these efforts to reach out to Nova Scotians, we put inserts in income assistance recipients' cheques to help them learn about and access the very important Heating Assistance Rebate Program. Income assistance caseworkers also received applications to give to their clients. Efficiency Nova Scotia receives copies of the application and staff are available to work with all Nova Scotians to help them make their homes more energy efficient.

We always advertise the Heating Assistance Rebate Program when it begins in the Fall, usually in late October or early November. In 2011 we advertised the Heating Assistance Rebate Program in print and on radio, in French and in English, on-line, and after receiving some strong criticism for not doing all we could to get the word out about the program, we advertised HARP on television.

In just a few weeks, we will once again advertise the Heating Assistance Rebate Program to get the word out to Nova Scotians who might need this help. Yesterday we sent out a press release announcing the 2012-13 program. It is our hope that media will help us get the word out to all of those Nova Scotians who need assistance with their fuel costs. While we didn't see any of the coverage today, it is our hope that, indeed, media will help us spread the word.

I want to encourage all members of the House to do whatever they can to get the word out. I know that's something that's very important to the MLA office in Queens, and in my office what we do is follow up on those applicants from last year to ensure they do know that the rebate is available to them this year. In fact, I just received from my assistant, earlier today, four applications that she sent out on my behalf to constituents who had contacted my office looking for those rebate applications.

Another thing we do, my MLA office partners with other MLAs along the South Shore: the member for Lunenburg, the member for Lunenburg West and the member for Chester-St. Margaret's. We regularly put out service announcements to our constituents, jointly, to communicate to our constituents to let them know that this very important rebate program is available. So you see, we here take this program very seriously. We want to make sure that all Nova Scotians have the most updated information on the application, when it is available, and what the criteria are for them to apply. It is a good program and it is a targeted initiative that helps thousands of Nova Scotians every year and as I indicated, 51,000 have applied for this very important program.

We also work closely and have a partnership with the Salvation Army through its Good Neighbour Energy Fund. Last year we contributed \$800,000 to that fund. This program runs from January to April and it is administered by the good people of the Salvation Army.

As you can see, our government has a number of programs in place to help Nova Scotians stay warm and these range from rebates to helping make homes more energy efficient. It's through initiatives like the Heating Assistance Rebate Program that we are committed, every day, to helping as many people as possible stay warm through the cold months. We do everything that we can to ensure Nova Scotians are able to find out about government programs and services such as this that can help make life better for Nova Scotians and their families. In doing this we always want to ask for our colleagues' help in getting the word out, because at the end of the day this program is benefiting Nova Scotians who truly need it.

I want to thank the member opposite for bringing this important topic to the floor tonight and I thank you for allowing me to share my comments.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise here this evening to speak in this late debate on the topic: "Therefore be it resolved that the NDP Government take stronger action to ensure that as many Nova Scotians as necessary access the Heating Assistance Rebate Program."

Mr. Speaker, I heard the member opposite there urge the rest of us in this Legislature to make sure we get out as much word of this as we possibly can. I'll guarantee

you that my office has been putting these applications out left and right - and actually my assistant called today to see if I could get more quickly because my office is running out.

Mr. Speaker, last winter more than 51,000 Nova Scotians received help under this Heating Assistance Rebate Program, which offers eligible applicants a rebate of up to \$200, which only fills about one-quarter of an oil tank. That's down from over \$400 in years gone by - this government slashed that program in half when most Nova Scotians need it most. The amount of 51,000 individuals using this program shows the hardships that these citizens are facing in order to keep themselves warm. People have lost their jobs; there are working poor out there who need this rebate, who need this assistance, and the government slashed it in half.

Mr. Speaker, households with net incomes of less than \$42,000 a year and individuals who make less than \$27,000 who purchase oil, natural gas, wood, wood pellets, propane, electricity, or coal, qualify for this rebate.

Mr. Speaker, I just heard the member opposite say that government organizations, such as Community Services, receive these applications. I got a call from the Community Services office in North Sydney that they didn't get their applications this year, so we had to make a call to the government to make sure that happened. These people rely on this rebate to put some kind of heat in their homes and, right now, when the weather is starting to change, it's important that we get that.

Mr. Speaker, we also have people in Cape Breton who rely on coal to heat their homes and hot water for cooking and cleaning, et cetera. We found out this year that there will be no availability of domestic coal to supply individuals in Cape Breton to heat their homes this winter, so I took it upon myself to write the minister to find out if we could get help for these individuals. His reply was that we should try to get the coal ourselves, through Nova Scotia Power or Devco - or ECBC - because they get coal for Devco pensioners.

Mr. Speaker, I'll let everybody know that we are in negotiations now to get this coal available and, if we're not successful in getting that coal, some people are going to be left in the cold this winter. It's an expensive change to go from coal to oil and people who burn coal, especially in an older home, like the heat they get, but they can't afford any other form of heat. To say that people qualify for this rebate is a great thing, but if people have no supply of domestic coal, the rebate is not going to help them one little bit.

We asked for help from the government and we were basically told to find our own. Mr. Speaker, some of the residents of my constituency weren't happy with that response. I understand there's a moratorium on strip mining - there's lots of coal in Cape Breton, there's coal in Donkin, and we're not putting anything into developing this resource.

We're also told that it may take up to six weeks for completed applications to be processed and eligible Nova Scotians to receive their rebate. Mr. Speaker, it's getting cold now and this time could be an eternity for some Nova Scotians. The NDP promoted HARP through a \$245,000 ad campaign. That's over 1,200 families that could have benefited from a little more on their rebate - or receive the rebate. With electricity rates rising over 27 per cent in the last few years, there hasn't been any corresponding increase in the rebate - they've actually cut it in half.

There's no formula to find the most beneficial amount to provide the rebate. Wouldn't it make sense for the household income barrier to be higher than twice the single applicant barrier? It would make sense that if two people are applying together because there may be children in the home, that would increase their need for heat and power and hot water. When there are five children in the household, the two parents making less than \$42,000, the rebate would cover a lot less. But if you're single making \$27,000, the rebate would cover a lot more. I guess common sense and compassion are not traits that we've been accustomed to on the other side House. When they had the power to change things, they won't but they were full of great ideas when they were in Opposition.

Removing the HST from residential energy is good for all Nova Scotians but more beneficial for those who use a lot of the utility. We need to make sure that the people that need the rebate get it, the person that is struggling to make ends meet. Giving such a large amount of tax dollars back to the general population, cutting a program that helps the people the most, is not the proper way to move forward. The Good Neighbour Energy Fund was given \$400,000 to operate their program. Last Spring the wait list was over 200 people long, that's a long wait when you need the oil to heat your home, Mr. Speaker, when there is no oil in the tank there is no place to get it.

As we can see from job numbers, urbanizing population, GP growth and CPI increases, Nova Scotians are not seeing a changing climate for their income. We have 8,600 fewer jobs, power rates are increasing - while the NDP have been in power, they have increased over 27 per cent. We have embarrassingly low provincial growth, continued provincial deficits, \$100 million in corporate bailouts, yet the HARP program has received fewer applicants due to this bureaucracy. Since our salaries are worth less than average now, compared to last year or the year before, the rebate is doing less and less, leaving our most vulnerable with less and less.

What steps are you taking to make sure that more people are receiving assistance? We see very little. The NDP have handed out hundreds of millions of dollars to rich corporations while ignoring struggling businesses. Large provincial debt. We have the highest taxes, dwindling job numbers and decreased value in our homes and a government whose spending habits are as volatile as our gas prices.

We, as Progressive Conservatives, have a plan for electricity which includes removing the guarantee on Nova Scotia Power's profit, rewriting the expensive NDP's

electricity plan to make it affordable for all Nova Scotians, and creating a regional energy market to lower power bills for consumers. When we give our people the tools to provide for themselves, Mr. Speaker, the province won't have to kick in as much on these rebates, the NDP don't seem to understand this. We, as a Party, will work with impoverished people across the province to bring them out of poverty and re-engage them in the economy, bring jobs to rural Nova Scotia, stop the corporate bailouts and increase availability of programs to those who need them most, especially the Heating Assistance Rebate Program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The time for debate has been used up.

The House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning when we meet at 9:00 a.m.

[The House rose at 6:03 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1446**

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Halifax Regional Municipality held elections for all municipal districts on October 20th, 2012; and

Whereas citizens put their name forth to serve their communities as elected representatives in the spirit of responsible government; and

Whereas voting resulted in the election of Barry Dalrymple as councillor for District 1 – Waverley-Fall River-Musquodoboit Valley;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Barry Dalrymple on his success in the election and wish him every success for his term of office.

RESOLUTION NO. 1447

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Halifax Regional Municipality held elections for all municipal districts on October 20th, 2012; and

Whereas citizens put their name forth to serve their communities as elected representatives in the spirit of responsible government; and

Whereas voting resulted in the election of Bill Karsten as councillor for District 3 – Dartmouth South-Eastern Passage;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Bill Karsten on his success in the election and wish him every success for his term of office.

RESOLUTION NO. 1448

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Halifax Regional Municipality held elections for all municipal districts on October 20th, 2012; and

Whereas citizens put their name forth to serve their communities as elected representatives in the spirit of responsible government; and

Whereas voting resulted in the election of Darren Fisher as councillor for District 6 – Harbourview-Burnside-Dartmouth East;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Darren Fisher on his success in the election and wish him every success for his term of office.