



## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS:</b>	
URB - NSP: General Rate Application - Deny, Mr. L. Glavine.....	2952
<b>GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:</b>	
Res. 1598, MADD Can.: Project Red Ribbon Day (11/01/12) - Support, The Premier (by Hon. Maureen MacDonald) .....	2952
Vote - Affirmative.....	2953
Res. 1599, CCH - Museum of Nat. Hist./Museum of the Atl.: The Coast 'Best of' Issue - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra .....	2953
Vote - Affirmative.....	2954
<b>TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS:</b>	
Public Accounts Comm. - Anl. Rept. (2012), Hon. K. Colwell .....	2954
<b>INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:</b>	
No. 109, Bee Industry Act, Hon. J. MacDonell .....	2954
No. 110, Supporting All Students' Success in the Classroom Act, Hon. S. McNeil .....	2954

No. 111, Fur Industry Act, Hon. J. MacDonell .....	2954
No. 112, Municipal Government Act and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, Hon. J. MacDonell .....	2954
NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 1600, Third Party Leader/Stephen Harper: Relationship - Effects, Hon. Manning MacDonald .....	2955
Res. 1601, Enfield/Elmsdale & Dist. Lions Club - Anniv. (40 <sup>th</sup> ), Hon. J. MacDonell .....	2955
Vote - Affirmative.....	2956
Res. 1602, Hatt, Michael - PANS Member of Yr. Award, Hon. M. Samson .....	2957
Vote - Affirmative.....	2958
Res. 1603, Springhill Mine Explosion: Anniversary - Remember/Honour, Hon. J. Baillie .....	2958
Vote - Affirmative.....	2958
Res. 1604, Timberlea-Prospect MLA: The Coast “Best Member of the Prov. Legislature” - Congrats., Hon. F. Corbett .....	2958
Vote - Affirmative.....	2959
Res. 1605, Spurrell, Kathy - Bowl of Hygeia Award (2012), Mr. L. Glavine.....	2959
Vote - Affirmative.....	2960
Res. 1606, Prem.: Com. Serv. Min. - Fire/Halifax Chebucto MLA Appoint, Mr. K. Bain .....	2960
Res. 1607, Liberal Gov't. (Previous): Decisions - Effects, Mr. H. Epstein.....	2960
Res. 1608, Guy's Frenchys: IWK Fundraising - Congrats., Hon. W. Gaudet .....	2961
Vote - Affirmative.....	2962
Res. 1609, Denny, Chief Leroy - Eskasoni Chief: Re-election - Congrats., Mr. A. MacLeod.....	2962
Vote - Affirmative.....	2962
Res. 1610, Liberal Tradition: Decision Making - Financial Effects, Mr. G. Ramey .....	2963
Res. 1611, Tornados Team/Coach - Mar. Sikh Soc.: Alzheimer's Fundraiser - Congrats., Ms. D. Whalen .....	2964
Vote - Affirmative.....	2964
Res. 1612, Fish. & Aquaculture Min.: Tough Fall (2012) - Recognize, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	2964
Res. 1613, Liberal Gov't. - PSC Rollback: Anniv. (18 <sup>th</sup> ) - Remember, Ms. P. Birdsall.....	2965
Res. 1614, Crocker, Tiffany: Achievements/Work - Congrats., Hon. K. Colwell .....	2966
Vote - Affirmative.....	2967

Res. 1615, St. Cyr, Samantha - Northside Benchwarmers:	
Fundraising - Congrats., Mr. E. Orrell.....	2967
Vote - Affirmative.....	2967
Res. 1616, Henderson, Dr. David: Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal	
- Congrats., Hon. K. Casey .....	2967
Vote - Affirmative.....	2968
Res. 1617, MacKinnon, Lillian: Death of - Tribute,	
Mr. K. Bain .....	2968
Vote - Affirmative.....	2969
Res. 1618, Woodworth, Jean: Death of - Tribute,	
Ms. K. Regan .....	2969
Vote - Affirmative.....	2970
Res. 1619, Cdn. Safety Coun.: Advice/Educ. - Thank,	
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	2970
Vote - Affirmative.....	2970
Res. 1620, Digby Pier Light - Mayor Cleveland/Residents:	
Return - Thank, Mr. H. Theriault.....	2971
Vote - Affirmative.....	2971
Res. 1621, Thibault, Zach: Baseball Achievements	
- Congrats., Mr. Z. Churchill .....	2971
Vote - Affirmative.....	2972
Res. 1622, Prem./NDP Cabinet - Economy Mismanagement:	
Halifax Needham MLA - Remind, Ms. D. Whalen.....	2972
Res. 1623, Hampsey, Carol: Berwick Sports Hall of Fame	
- Induction, Mr. L. Glavine .....	2973
Vote - Affirmative.....	2973
Res. 1624, Red Cape Rest. Yarmouth Bantam Female Mariners Hockey Team	
- Exceptional Serv. Award, Hon. W. Gaudet.....	2973
Vote - Affirmative.....	2974
Res. 1625, Davies, Jessie - Commun./Prov.: Contributions	
- Recognize, Hon. K. Colwell.....	2974
Vote - Affirmative.....	2975
Res. 1626, Dairy Farmers: Skim Milk Donation Prog.	
- Contributions, Hon. K. Casey.....	2975
Vote - Affirmative.....	2976
Res. 1627, MacKinnon, Louise: Death of - Tribute,	
Ms. K. Regan .....	2976
Vote - Affirmative.....	2976
Res. 1628, Smart Einsteins: Science Olympics - Congrats.,	
Mr. H. Theriault .....	2977
Vote - Affirmative.....	2977
Res. 1629, Berry, Allie: Basketball Achievements - Congrats.,	
Mr. Z. Churchill .....	2977
Vote - Affirmative.....	2978

## ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS:

No. 352, ERDT - Minas Basin Pulp & Power: Closure - Min. Knowledge, Mr. G. MacLellan .....	2978
No. 353, Minas Basin Pulp & Power: Jobs Plan - Efficacy, Mr. C. Porter .....	2980
No. 354, Massey, Joan: RRFB Bd. Appt. - Qualifications, Hon. M. Samson .....	2982
No. 355, Fin. - Balanced Budget: Delivery - Confirm, Ms. D. Whalen .....	2984
No. 356, Prem. - N.S. Job Losses: Reasons - Explain, Hon. J. Baillie .....	2986
No. 357, Prem. - Law Amendments Comm.: Communities - Visitation, Mr. H. Theriault .....	2989
No. 358, Fish. & Aquaculture: Cornwallis Lease - Details, Hon. J. Baillie .....	2990
No. 359, Fin. - Film Tax Credit: Applications - Processing Times, Ms. D. Whalen .....	2991
No. 360, Nat. Res. - Pulpwood Prices: NewPage - Negotiations Confirm, Mr. A. MacLeod .....	2993
No. 361, Educ. - Pub. Educ.: Priority - Confirm, Hon. K. Casey .....	2995

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS:

## PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 94, House of Assembly Act, Hon. K. Colwell .....	2997
Hon. J. Baillie .....	3001
Mr. H. Theriault .....	3006
Mr. A. MacLeod .....	3008
Hon. Manning MacDonald .....	3014
Mr. Z. Churchill .....	3017
Mr. E. Orrell.....	3029
Adjourned debate .....	3031

## ADJOURNMENT:

## MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5):

Nova Scotia - Life: Affordability - Commit Mr. K. Bain .....	3032
Mr. J. Morton .....	3034
Ms. K. Regan .....	3037

ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Fri., Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9:00 a.m. ....3039

## NOTICE OF QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS (RESPONSES):

No. 1, Nat. Res.: Moose Hunt Pollet's Cove-Aspy Fault Wilderness Area - Changes Explain, Mr. A. MacLeod .....	3040
No. 3, Educ. - Three Mile Plains Elem. Sch.: Gymnasium Expansion - Status, Mr. C. Porter .....	3042
No. 8, SNSMR - Fisheries Assoc. N.S.: Registration Revocation - Details, Hon. C. d'Entremont .....	3043
No. 13, Communications N.S. - Ships Start Here Campaign Correspondence: Deputy Prem. - Copies Provide, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	3044
No. 20, Energy: Renewable Energy - Costs/Affordability, Mr. C. Porter .....	3046
No. 23, Energy - Alberta Oil: N.S. Advocacy - Details, Mr. C. Porter .....	3047
No. 24, Energy - Wind Energy: NSP - KWH Costs, Mr. C. Porter .....	3048
No. 25, Energy - Muskrat Falls: Energy Needs - Negotiations, Mr. C. Porter .....	3049
No. 26, Energy - Muskrat Falls: Independent Review - Premier's Stance, Mr. C. Porter .....	3051
No. 27, Energy - NSP Power Rate Increases (2013-2014): Prem./Gov't. (N.S.) - Awareness Time Frame, Mr. C. Porter.....	3052
No. 28, Energy - NSP Rate Increases: Discussions - Prem. Confirm, Mr. C. Porter .....	3053
No. 29, Agric.: Outside Consultants (Untendered) - List Provide, Mr. C. Porter .....	3054
No. 83, Agric.: AG's Rept. - Quality Assurance, Mr. C. Porter .....	3057
No. 84, Agric. - AG's Rept.: Meat Inspection - Policy, Mr. C. Porter .....	3060
No. 93, Agric. - Farm Buildings: Mun. Tax Exemption - Affordability, Mr. C. Porter .....	3063
No. 94, Agric. - COMFIT Program: Farms - Qualification, Mr. C. Porter .....	3066
No. 95, Agric. - Point of Origin Labelling: Plans - Confirm, Mr. C. Porter .....	3069

## NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):

Res. 1630, Windsor McDonald's: Olympic Breakfast - Applaud, Mr. C. Porter .....	3072
Res. 1631, Cochrane, Ryan - London Olympics: Performance - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3072
Res. 1632, Kirumira, Dr. Abdullah - BioMedica Diagnostics: Grand Opening - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter.....	3073
Res. 1633, Hagmann, Doris - Avon Emporium & Shipwright Inn: Success - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter.....	3073
Res. 1634, Rego, Maria - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3074

Res. 1635, Miller, Terry: Bass Playing Ability - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3074
Res. 1636, TIR - Median Crossover: W. Brooklyn Mtn. Rd. - Construct, Mr. C. Porter .....	3075
Res. 1637, 14 Wing Greenwood - Anniv. (70 <sup>th</sup> ), Mr. C. Porter .....	3075
Res. 1638, Rippey, Natalie: Remembrance Day Poster - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3076
Res. 1639, Bailey Fam. - Hops Harvest: Sale - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3076
Res. 1640, Burgess, Troy/Frank, Kim - Wentworth Creek Farm: Success - Applaud, Mr. C. Porter .....	3077
Res. 1641, Johnston, Brian - Musical/Teaching Career/ Valley Arts Award Nomination - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3077
Res. 1642, Adams, Jillian: Remembrance Day Poster - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3078
Res. 1643, Hants West Ground Search & Rescue: Proj. Lifesaver Certification - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3078
Res. 1644, Spence-Campbell, Susan: Teaching - Dedication/Commitment (27 Yrs.), Mr. C. Porter.....	3079
Res. 1645, Lavers, Capt. Daniel - Windsor & West Hants Vol. Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3079
Res. 1646, White, Leesa - Windsor & West Hants Vol. Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3080
Res. 1647, MacNeil, Hugh - Windsor Rotarian of the Yr. Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3080
Res. 1648, Lewis, Sara Lee - Paul Harris Fellow, Mr. C. Porter .....	3081
Res. 1649, Creaser, Stewart/Vassalo, Lorraine: Bus. Success - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3081
Res. 1650, OnTree Fun & Adventure Park - Grand Opening: Owners - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3082
Res. 1651, Windsor Plains United Baptist Church - Anniv. (200 <sup>th</sup> ), Mr. C. Porter .....	3082
Res. 1652, Cheverie Crossway Salt Marsh Soc.: Camera Obscura - Grand Opening, Mr. C. Porter .....	3083
Res. 1653, Murray, Insp. Trudy: Retirement - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3083
Res. 1654, Mermaid Theatre - Birthday (40 <sup>th</sup> ), Mr. C. Porter .....	3084
Res. 1655, Lynch, Tim/Lewis, Dave: Yukon River Quest - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	3084
Res. 1656, Rowlands, Logan - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3085

Res. 1657, Green, Layla - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3085
Res. 1658, Thomas, Katrena - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3086
Res. 1659, Lynch, John Liam - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3086
Res. 1660, O'Flaherty, Jack - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3087
Res. 1661, James, Colton - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3087
Res. 1662, Jurgens, Claire - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3088
Res. 1663, Kuan-Yi, Chiang - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3088
Res. 1664, Fang, Tina - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3089
Res. 1665, Wong, Thomas - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3089
Res. 1666, Liu, Sean - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3090
Res. 1667, Rahola-Drdul, Olki - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3090
Res. 1668, Yoston, Peggy - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3091
Res. 1669, Walsh, Miranda - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3091
Res. 1670, Bancroft, Melissa - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3092
Res. 1671, Walsh, Kyla - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3092
Res. 1672, Wu, Patrick - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3093
Res. 1673, Yeomans, Taylor - Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mr. C. Porter .....	3093
Res. 1674, Kings Co. Mun. Election: Swearing-In - Congrats., Mr. L. Glavine.....	3094



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 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. The subject matter for the late debate has been chosen and I will now read it:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly commit to making life affordable for Nova Scotians and urge the government to reverse their expensive policies so fewer adults will have to make that decision and fewer children will need to rely on food banks to eat.

It was submitted by the honourable member for Cape Breton West.



**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

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

“Therefore, your petitioners call upon the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to use its powers over the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities, the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB) to deny any General Rate Application presented by NSPI requesting a rate increase in 2013, 2014 and 2015.”

I have affixed my signature to the 101 presented here.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Finance.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1598**

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

Whereas MADD Canada’s 25<sup>th</sup> annual Project Red Ribbon Campaign uses the iconic red ribbon as an appeal to drive sober during the holiday season, and as a tribute to all victims killed or injured by impaired drivers; and

Whereas each year from November 1<sup>st</sup> to the first Monday after New Year’s Day volunteers in communities across Canada distribute millions of red ribbons to the public, reminding people to plan ahead to get home safely when drinking or doing drugs; and

Whereas it is important to honour and celebrate the longevity and effectiveness of this program and promote the program’s drive sober message at a critical time of year, as the 25<sup>th</sup> annual campaign begins;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House support the proclamation of November 1, 2012, as MADD Canada Project Red Ribbon Day in the province to mark this very special 25<sup>th</sup> year milestone for the Red Ribbon Campaign.

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. 1599**

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

Whereas on November 1, 2012, The Coast publication released their annual “Best-of” edition, which named the Museum of Natural History and the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic as their readers’ favourite museums this year; and

Whereas the Museum of Natural History has had much success attracting visitors to popular exhibits, such as *Our Amazing World featuring Science on a Sphere* and *Out of This World: Extraordinary Costumes from Film and Television*; and

Whereas the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic has welcomed about 25 per cent more visitors than last year as a result of exhibits based on the RMS Titanic, cable ships, and Nova Scotia’s seafaring culture;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate the Museum of Natural History and the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic for being voted the top two museums in Halifax by The Coast’s readers, and thank the staff and volunteers of the Nova Scotia Museum for doing a fantastic job promoting the province’s rich heritage.

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 Opposition House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, with the consent of the House, would you please revert to the order of business, Tabling Reports, Regulations and Other Papers.

MR. SPEAKER: There is a motion before the House to revert to the order of business, Tabling Reports, Regulations and Other Papers.

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

The motion is carried.

#### **TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the Annual Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 109 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 3 of the Acts of 2005. The Bee Industry Act. (Hon. John MacDonell)**

**Bill No. 110 - Entitled an Act to Ensure Appropriate Supports in the Classroom for Children with Special Needs. (Hon. Stephen McNeil)**

**Bill No. 111 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 4 of the Acts of 2010. The Fur Industry Act. (Hon. John MacDonell)**

**Bill No. 112 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998. The Municipal Government Act; and Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008. The Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. (Hon. John MacDonell)**

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

### NOTICES OF MOTION

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

### RESOLUTION NO. 1600

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

Whereas the Third Party's Leader told a Halifax newspaper he supported the Harper Government's changes to EI, but only thought the government should move more slowly; and

Whereas the Leader of the Third Party was silent on Harper's planned privatization of the Highland Links, a golf course in the riding of the member for Victoria-The Lakes; and

Whereas the Leader of the Third Party earned hundreds of thousands of dollars from government appointments under the Harper Government;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize that the Leader of the Third Party is too cozy with Stephen Harper and that his friendship with Harper puts the member for Victoria-The Lakes at risk.

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 Agriculture.

### RESOLUTION NO. 1601

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

Whereas volunteer service clubs add an important component to the livability of a community; and

Whereas Lions Club members have been offering their services to the public since their founding in 1917 by businessman Melvin Jones; and

Whereas on November 3, 2012, the Enfield/Elmsdale District Lions Club will be celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> year of their charter;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate the members of the Enfield/Elmsdale District Lions Club on their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and wish them success on their 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 Premier.

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, if you don't mind, I'd like to make an introduction. I know my colleague here was good enough to read my resolution on my behalf. I had intended to do the introduction and then read the resolution - I want to thank her for doing that. I thought now I would extend the welcome to the people who are joining us here in the gallery.

Today in the Speaker's Gallery are members of the Halifax Regional Police and MADD Canada to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Red Ribbon Campaign. For those who may not know, the Red Ribbon Campaign is an appeal to Canadians to drive sober during the holiday season, and a tribute to all the victims killed or injured by impaired drivers. I believe all the members of the House were presented with red ribbons; I encourage them to wear them and to share with others what they mean and what they stand for.

I'd now like to introduce Constable John MacLeod; Susan MacAskill, who is the regional manager of chapter services with MADD and her grandson, Brendan; Anissa Aldridge, president of the Halifax Regional Chapter of MADD; and finally a gentleman I

believe the Leader of the Official Opposition knows reasonably well, his brother, Deputy Chief Chris McNeil.

I would ask all the members to give our guests a warm welcome and thank them for joining us today. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Richmond.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1602**

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

Whereas on October 21, 2012, the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia presented awards to distinguished members at its annual conference; and

Whereas the Member of the Year Award honours a pharmacist who has demonstrated an active interest in the promotion of pharmacy by personal example, and by participating in endeavours having a direct impact on the profession; and

Whereas Michael Hatt of Port Hawkesbury received the 2012 Member of the Year Award for significant contributions to his community through involvement in the Canadian Cancer Society Relay for Life, the ROC Society, and through his caring relationships built on trust involving follow-up treatment with his patients;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature congratulate Michael Hatt of The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy, in Port Hawkesbury, on receiving the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia Member of the Year Award, and extend our best wishes for many more years of exceptional quality of care to its patients and invaluable contributions to his community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1603**

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

Whereas today, November 1<sup>st</sup>, is the anniversary of the horrific No. 4 mine shaft explosion that devastated the Town of Springhill; and

Whereas we pay tribute to the tragic loss of those 39 miners today and honour the brave men and women who put their own lives at risk to rescue nearly 90 others; and

Whereas though this day is marked by tragedy, it is also a reminder to all of us of the incredible courage and generosity of our fellow Nova Scotians;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize this day as an important one in our history, and honour both the lives lost and also those saved on that tragic day.

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 Deputy Premier.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1604**

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

Whereas the honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect, who sits in this House today, was first elected to serve in the Spring of 1998 and has been my trusted and esteemed colleague ever since; and

Whereas this member has loyally and unfailingly worked for the constituents of Timberlea-Prospect every day since, and including Sundays and holidays; and

Whereas today The Coast magazine has named the honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect as the Best Member of the Provincial Legislature saying that he “is hands-down the nicest and most-liked politician in Nova Scotia”; (Interruption)

No, that’s a problem with freedom of the press, folks.

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate and applaud the honourable member from Timberlea-Prospect on his well-deserved recognition and applaud his unfailing and unwavering service to his constituents since 1998.

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. (Applause)

The honourable member for Kings West.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1605**

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

Whereas Kathy Spurrell of the Valley Drug Mart in Kingston is this year’s recipient of the Pfizer Consumer Healthcare Bowl of Hygeia; and

Whereas Kathy has demonstrated her commitment to the community in many ways, including involvement in school, church, and public events; and

Whereas Kathy has practised community pharmacy since 1983 and continues to support her fellow citizens by actively participating in a multitude of events;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Kathy Spurrell as this year’s recipient of the Bowl of Hygeia Award for 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 Victoria-The Lakes.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1606**

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 Premier has ignored repeated calls to fire his Minister of Community Services; and

Whereas the Minister of Community Services has been chastised over the handling of the Talbot House affair; and

Whereas the Premier has acknowledged that the Minister of Community Services is incapable of overseeing the province's recovery houses, as evidenced by his decision to strip her of the file and transfer it to the Department of Health and Wellness;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly urge the member for Halifax Chebucto to speak up and tell the Premier to fire his incompetent Minister of Community Services and finally put him in Cabinet instead.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1607**

MR. HOWARD EPSTEIN: On a slightly different point, Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas today is the 18<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the former Liberal Government's implementation of a 3 per cent wage rollback that affected 60,000 public sector workers; and

Whereas this decision on the part of that Liberal Government meant that hard-working Nova Scotia employees took home less money at the end of each week; and

Whereas this decision also served to make life more expensive for Nova Scotia families;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House acknowledge that when last in government, the Liberal Party made life more difficult for Nova Scotians.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Clare.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1608**

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

Whereas Guy's Frenchys stores from across Nova Scotia and New Brunswick hold annual fundraisers for the IWK Health Centre; and

Whereas the 2012 campaign raised over \$83,000, enabling them to purchase a Pixus C<sup>II</sup>Safe that controls narcotics and controlled substances in difference sections in the hospital; and

Whereas Yvonne Surette collected \$7,553, once again making her the top fundraiser;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the staff and customers of Guy's Frenchys for their effort to raise money for the IWK Health Centre and wish them continued success in their future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1609**

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

Whereas Eskasoni, the largest First Nation community in Atlantic Canada, held its election for chief and council on October 26; and

Whereas three individuals let their names stand for the position of Chief; and

Whereas Chief Leroy Denny was re-elected with 65 per cent of the popular and more than double the number of votes for his closest opponent;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chief Leroy Denny on his re-election as Chief of Eskasoni and wish him well as he works toward a brighter future for his community of Eskasoni.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage on an introduction.

MS. BECKY KENT: Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure today of asking the House to give a welcome to two visitors in the east gallery. We have the pleasure of having my husband, Gerry Goldsworthy, here today but also my son Matthew. Matthew Kent is a recent graduate and is out looking for work and going between job interviews. I am very proud to have them here today. I would ask the House to give them a welcome. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1610**

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

Whereas the day is the 18<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the former Liberal Government's implementation of a 3 per cent wage rollback that affected 60,000 public sector workers; and

Whereas this rollback came just one year after the former Liberal Government forced employees to take five days of unpaid leave; and

Whereas today, carrying on the great tradition of Nova Scotia Liberals, the current Liberal caucus is proposing an electricity plan that would see power rates increase between 30 and 50 per cent;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House recognize the trend and long-term tradition of the Liberals to make decisions like rolling back wages, instituting unpaid leaves and proposing plans that will significantly increase electricity rates that make life more expensive for Nova Scotia families.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1611**

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

Whereas the Tornados Team of the FIRST Lego League at the Maritime Sikh Society chose to study seniors' issues this year as part of their activities in science and technology; and

Whereas the youth, aged nine to 14, soon realized the devastating impact of Alzheimer's disease among seniors and responded by holding a delicious Indian food fundraising dinner on October 27, 2012, which raised \$1,000 for the Alzheimer's Society; and

Whereas the event included a skit from the youth, their suggestions for new inventions that could help caregivers and those living with Alzheimer's, and remarks from a representative of the Alzheimer's Society;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate the seven youth members of the Tornados Team, their coach Manivinder Dillon, and the Maritime Sikh Society on truly making a difference in the community by holding such a successful fundraiser and supporting a wonderful cause.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Argyle.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1612**

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 yesterday the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture told reporters "I will stand and defend" the untendered lease agreement in Cornwallis, but when he had the

chance to do just that during Question Period, he refused, passing questions off to the Premier; and

Whereas only one hour after the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture declared that the lease agreement was a good deal, the Premier said he wasn't satisfied with some of the answers he had received about it; and

Whereas it appears to Nova Scotians that the Premier has had enough of the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture's mishandling of the agreement and has taken it over himself;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly note that it has been a tough Fall for the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture who first, had his constituency taken away from him and now has had the responsibility for an important government initiative taken away from him as well.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Lunenburg.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1613**

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

Whereas today is the 18<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the former Liberal Government's implementation of a 3 per cent wage rollback that affected 60,000 public sector workers; and

Whereas this rollback came just one year after the former Liberal Government forced employees to take five days of unpaid leave; and

Whereas the combination of these two decisions in just two short years meant that Nova Scotia workers and their families had a harder time making ends meet;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly remember this anniversary and the impact the decisions of the former Liberal Government made on Nova Scotians and their families.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Preston.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1614**

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

Whereas Tiffany Crocker was born in St. John's, Newfoundland, attended Memorial University and also Université Sainte-Anne in Nova Scotia, and is currently working on her Master of Education at Acadia University; and

Whereas after teaching in Newfoundland and Labrador, she moved to Nova Scotia and began her teaching career here as a French Immersion teacher; and

Whereas Ms. Crocker has a special gift to recognize problems or excellence in her pupils and has done special work with many of her students by reporting potential problems of all kinds back to the parents;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House join me in congratulating Tiffany Crocker for her many achievements and the wonderful work she is attaining with Nova Scotia students.

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. 1615**

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

Whereas the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Northside Benchwarmers Invitational women's hockey tournament has thrown its support behind 5-year-old Samantha St. Cyr who is suffering from a rare form of cancer impacting the kidneys; and

Whereas the tournament organizer, Angela Hull, said all proceeds from the tournament will be given to the St. Cyr family to help offset the costs associated with Samantha's medical needs; and

Whereas tournament organizers expect to surpass the tournament's typical \$6,000 fundraiser efforts;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly salute the Northside Benchwarmers for their compassion and kindness, and wish the St. Cyr family the best as they support Samantha through her health challenges.

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. 1616**

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



Whereas Dr. David Henderson is the medical director of the Palliative Care Program with the Colchester East Hants Health Authority; and

Whereas Dr. Henderson also serves as the secretary and treasurer of the Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians, has served on the board of directors for the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association, and is a past president of the Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association; and

Whereas Dr. Henderson is known for his leadership and dedication in working to enhance access to palliative care services, his goal since he began working in the field;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Dr. David Henderson for being awarded a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal at a ceremony held at the International Congress on Palliative Care, in Montreal, in recognition of his dedication to the service for families, communities and country.

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. 1617**

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

Whereas on September 25<sup>th</sup>, Lillian MacKinnon, a resident of Cape North, completed her journey on earth and passed peacefully to her eternal rest; and

Whereas Lillian was born on August 3, 1905 in Margaree, and later settled in Cape North where she married Kenneth MacKinnon in 1927, raised her family, and worked as a school teacher; and

Whereas this funny, kind, intelligent lady, who was Victoria County's oldest resident and possibly the oldest resident of Nova Scotia, was an inspiration to all who knew her, died at the age of 107;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly express deepest sympathy to the family and caregivers of Lillian MacKinnon on her passing.

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. 1618**

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

Whereas Jean Woodworth was an accomplished nurse, artist and beloved wife, mother, grandmother, volunteer and friend; and

Whereas Jean was a key volunteer for many Bedford groups, including Charles P. Allen High School, the Hospice Society of Greater Halifax, Bedford Baptist Church, and Beacon House, so much so that she was named Bedford's 2010 Adult Volunteer of the Year; and

Whereas Jean passed away on October 19, 2012 at the age of 81;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly send our condolences to Jean's family, husband Garfield, daughter Kim Dompierre, and grandsons Matt and Chris Dompierre, on the passing of this remarkable woman - she will be missed.

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. 1619**

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

Whereas November is Crime Prevention and Community Safety Month; and

Whereas the Canadian Safety Council dedicates this month to a broad array of safety topics that affect the community and offers advice to Canadians about how to live securely in our own communities; and

Whereas people in Halifax live in a city with the highest homicide rate in the country, the highest attempted murder rate and the highest number of weapons violations in the country;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank the Canadian Safety Council for their advice and education, and urge all Nova Scotians to inform themselves on ways to stay safe in their communities.

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. 1620**

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

Whereas on October 19<sup>th</sup> a troop of 30 Digby residents and Mayor Ben Cleveland travelled to Saint John to oversee the return of the Digby Pier light; and

Whereas the decision was made in 1970 by the Coast Guard to ship the lighthouse to Saint John for storage after it was no longer being used; and

Whereas renovations on the lighthouse will take place throughout the winter season, with a June celebration to relight the lighthouse in the exact spot it sat 40 years ago;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the residents and Mayor Cleveland for the coming together to bring this iconic lighthouse back to its rightful home.

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. 1621**

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

Whereas 16-year-old Yarmouth County resident, Zach Thibault has been playing baseball since he was three years old and has had great success in the sport; and

Whereas Zach Thibault played Midget AAA baseball this year with a team in Kentville and was also a member of the Nova Scotia Selects squad that competed in Ontario for the Canada Cup tournament in August; and

Whereas Zach Thibault is currently enrolled in Grade 11, in Alberta, through the Prospects Academy in St. Albert, in the academic and baseball development program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Zach Thibault on his many impressive achievements in the sport of baseball and wish him luck and continued success in the Prospects Academy, as he continues to make his community proud.

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. 1622**

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

Whereas the 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 Halifax Needham 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 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 Kings West.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1623**

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

Whereas Carol Hampsey of Berwick was inducted into Berwick Sports Hall of Fame in June 2012 for her championship curling abilities; and

Whereas Carol Hampsey began her competitive curling career in 1965 at the Berwick Curling Club and still curls there recreationally today; and

Whereas Carol competed on the national level in many tournaments and was always a strong contender in any tournament she entered, and a valuable team member as well;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Carol Hampsey for her induction into the Berwick Sports 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 Clare.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1624**

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 Red Cape Restaurant Yarmouth Bantam Female Mariners hockey team was presented with the Exceptional Service Award during the Mel Hebb Hourglass Action Awards in June, during Access Awareness Week; and

Whereas the Exceptional Service Award recognizes an organization or a member of an organization that has gone beyond their mandate in service to persons with disabilities; and

Whereas the hockey team is being honoured for its effort to include the sister of one of the team's members in their hockey season;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Red Cape Restaurant Yarmouth Bantam Female Mariners hockey team for receiving the Exceptional Service Award.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Preston.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1625**

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

Whereas Jessie Davies was born and brought up in Eastern Passage, Nova Scotia, and in 1973 she and her husband moved to the community of Lake Echo, where they brought up their three sons; and

Whereas she joined the newly-formed Lake Echo Food Bank while it was still in its infancy, and in 2002 she became its chairperson, and they serve over 45 families every month, depending solely upon donations from Feed Nova Scotia and local churches; and

Whereas she still finds time to work in the elementary school system as a special-needs caregiver - work she has been doing since 1996, which she thoroughly enjoys - and she also has been a member and a volunteer for the Lake Echo Lioness Club;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly recognize Jessie Davies for the contribution she has made to her community and to our province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1626**

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

Whereas this year the province's dairy farmers donated 2,700 kilograms of skim milk powder to Feed Nova Scotia; and

Whereas milk not targeted for the fluid market is used to make products such as cheese and butter, and the skim milk, a by-product of the process, is dried into a non-perishable powder; and

Whereas the cost to fund the donation is between \$8,000 and \$10,000 annually and is provided collectively through dairy farmers in Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the importance of this critical contribution made by the dairy farmers in our province to assist programs, and thank those farmers, such as Gerry Brouwer and his son Brian, from Brookside, Colchester North, who have contributed to the skim milk donation program since its inception in 2005.

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. 1627**

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

Whereas Louise MacKinnon was a teacher and vice-principal for 35 years with the Halifax Regional School Board, spending many of those years at Sunnyside Schools in Bedford, where “Miss MacKinnon” was a devoted and kind presence; and

Whereas Louise retired in June 2009, returning home to Sydney, where she turned her attention to her family and enjoyed skating, gardening, walking, and chatting with her neighbours; and

Whereas Louise passed away, in June of this year, at the age of just 59;

Therefore be it resolved the members of this House of Assembly send our condolences to the family, friends, and former students of Louise MacKinnon - she will be missed.

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. 1628**

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

Whereas on June 7<sup>th</sup>, the Tri-Country Regional School Science Olympics were held in Meadowfields Community School in Yarmouth; and

Whereas the Smart Einsteins from Weymouth Consolidated captured both the overall title and gold in the Grade 4 Division; and

Whereas the winning team consisting of Kaylee White, Melina Marr, Renee Ford and Aaron Potvin scored 23.66 out of 25;

Therefore be it resolved the members of the House of Assembly congratulate the Smart Einsteins on their win, and wish them continued success and interest in the world of science.

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. 1629**

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

Whereas Allie Berry, a Grade 12 student at Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School, has been playing basketball for as long as she can remember and has had much success in the sport; and

Whereas this summer, Allie Berry travelled to and from Halifax to practice and compete with the Nova Scotia U17 women's basketball team; and

Whereas in August, Team Nova Scotia competed in the Women's Under-17 National Championships in Fredericton, where Allie Berry was the starting centre on the letter team in shooting percentage with 53.1 per cent, and was the leading rebounder for the Nova Scotia team, helping the team win the tournament silver medal;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Allie Berry on being an integral part of Team Nova Scotia's silver medal winning performance during the Women's Under 17 National Basketball Championships, and wish her continued success in the sport of basketball.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

MR. SPEAKER: Question Period will begin at 2:48 p.m. and end at 3:48 p.m.

The honourable member for Glace Bay

### **ERDT - MINAS BASIN PULP & POWER: CLOSURE - MIN. KNOWLEDGE**

MR. GEOFF MACLELLAN: My question is for the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

This government has decided to sign big deals with big business that lack job guarantees. This is this minister's economic development strategy, one he is responsible to taxpayers for these decisions. With six large corporations receiving \$590 million in commitments, small businesses are struggling to get capital they need and it's not just capital Nova Scotia businesses are struggling with - they are hit with high production costs such as power, as well as marketplace challenges.

We learned today that Minas Basin Pulp and Power containerboard mill in Hantsport will be closing in December. My question to the minister is, when did the minister find out about this situation in Hantsport?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I want to stand in my place and my first response to the question is that this is a very sad day. I grew up in Hants County, in Windsor, Nova Scotia, a little place called Currys Corner. I was just mentioning to the member from Hants that I think anyone who was born and raised in Hants County we either know a relative or a friend who has been employed at Minas Basin. Our first concern is for the women and the men and their families for those lost jobs.

I first heard about it from a letter that I received this morning on my BlackBerry.

MR. MACLELLAN: By failing to invest in small and medium-size businesses, and by doubling down on six large corporations, this government has failed to diversify our economy. This leaves communities that the government has tethered to those corporations in jeopardy. An essential component of sustainable economic growth is a well-diversified economy, but when the government abandons the fundamentals of economic development in order to write blank cheques to big corporations, our economy suffers. Today job losses in Hantsport are evidence that the NDP needs to focus on diversifying the economy in our province.

Mr. Speaker, when will the minister take proactive measures to start diversifying the economies of our communities across Nova Scotia?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a sad day, it's even sadder when any member of this House tries to make political gain out of the misfortune of others. We have gone through great pains to create employment in the Province of Nova Scotia, especially for small and medium-size companies.

Mr. Speaker, in Glace Bay alone there is a company called Stream. I would say that if it hadn't have been for this government, Stream wouldn't be there, but if it had been the Liberal Government, they'd be fighting a 30 to 50 per cent increase in electricity.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, we have a very serious problem with Minas Basin Pulp and Power and the minister comes up and talks about an investment in Glace Bay. The reality is that our economy is not diversified, and our rural communities are struggling to create jobs. This is another indication that our economy is not diversified in this province. The minister turns to political shots to try to make a point that makes no sense in this day and age.

There have been 8,600 full-time jobs lost in the last year in this province - more people on EI, more people forced into part-time work. There are 135 employees in Minas Basin Pulp and Power in Hantsport who are dealing with the closure of their

containerboard mill. We are told that 40 of those employees will be transitioned to a sister company but that still leaves 95 people without work.

The loss of this mill shows that the NDP corporate handouts are not a substitution for a well-diversified and competitive economy. My question to the minister, has there been any commitment by this government to put funding into Minas Basin Pulp and Power?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, again I hear the member opposite talking numbers that are purely fictional. The fact is that since June, as I mentioned yesterday, we created 8,800 jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia. There's a little company, Allendale Electronics in Lockeport; they are in business because of efforts on their behalf by this government.

Mr. Speaker, we take this very, very seriously. Through our plan we have things on the horizon - Irving Shipbuilding, peak time, 11,500 jobs. We worked with Minas Basin Pulp and Power, we activated a loan to them, \$6.7 million. We are there to help companies. We've been doing it and we will continue to do it.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

#### **MINAS BASIN PULP & POWER: JOBS PLAN - EFFICACY**

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, today 135 workers at the Minas Basin Pulp and Power mill got some very devastating news. Those hard-working 135 Nova Scotians were told today that they would be unemployed in December when the mill shuts down for good. The company cited as part of their problems, rising costs of operation as one of the reasons they are closing this plant. Mr. Speaker, I'll table the document in a few minutes that I'm going to speak from.

My question is, how can the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism say that his jobs plan is working when we've got 135 examples today that prove that it is not?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, as anyone with any reasonable common sense will know, there are things going on in the global economy that are certainly out of the control of government.

Mr. Speaker, I find it very ironic that somebody from the Third Party would get up and ask that question and make those statements. I will read you something from today's paper. This was a company that was in Nova Scotia in 2005, decided to move, to leave Nova Scotia. I will quote to you and I will table this. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism has the floor, please.

MR. PARIS: “I probably wouldn’t go back to Nova Scotia after what took place with us there.” He’s talking about 2005, Mr. Speaker. Who was in power then, Mr. Speaker? That Party.

MR. PORTER: Mr. Speaker, this is 2012 and I’m standing in my place today to talk about the 135 jobs that have been lost. That’s what I’m doing, on behalf of those very people that I represent. That’s my job in this House, Mr. Speaker, and I’m sure you, as well as every member in this place, expect that to happen.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there have been thousands of jobs lost in this province outside of this minister’s watch. To say his plan is working is an insult to these people. In the Valley alone, in my own constituency, we lost 150 jobs over at Fundy Gypsum and not a word said from government - nothing there, not a thing. Where were they then? You can cite everything from 2005 and beyond yesterday that you want. It’s important today. Where are we going? We’re not going anywhere as far as we can tell.

What is the plan, Mr. Speaker, what action is the minister going to take to stop the bleeding in the Annapolis Valley? What does he plan on doing to help all of those in the Valley who have lost jobs under this watch?

MR. PARIS: You know, Mr. Speaker, much like NewPage, much like Bowater - much about those individuals whose jobs were threatened or who had lost jobs - this government and this Premier sitting here, we were the first ones on site.

Mr. Speaker, through Labour and Advanced Education - and I don’t want to speak for the minister - but I’ve got the utmost confidence that a transition team has been in place, will be working with those displaced employees, the same as we did in the mills when Bowater ran into trouble, the same as we did when Port Hawkesbury. Those individuals appreciated it because - who was the first on site? This Premier was the first on site and this government.

MR. PORTER: Mr. Speaker, this is a little different. Scotia Investments put right in their note that they released today, and I’ll quote it and then I’ll table it: “While we have worked closely with governments over many years, we are not seeking support for the mill.” This isn’t about another handout; this is about 135 people and the jobs that exist there today that will be gone at the end of this year.

The question is very simple, and I’ll get right to it, Mr. Speaker, it adds to the numbers. When will this minister finally admit the plan is not working? They don’t care about the statistics from anywhere. They care about the 135 jobs and their families, and how they’re going to put food on their tables, and how they’re going to pay the power bills.

When will this government stand up and say the program is not working? When will they introduce something that will create jobs, in this province, for our people?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, this government has proven time and time again that they are there to support displaced workers. We will be there. We are there to provide support to those individuals, those workers at Minas Basin Pulp and Power. We will be there.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

**MASSEY, JOAN: RRFB BD. APPT. - QUALIFICATIONS**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians are learning every day that what the NDP stood for in Opposition is quite different now that they are in government. In Opposition, the NDP felt that the Human Resources Committee, which approves appointments to agencies, boards and commissions, was not functioning properly. They argued, how could they approve a nominee as the most qualified candidate without knowing the names of all those who had applied. They were also very vocal about appointees with obvious connections to the government of the day.

So my question is, will the minister responsible for the Resource Recovery Fund Board tell this House and all Nova Scotians if he still believes defeated NDP MLA Joan Massey is the best qualified candidate for an appointment to the Resource Recovery Fund Board?

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, I really appreciate the question on this. I can tell that the applicant is very qualified, and as anybody knows, Ms. Massey was also an Environment Critic. I just ask everybody to look around the table and see that I think she's very qualified. There's a process that all these people have to go through, and I'm proud to say that she understands the Environment role. I support that nominee, and I thank you for the question. The Resource Recovery Fund Board is doing a great job. Thank you.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker: "I am not sitting here today saying that these are the best people; I am not sitting here today saying they are not the best people. What I am saying is that the members of this committee do not have the information before them by which they could make that judgment. That is the point and that is why I intend to vote against these nominees, not because of any feeling I may have about them as people, as citizens willing to serve the public, but because as a member of this committee I do not have the information to make the judgment that I am called upon to make."

That was the former Minister of Finance, current member for Halifax Fairview, on March 27, 2001. At the time, the NDP felt that the government of the day should disclose

the list of all candidates to appointments. (Interruption) I have another one coming up, Mr. Premier, hold on. I have a more recent one for you as well.

Mr. Speaker, at the time the NDP clearly stated that the Human Resources Committee was not functioning. The member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage, as chairman, indicated that changes would be coming before the Assembly Matters Committee for consideration. I believe that was two years ago. Nova Scotians are still waiting.

My question is, will the Premier explain why, after three years in office, his government has not corrected the problems they identified with the Human Resources Committee appointments process?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, what I can tell the member opposite is that we advertise very broadly across the province for nominees. We make sure that the people who come forward are appropriately screened. These appointments are a lot of work for very little in the way of remuneration. The simple fact of the matter is that we're grateful to the people who apply for these jobs, and we don't discriminate against them because they happen to be Liberals or Tories or New Democrats. The only thing we look for is that they are good nominees.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, May 27, 2008, the former Minister of Finance and current member for Halifax Fairview said, "... a person's Party affiliation should be simply irrelevant. It shouldn't disqualify someone, it shouldn't qualify them. It's hard to imagine many people saying with a straight face that of all the people in Nova Scotia, if Mary Ann McGrath were not a former Tory MLA, that her name would have come to the top as one of the very best, qualified people in the whole province to sit on a board dealing with the very valuable waterfront property. Nevertheless, there it is."

The NDP were more than happy to take shots at a former Progressive Conservative member of this House, but now, when it comes to one of their own, she's highly qualified. Why wouldn't she be qualified? In her application she said: I built my own backyard composter and now have two backyard composters which provide my gardens with nutrients.

The Resource Recovery Fund Board is one that hands out millions of dollars to municipalities throughout the province to promote recycling here in this province. This is the government that has appointed former MLA John Holm, Justin McDonough, former candidate Linda Power, and now former NDP member Joan Massey. Why, again, after three years is the Premier refusing to make changes to the appointment process so that the committee can see all applicants to determine who truly is the most qualified?



THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I said, we advertise very broadly for qualified candidates. As was actually pointed out in there, we don't discriminate on the basis of Party affiliation. There are lots of Liberals and lots of Tories who have been appointed.

I know that he picked a tiny little piece of that application to talk about composters - which would be a good place to start with that question - but I have to say we're very thankful to all those people who applied for these positions, we thank them for their service to the province; it's a valuable part of public participation.

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

### **FIN. - BALANCED BUDGET: DELIVERY - CONFIRM**

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Finance avoided an answer on whether or not she was going to be able to deliver on her predecessor's promise to balance the budget this Spring. After cutting \$65 million from education and \$100 million from universities, after hiking taxes and fees, and after putting at risk our health and social programs, this Finance Minister still can't promise a balanced budget. Why does the minister refuse to tell Nova Scotians if she can deliver on her government's promise of a balanced budget this Spring?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question, although her question had quite a few factual errors in it with respect to the amount of money that has been given to school boards and given to health authorities, and so on, to operate their affairs on behalf of the people in the Province of Nova Scotia.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we inherited a tremendous mess during a very, very difficult period of economic recovery from a very serious and deep recession. This required a thoughtful and balanced approach to bringing this province to a better place, using our resources more effectively and using them in a way that people would get the benefit. We have done that in each and every department of our government. We've been able to bring department spending in, under budget, every year for three years - not an easy thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen 8,800 new jobs created in our economy. We are working very hard to restore fiscal sanity to this province and we've done it without breaking any collective agreements - unlike what that Party did when they were in government.

MS. WHALEN: I think there is no question our figures are different than the Minister of Finance is talking about today but what we do know is that when the budget was tabled, the estimate for 2011 pegged real gross domestic product at \$30.3 billion for Nova Scotia. I said yesterday that the private analysts have downgraded our growth to 1.5

per cent and that equates to about a \$60 million decrease next year. That is a significant amount of money in the economy if that is the hit. What Nova Scotians don't know is what specific effect this economic downgrade will mean to the revenues of the province, and more importantly, what this economic downgrade will mean when it comes to the NDP's cuts to education, health, and social programs.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister tell Nova Scotians what a \$60 million drop in real economic activity means to her department's revenue projections?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, it is true that organizations like RBC, for example, have revised their forecast for Nova Scotia, as they have for most other provinces in the country and indeed for the Canadian economy. They have done that because the economic recovery has not been as strong here in Nova Scotia, or perhaps the country, or internally, as anticipated. I'm sure the member is watching the American economy very closely as well.

Mr. Speaker, I met with the senior economist for RBC and he told me that, in fact, they have a very, very optimistic outlook for Nova Scotia for next year and the following year. Their forecast is optimistic because of the hard work this government has done in controlling spending, in creating jobs and in growing our economy. So we are on a path to a better day, a path to a day that is significantly different than what we inherited from that lot over there and what they inherited from that lot there.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, given the minister's comments, I can only say I look forward to pointing across the House and saying that we've inherited a mess from that lot over there.

The minister tabled a deficit budget this past Spring and the latest update projects a deficit of \$250 million; that's \$250 million in cuts to education, health, and social programs, and that is just the beginning to get us back to balance. I have just mentioned in my second question that we're \$60 million further in the hole, as it would appear, and with all of this the NDP continues with handouts to large corporations at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister tell Nova Scotians how much more education, health and social cuts they can expect from this government or has the minister simply abandoned the balanced budget?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, during difficult economic times what this government will not do as a way to find revenue is we will not put tolls on the highways in the province; we will not build P3 schools; we will not suspend collective bargaining; we will not remove inflation protection from the poorest people in the province, through their social programs.

Mr. Speaker, we have a balanced plan. Our plan is on track, it is working, and I look forward to tabling a budget in the Spring and enjoying the support from those Parties. Thank you.

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

**PREM. - N.S. JOB LOSSES: REASONS - EXPLAIN**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Today another 135 Nova Scotians were told that they will lose their jobs by Christmastime. That is 135 good, full-time jobs that we can now add to the 6,300 full-time jobs that have been lost under this Premier in the last three years. I will table the Statistics Canada report that that comes from.

During those same three years, Mr. Speaker, the rest of Canada has gained 716,000 full-time jobs while Nova Scotia, under the NDP, has lost 6,300 and now 135 more. I will table that statistic for the benefit of the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia is going backwards on jobs, the rest of Canada is going forward on jobs. My question to the Premier is, why is Nova Scotia losing jobs while the rest of Canada gains jobs?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I don't know what he just tabled, I haven't had a chance to have a look at it. What I do know is that the latest Statistics Canada figures show that there are 8,800 more jobs in Nova Scotia than there were in June 2009, when we came into power, so the job numbers are going in the right direction.

What we do know, of course, is that we are dealing with some of the largest recessionary pressures in the history of the world, since the great depression. So, Mr. Speaker, this is a difficult time to be in government. That is why we have put in place the foundations for a stronger economy, through ensuring that we get the budget back to balance by getting rid of the \$1.4 billion deficit left to us by the Progressive Conservative Government. In fact, over the last three years we have actually raised more money through the budgets to cover off the deficits than we have spent, so money has in fact been paid down on the debt since we came into power.

Mr. Speaker, that is true. The fact of the matter is our debt-to-GDP ratio continues to decline; in fact, the Dominion Bond Rating Service points to Nova Scotia as an example for the rest of the country.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the message from the minister for the first set of financials for the province since the NDP came in, which records that for the year ended March 31, 2009, the province had a net surplus of \$19.7 million. That's a fact.

Of course, it's signed by the member for Halifax Fairview, who we miss more in that job every day. (Interruptions)

AN HON. MEMBER: I bet she does, too.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I just heard the Premier say it's a difficult time to be in government today. Do you know what? Excuse me, it's a difficult time to get a job in Nova Scotia today - that is the important thing that the Premier needs to learn.

The Annapolis Valley - the case today with Minas Basin, 35 jobs; Fundy Gypsum, 150 jobs; Mason Apples, another 30 jobs. All in the Annapolis Valley, full-time jobs that can add to the total under the Premier's watch with the second-worst percentage of full-time jobs lost in all of Canada over the last three years. I'm happy to table that. He can take it up with Statistics Canada if he doesn't agree. The worst full-time job losses in the last year, September to September - he can take that up with Statistics Canada if he doesn't agree.

The fact of the matter is the Premier keeps looking at the part-time jobs, but when is he going to admit that under his watch Nova Scotia has lost 6,300 full-time jobs, including 315 more today?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I suppose anybody - you know, they say that figures don't lie, but liars sure can figure. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. (Interruptions)

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Anyway, if the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party was offended by that in any way, I take it back because this is a serious matter and, you know, the simple fact of the matter is that we have put in place a comprehensive jobsHere plan where small and medium-size businesses right across the province are getting help in increasing their productivity so that they can take better advantage of the opportunities in front of them, and to hire more people for full-time work.

Mr. Speaker, that is what's happening. It's happening in places like Mulgrave at the machine shop; it's happening in companies like LED Roadway Lighting which continues to expand the book of business that it has. And it shows up, as it has in Statistics Canada, because we have 8,800 more jobs today than we did when we came into power. The simple fact of the matter is that, you know, you can try to distort it any way you want, but the reality is that the people out there know that they have a government that has built a program for the renewal of the economy based not on the fact that the government knows what's best - in fact we went out to the business community, to the labour community, to

community activists, and they delivered to the government the jobsHere program which is now being implemented.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the fact is in Nova Scotia today, for every job vacancy there are 10 people chasing it, while in the rest of Canada the ratio is only five to one. It is twice as hard to find a job in Nova Scotia today as it is in the rest of the country - and I will table that document for the benefit of the Premier.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, our average weekly earnings are the second lowest in the whole country. The Premier is proud of the part-time jobs that are there, but is ignoring the reality of full-time jobs in Nova Scotia.

So my question to the Premier is, will he now admit that high taxes, high power rates, high price inflation are not a better deal for today's families but are actually an impossible hardship for today's families?

THE PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, there is no question, if we weren't saddled by some \$12 billion worth of debt run up by the Liberal and Progressive Conservative Governments of the past, we would be in a much better situation.

The simple fact of the matter is that we inherited that burden from them and that makes up part of the cost. Fortunately, because the Dominion Bond Rating Services continues to improve the outlook for Nova Scotia, our interest costs continue to go down and that is a benefit to Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read, for the benefit of the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, an e-mail received from the President and COO of Intelligent Dynamics Canada which said: "I wanted to drop you a line to personally thank you for the wonderfully effective innovation voucher program and your warm personal welcome to all of us at the Province House yesterday. I am a newcomer to Nova Scotia and having done business in such diverse places as Israel, Japan, Hong Kong, and Massachusetts, all of which are considered to be world leaders in entrepreneurship and innovation, I can attest first-hand that the climate created by our provincial government here in Nova Scotia is by far the most welcoming and supportive to small and medium sized business entrepreneurs."

Mr. Speaker, I'll table that.

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

**PREM. - LAW AMENDMENTS COMM.: COMMUNITIES - VISITATION**

MR. HAROLD THERIAULT: It seems like this Question Period is turning into a late debate show. There seems to be some long-winded people here who like to speak a long while. Maybe I'll take my time.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier also. Yesterday in Question Period when asked about his decision to send the Law Amendments Committee to Shelburne, the Premier said, "So we think it's only fair that they have a voice. The fact of the matter is that other places have had an opportunity to give input." Well neither the first round nor the second round of public meetings held by the Electoral Boundaries Commission were held in my area of Digby, a community greatly impacted by this process.

Mr. Speaker, I am asking the Premier, will the Premier commit to sending the Law Amendments Committee to Digby since they didn't have a chance to have their voices heard concerning these boundary changes?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, of course we would welcome any of the input from the residents of Digby. The Law Amendments Committee sits. They are open to anyone who wants to come. They can come here. They could go to Shelburne, if that's closest for them. They have an opportunity to have their input.

MR. THERIAULT: Mr. Speaker, the Premier and his government and the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture say the people of Shelburne were not consulted over this, so I believe the Premier has made a decision that they go to Shelburne. The people of Digby are saying the same thing - if Shelburne can have this, why can't we? They are asking this question. The people of Digby deserve the same chance as Shelburne does because they are impacted just as badly.

Will the Premier commit, today, to send the Law Amendments Committee to Digby and when will this committee get together? We have two members in our Party here who haven't heard anything about this committee even getting together for Law Amendments Committee.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I might just point out to the member that the simplest and fastest way to get the Law Amendments Committee to consider this report would simply be to move it on to Law Amendments Committee.

MR. THERIAULT: Again, I will ask just this final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, just a simple question because a simple question was asked about Shelburne and the minister said okay, let's go. My simple question is, will you come to Digby with the Law Amendments Committee? You have the power to do so.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we're not going to redo all of the communities that were done by the Electoral Boundaries Commission. They were around the various places. In fact, those who were affected in the first round of the Electoral Boundaries Commission report knew that was going to happen. They had an opportunity to respond at that time.

I want to be really clear - if they want to participate we would welcome them before the Law Amendments Committee.

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

### **FISH. & AQUACULTURE: CORNWALLIS LEASE - DETAILS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the issue of the lease in Cornwallis has raised more questions about the government's ability to handle taxpayers' money. As we know, the NDP agreed to spend \$2,890,000 of taxpayers' money on an office space, but are hiding the details about who will ultimately be footing the bill.

Yesterday in defending it, the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture said, "I'm confident that we made the right decision . . . and I'll stand and defend it." An hour later, the Premier took this file away from him.

My question to the Premier is, what did his minister do wrong?

THE PREMIER: The minister did nothing wrong, and in fact, I want to thank him very much for what an admirable job he does in that department on a day-to-day basis.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'm interested to hear that the Premier thinks renting a building at \$135,000 a year that only costs \$168,000 in the first place is an admirable job at handling taxpayers' money. The fact of the matter remains that the Premier took the file away from the minister and is reviewing it in-house. The Premier is going to have to forgive Nova Scotians for not leaving it at that, with the Premier's record of handling their money - agreeing to Muskrat Falls without knowing how much it will cost, buying a paving machine that we don't need, bailing out large corporations with no plans for job security.

My question to the Premier is, if he's so confident that nothing was done wrong, will he agree to hand all the files related to that lease over to the Auditor General for an independent review?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the simple fact of the matter is that what we have done with taxpayers' money is invest in the future of this province - tens of thousands of jobs associated with the largest industrial contract in our history that could not and would not have been won without the investment of the provincial government. What I can tell him is that with respect to the lease documents, I intend to do one better - I'm going to release all of them so that anyone who wants to have a look at them can. I don't dictate to

the Auditor General whether or not he wants to see them. If he wants to see them, he's welcome to see them.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Premier brought up the example of the Irving shipyard bid, because it was won on the basis of a competitive tender. That's how the Government of Canada knew they got the best deal for those ships. That's exactly the problem with the Cornwallis lease. There was no tender. There was no analysis of whether buying the building would have been better than leasing the building at ten times more than the cost of buying it. There was no business sense whatsoever in deciding how to handle that building. There was just a plain old throwaway of taxpayers' money. The Irving Shipbuilding deal is a great example of what the government should have done when it comes to leasing its own space.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has an opportunity to prove his words - not by sitting back and hoping or waiting or maybe thinking the Auditor General might at some future date decide to look at the file. Why not be a Premier and send those files to the Auditor General and ask him for his opinion on whether this was handled right or not?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the odd and ironic thing about this is that the program that was designed to ensure that community development organizations were able to get access to things like work done from government was actually put in place by the Progressive Conservative Government. He is essentially criticizing the exact program that they put in place and utilized. The simple fact of the matter is, the comparisons he tries to draw are nonsensical. It's based on a square-foot cost - the same square-foot cost that exists right across the province. It's based on the market in that area, the same way that it is down here in Halifax.

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

#### **FIN. - FILM TAX CREDIT: APPLICATIONS - PROCESSING TIMES**

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. The film industry in Nova Scotia contributes roughly \$100 million a year to the provincial GDP. The Film Tax Credit is an essential part of this industry's success here in Nova Scotia. However, it's becoming clear that bureaucratic duplication is causing unreasonably slow processing times for applicants.

Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware of these problems regarding the slow processing times for the Film Tax Credit applications?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for the question. The film industry is a vital part of Nova Scotia and I'm proud to say that the tax credit that we have enjoyed a great deal of support from the Premier when we were in Opposition and continues to enjoy support, as does that industry. We will continue to work



with the industry and look for the absolute best vehicles that we can bring to bear to support such an important industry in our province.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, the question is around the processing times for the applications for that tax credit. The industry is predictably frustrated with the government over these slow processing times. In fact, we've heard from industry representatives that this backlog of applications is due to duplication of efforts within the bureaucracy. This additional red tape is a very immediate concern for producers, investors, industry guilds, and unions within the industry, and it is important that the Finance Minister take these concerns seriously.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a letter that was sent to the minister, as well as an e-mail to the deputy minister on this subject. My question to the minister is, what steps is the minister taking in order to address the concerns around slow processing times?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, there are two departments involved in the processing of support to the film industry. We have in Nova Scotia, Film Nova Scotia as well as then the process within the Department of Finance. We are working very hard across departments to understand what the concerns are from the industry and what it is we can do to facilitate a smooth processing of applications, and that analysis and those discussions are underway.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, the industry points specifically to the Department of Finance as the cause for the backlog. They cite duplication of efforts between Film Nova Scotia, as the minister has said, and the Department of Finance, but they do say that the Department of Finance is the cause for the backlog.

My question to the minister is, will the minister look into this process within her department and streamline the application process as quickly as possible to eliminate this unnecessary duplication?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, we are doing the analysis on the process for the Film Tax Credit. We are working with another department through that process. I have indicated to staff in my department that I would like an opportunity built into my schedule to meet with people from the industry, and we will be doing that so that we can understand better what specifically the concerns are that they've been raising.

I want to tell members that there has been no change, there have been no policy changes and there have been no other changes with respect to the Film Tax Credit. It remains essentially the same, and so we need to hear from the industry, assess the processes that we have in place, and work as hard as we can to ensure that the objectives of the tax credit, and whatever other programs we might have to support such an important industry, are effective.

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

**NAT. RES. - PULPWOOD PRICES: NEW PAGE - NEGOTIATIONS CONFIRM**

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you will be to the Minister of Natural Resources. Private contractors are being offered \$43 to \$45 a tonne for pulpwood delivered roadside by the new owner of the Port Hawkesbury mill. Now that's down from the \$53 a tonne that was being paid by NewPage and it is actually less than what it costs to produce a tonne of wood.

My question to the minister is, when the minister and his government were negotiating the deal with Port Hawkesbury Paper, were there any discussions about the price to be paid to private woodlot owners and contractors?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable member for the question. Certainly being a private woodlot owner myself, I know we're always interested in getting the best possible price for your product, whether its pulpwood or stud wood or logs or whatever. I can remember cutting those products in the past and selling them on the open market, on the free market and that's still true today. Somebody is cutting wood, I'm sure they're negotiating with sawmills and with pulp mills and hardwood mills, wherever it is, but in Nova Scotia, we do have a free market system.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, a 2011 consultant's report commissioned by the Department of Natural Resources said that in order for the province's pulp and paper mills to be supplied sustainably, there will be a need for increased participation from private landowners.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Russell Huntington, who is the owner of Marion Bridge Pulp, who employs five people, says it costs him \$47.30 a tonne to produce pulp delivered roadside. The producers hope to get at least the price that they were getting when the mill shut down. These mills that this government put a large amount of dollars into, they put a large amount of money into this mill. The reason they did that is because the operator said he wanted to come here and make a profit.

I think it's very logical to understand that if the people who are supplying the wood product and the wood fibre cannot make a profit, then how, indeed, can the mill stay sustainable - unless, of course, you bring everything in from the outside?

The question that I would ask the Minister of Natural Resources is, can he please tell the House and, more importantly, the private wood contractors, what steps he and his government have taken to ensure that private woodlot owners in Nova Scotia are treated fairly and not thrown under the Dexter bus, like so many other small businesses in Nova Scotia?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member would know that using a member's name in the Chamber is not appropriate. I would just remind the honourable member that using a name, as a former Speaker, would know the rules of the Legislature and know that using somebody else's name is not allowed in the Legislature.

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, you know, naturally, everybody wants the best price for their product and I know we're in challenging times. Certainly, it's important now that that mill, operated by Pacific West, is open: it's providing great jobs in the Strait area and throughout Eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island. There are thousands of families that now come to rely on the paycheques, from both the mill directly and indirectly.

Again, we're in a free market system. I would encourage woodlot owners to work together and to work with the mill. I know some have already come to an agreement, like M.R. MacDonald Holdings have signed an agreement with Pacific West: B.A. Fraser from Cape Breton have done the same. I would encourage the two parties to come together and mutually agree to what is a good working price for both of them.

MR. MACLEOD: It's hard to believe that this minister believes that it is a free market system when his government gives them \$150 million to operate. (Interruptions) If you were allowed to talk, you wouldn't be sitting in the back bench. (Interruptions)

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West has the floor.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I hear these comments from the other side and so be it. But, anyway, Pacific West negotiated a deal with the province, which has harvesting rights of Crown land similar to the former owner, NewPage, and that means that they direct harvesting operations, maintain the roads on those lands. Private land contractors, on the other hand, have to pay stumpage, build their own roads and organize where they operate, and this all adds to the bottom line and their costs.

Russell Huntington has said to The ChronicleHerald, and I will table that, Mr. Speaker, "No matter how efficient you are, at the prices they are offering, in five years your gear will be all worn out and you'll be left with nothing."

My question to the Minister of Natural Resources is, what does this minister have to say to the private contractors who need a fair deal to continue operating in this province?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, of course, all companies, private individuals, all pay stumpage. Whether it's Pacific West or you're buying from a private landowner, stumpage has to be paid by those who are harvesting it. But this government has invested strongly in

the Strait region. We've invested in the workers and their families and the communities in eastern Nova Scotia. We continue to invest with private woodlot owners. We have lots of programs, silviculture programs. We've invested \$2 million, just recently, on silviculture treatments for small and large landowners. We've invested almost \$4 million in silviculture in 2012-13. We just had a recent announcement around a private road program that was taken up very quickly. So there's lots that we're investing through our Natural Resources strategy. The path we share is investing in the workers and investing in private woodlot owners in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**EDUC. - PUB. EDUC.: PRIORITY - CONFIRM**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Education. We continually see from this minister what has been described as “. . . devastating errors in judgment . . .” regarding decisions around programming and funding in public education. I will table that. Parents are angry, students are losing out, and teachers are frustrated with those decisions. In fact, they demanded that she be replaced as Minister of Education on April 12, 2012, and I will table that.

Here's why, Mr. Speaker: direct budget cuts to boards of \$31.1 million, downloading inflationary costs to boards of \$33.9 million, and by my math, that adds up to \$65 million. Other poor decisions include eliminating Reading Recovery, eliminating math mentors, removing and/or adjusting negatively the class size caps, cutting funding to educational assistants, underfunding supports like school psychologists, speech pathologists, behavior specialists, and I could go on. But the most devastating of all is that there was no mention of students with special needs in the Speech from the Throne delivered in the Spring of 2012 and for the minister's reading, I will table that. Pages 19 and 20 are all that was dedicated to education and not one mention of special needs students.

So my question to the minister is, how can this minister tell parents that she and her government have made public education a priority when they continue to gut the system?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, when the Speech from the Throne was delivered, I think that the Premier mentioned - sorry, the Lieutenant Governor - would have very clearly mentioned the students, the children of Nova Scotia. We're talking about all of our children because we have an inclusive community in Nova Scotia and I'm very proud that we have an inclusive education system. All children mean all children.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, the minister should know that because students with special needs have special needs, they have a special allocation of funding which she has protected - which she has restricted. So I do beg to differ. Special needs students do have a special place, and should have been in that Speech from the Throne.

Parents are advocating for the needs of their children, teachers are advocating for the needs of their students, associations like the Learning Disabilities Association of Nova Scotia, Autism Nova Scotia, and school advisory councils are advocating for their kids. Mr. Speaker, there are some members in the caucus over there who I know value public education. Some of them are teachers. I've worked with them, and they must be disappointed with their minister, who should be advocating for education, not destroying it.

My question to the minister is, when will this minister show leadership, take responsibility for her office seriously, and restore funding to programs and services for our kids?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I take offence to the comments that I do not take this job seriously. I do take this job very seriously, as an educator for 30 years and as a parent and as a grandparent. Everyone here has a vested interest in making sure every child in this province succeeds. We have a Kids and Learning First program. We are investing in our students. We are in a position now - we have had severely declining enrolment. We are making sure that we're making strategic investment in skills trades, the co-op program, Succeeding in Reading. We're making sure that our math is stronger. We're making sure that we're having all of our children succeed.

This government is investing in education, unlike the last government. I remember when I was an educator 18 years ago, when we were sent home without pay for five days. (Applause)

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I would have been a teacher 18 years ago, and what I can (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Colchester North has the floor.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, when will this minister stop mucking around in public education and base her decisions on student needs rather than trying to defend a government that has yet to demonstrate in any way that education is their priority?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, education is our priority. We are investing in all of our students. We are making sure that they have the ability to have skills trades at school, that they are getting help with their literacy in Primary - unlike the last government, that put Reading Recovery in . . .

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

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Yesterday during Question Period, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal advised the

House that he would be providing the name of who was responsible for the lease that was signed for the new office in Shelburne. Since the minister told the House that he would be providing us with that information, I'm wondering if the minister will take the opportunity now to do exactly as he advised the House yesterday.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

HON. MAURICE SMITH: There was no lease signed. Indeed, I indicated that I would look at it to determine who from the department was involved in it. The Premier has indicated that he is going to be reviewing all of the documents - the whole file. That's his prerogative. Soon we will have a determination, and all of those documents, as the Premier said, will be made available. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry, but it's not a point of order. It's a disagreement between two members, and the honourable minister said that he would table that and didn't give a specific time. He just said, again, that he will table the documents when he has them in his possession.

### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 94.

### **Bill No. 94 - House of Assembly Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, before I begin, how much time do I have left? I believe it's 20-some minutes.

MR. SPEAKER: You have 28 minutes, I think - yes, my math is good today.

MR. COLWELL: Okay, thank you very much. I'm going to continue on with - sort of on the theme that I had before. Before I talk about this in any detail, what a negative effect this has had on some many communities or will have on many communities in Nova

Scotia, I just wonder, I listened with great intent today as a question was asked here - how the Law Amendments Committee was structured to go to Shelburne. A very interesting question, and never did get an answer from the Premier on it at all.

I believe if my information is correct, that the Premier did say that the Law Amendments Committee decided that they were going to meet in Shelburne. While I've talked to both of the members who are on the Law Amendments Committee in our caucus and they never, ever went to a meeting. I don't know the - and the Progressive Conservative members said they were never consulted whatsoever on this, so we wonder how we decided to go to Shelburne.

It appears maybe that the Premier decides that he wants to, potentially save his Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture's seat and have this in Shelburne so the minister can save some face and, indeed, maybe win a seat in the future, if they make some adjustments there. It would be interesting to see if they do make adjustments or amendments, how that is going to affect the rest of the province.

We're already on the third go-around in this report; we had a first interim report, we had a second report. The Minister of Justice wasn't happy with it, I'm sure he was directed by the Premier to gerrymander it again and make sure that whatever long-term goal this government had by messing around with all the ridings in the province, was adjusted to their political advantage.

We had an independent commission that wasn't independent at all. They were told what to do, how to do it and when they came back with the first report they were told again how to do it and what to change to make sure that the Premier and his caucus were happy with what came along. There are holes in that because here, they've seen the riding of Cape Breton Nova being eliminated - the Speaker's riding, so that makes it very interesting.

A question I really want to ask of the government and I know they won't answer this question but I'm going to ask anyway, just so that the people in Nova Scotia are aware of just how prejudicial this process is - when we've only got one community of Shelburne, we have a sitting Cabinet Minister and the Law Amendments Committee. Now in all the years, I've been here a long time in this Legislature and I've never, ever heard of this ever happening before. Now it might have happened in history before, I am not sure, but it has never happened in at least the last 20 years.

The question is, I want to see one of these Law Amendments Committees meetings in Preston, so I can see the residents of my community, who don't have to travel all the way to Shelburne or to Halifax or to wherever the case may be, go into our community - in our community - and the member makes a joke of this - it was over 200 years before the government recognized the importance of the Preston riding, so you're making a joke of that. I'm sure the people in my community will be highly insulted by the backbenchers in the NDP, and they should be insulted - seriously insulted. (Interruptions)

Here we are - you're going to treat one part of the province differently than the other. We should have a meeting in Cape Breton Nova; the seat is being eliminated in Cape Breton. We should also have another one in Yarmouth, another gerrymandered riding, definitely should have one in Clare, one in Argyle and one in Richmond. In Cape Breton West, we should have one there as well.

When this Law Amendments Committee goes on the road, which is a committee of the Legislature - and the only way the Premier can gerrymander that is, is by having more members on the committee than the Opposition Parties have, so they get can whatever they want and they'll do whatever they want. So you see all these communities should be treated exactly the same, exactly the same. We should go to Richmond, we should go to Digby and the list goes on and on.

When is there going to be a meeting of the Law Amendments Committee to decide exactly where this committee is going to meet? There's not any consultation been made between the chairman of the committee or the Premier's Office, which seems to be running this whole thing, where they're going to meet. Give the people a chance of Nova Scotia. People are very upset about this and they're going to be more upset when election day comes and a lot of the people don't realize where they have to go to vote, or even during an election campaign when they don't know who the candidate is going to be and the ridings change as the process goes on.

You see all the things that this government has done and you see the negative impact this has had on our province. Today we had another announcement that another one of our paper producers is shutting down, another one. The only difference this time is they didn't get the big bonus check that the other paper mills got before they closed down. I don't know - maybe they are not as smart as the other people were to get that money from Nova Scotians, or maybe they decided they just couldn't participate in that kind of an activity to further deaden the province's economy and destroy jobs in Nova Scotia.

This government has done more damage to employment in this province than any government in history, and that's bar none. This province has been through some hard times; a lot more hard times are coming. You are going to see some awfully hard times as a result of what this government did with the 25 per cent increase they put in on GST when they put the GST up - a 25 per cent tax increase, double digit tax increase. When you go and you see what has happened here, and what is happening, and you talk to the young people who are leaving the province because they can't find a job, they can't do the things that they need to do, and you look at the high unemployment that we're faced with and the things that are happening in this province, it's basically unbelievable.

This particular bill is another thing that this government has done that is just totally unbelievable, unbelievable. You get an independent commission to review the boundaries, you get the results from the independent commission, and the government doesn't like it. We don't like it, so go back and here is what you've got to do, and they are given marching



orders to do that, that's the sad part of it. If all of these boundaries would have been structured the way they are today because of the independent committee's recommendations - their recommendations and not gerrymandering from government - that would have been acceptable. The point is the government gerrymandered with this thing. They fooled around with it with the intention of political gain, and there is no other way to describe it.

That's what happening now. We see this Party over there that used to be so righteous when they stood on this side of the House. They were so proper and everything was great and they were going to fix everything in world. All of a sudden they get to government and all that changes, all of it changes. It makes you wonder how they can do this to Nova Scotians, to the people of Nova Scotia. This gerrymandering with the boundaries is something like you would hear in a third world country where a dictator runs what goes on. It's not much different, the only difference is we have the media here and that sort of holds people accountable for what they do, and it is a good thing that they do.

This whole thing, as it transpired, is a disgrace to the political process in Nova Scotia. It's an absolute disgrace and until we hear what the final bill is going to be like, who knows what that's going to be. I would say that they probably are going to have to save the seat in Shelburne and they are probably going to have to save some other seats. I don't know what they are going to tell - or how they are going to the amendments in this whole process, to save some of their elected members so hopefully, they think, they can get back to government. I don't know if that will ever happen. There are so many people in this province upset with this government today that it's a pretty slim chance that they'll win an election again and for our financial health in this province I certainly hope they never get re-elected again, and that's what I'm hearing everywhere.

When we go see what they have done and how they have gone about it, it is simply unbelievable. This is very upsetting. We see it's very upsetting with what's happened to the people in the province and next thing you know they are going to decide, if they stay in power in long enough and they get arrogant enough, they are going to finally say we don't need elections anymore, we'll just have a vote in the Legislature and put ourselves back in for another five or six years. You know they are not far from that by the way they have gerrymandered with the process.

I wasn't going to speak on this bill to start but after I have heard so many complaints from so many people about how this is organized, about how it was done, how everything was switched around and changed around to make it better for this party, to try to get two more seats in metro, where they hold most of the seats, where they figure they might get one or two of these seats and eliminate a couple more out in the rural areas. Well, if I was sitting in rural Nova Scotia, I would be very upset, and people in metro are very upset about this whole process.

Madam Speaker, it's no good talking about this anymore because this government doesn't listen anyway. They're not going to change anything. They're only going to do what they figure might be to their best political advantage, and the people of Nova Scotia will judge them at the end of the day. It's going to be a harsh judgment when it comes - I can guarantee you, it's going to be a harsh judgment. I'm glad that I'm not sitting on that side of the House when that happens. Thank you.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to talk about what has clearly become the boondoggle of all boondoggles for the NDP when it comes to redrawing our electoral boundaries. I don't intend to speak long. I've heard many eloquent words from members on this side of the House about how this process has gone so horribly wrong, but I do want to just add a few specifics. After all, this has been going on for a year now. In fact, it was on October 31<sup>st</sup>, exactly a year ago yesterday, when this House met on Halloween night, that the government brought in the original resolution to start the boundary redrawing process, as it is required to do by law.

At that time the resolution was to form a select committee of this Legislature to write up the terms of reference. The terms of reference were not available at that time; they were to be written up later by the select committee. Many members were led to believe that the terms of reference would be the same as or very close to the same as the terms of reference of all previous Electoral Boundaries Commissions.

We found out later, of course, that that wasn't the case, but I remember very clearly that night, Madam Speaker, that members looked at a resolution from the government side to set up a select committee of the House on the understanding that it would be dealing with terms of reference similar to those of past years.

There was an opportunity at that time to not draw the boundaries in the same old way but to make an improvement to the boundary-setting process by rejecting the old way of having the governing Party dominate the committee that writes the terms of reference and make all three Parties equal partners in the writing of the terms of reference for the independent commission. To me, that was a matter of common sense, that when it comes to something as important and non-partisan as the boundaries of our electoral districts - when it comes to something as important as basically the rules of the game for the next election - that Nova Scotians would apply an important test of fairness, and that test of fairness would include that all three Parties participating in those elections are equally represented on the committee that sets the rules of the game.

That was an improvement that was put forward by the PC caucus, and I believe it could have saved a lot of the trouble that the government finds itself in - but that all Nova Scotians, including people in Shelburne, in Digby, in Yarmouth, in our Acadian

communities, in the African Nova Scotian communities, would also have been saved a lot of heartache, because not only would all three Parties be making contributions but they would be a good watchdog on each other. I knew Nova Scotians would understand and accept this as a principle of fairness.

However, that didn't happen, and I will point out that both the Liberals and the NDP voted against that improvement on the way that we set electoral boundaries in our province, and that set Nova Scotia down the sorry course that it has been on for the year since then. So there is plenty of blame to go around on behalf of those two Parties, the Liberals and the NDP, for the course that we are now on.

Madam Speaker, having gotten their wish as a government by getting a mandate to pick a government-dominated committee to set the terms of reference, with the backing of the Liberal Party, the NDP set about doing their work. They did produce a draft terms of reference that was not the same as previous terms of reference in previous years had been. It included an important difference: that notwithstanding the 25 per cent allowable variance, that every riding - even the protected seats, the Acadian seats, the African Nova Scotian seat - must now also comply, which, in effect, makes a mockery of the idea that they are protected. Although the NDP continues to promote the fiction that there's still some special status for those ridings, in fact, no such special status exists because like every other riding, they have to comply with the 25 per cent rule.

Now, Madam Speaker, I will say at this point that there could be a very healthy debate about whether all ridings should fit within the variance or whether, for historical or community or cultural reasons, we should continue with the protection that was offered to the Acadian Nova Scotians and the African Nova Scotians but that debate never took place. That was the decision of one Party alone, that was a decision made under the dark of night, that was a decision made in an NDP backroom, that was a decision made without any input from the people of Nova Scotia, whether they're in one of the protected seats or whether they're not in one of the protected seats. That was the decision made by a handful of people, all from one Party, who saw the advantage to them of wiping out those seats. That was the danger in having an NDP-dominated committee of this House set the terms of reference for the independent commission. That, again, is where Nova Scotia started down the wrong path to drawing electoral boundaries; by allowing one Party to write the terms of reference for an independent commission.

Madam Speaker, that was just the start. Then, an independent commission of men and women from around Nova Scotia were given the impossible task of travelling the province, of listening to the views of Nova Scotians and then writing their first interim report. When that day came that that independent commission tabled their first interim report, they had a choice to make because they had heard from all Nova Scotians, they had heard many, many everyday Nova Scotians travel to the commission to report that they wanted their communities to be kept together, they wanted their municipal boundaries respected, they wanted Acadian communities to be lumped together to ensure a diversity of

voices and languages in this House of Assembly. They wanted an African Nova Scotian community to be held together to ensure there is a diversity of views and opinion in this House of Assembly, they wanted to know that, in addition to a strict parity of vote, the House of Assembly reflected not just the majority of Nova Scotians but all Nova Scotians.

They had a choice, as a commission, to go with what they knew the people wanted or to go with the will of a handful of backroom NDP members who had written the terms of reference.

Madam Speaker, I believe the commission did the right thing and wrote a report that reflected the opinions of the people of Nova Scotia. They wrote a report that respected the diversity of cultures and communities and peoples of Nova Scotia. They wrote a report that would show that this House of Assembly, which belongs to all Nova Scotians, would reflect in its composition, all Nova Scotians. They wrote that report knowing the straightjacket that the terms of reference had put them in. They believed that they had found the room within the terms of reference to write a legitimate report because one of the terms said clearly they were instructed to be guided by the terms of reference.

They did take the terms of reference as a guide, as they were written, and produced that first interim report. That is the one, Madam Speaker, that is the report of the commission that truly reflected the views of Nova Scotians. But, as we know, it turned out it didn't reflect the views of every Nova Scotian because the Attorney General, the Minister of Justice, the NDP Minister of Justice, is one Nova Scotian who said no to that interim report. He said no to the interim report both verbally and then later in writing, that regardless of what they heard from the people of Nova Scotia in their travels, his opinion was going to prevail. So the Minister of Justice wrote them a letter rejecting their report and requiring them to come up with a whole new one.

Perhaps, Madam Speaker, we'll never know who else in the Cabinet agreed to that decision. It's hard to comprehend that the Minister of Justice would do that all by himself, and for that reason every single member of the NDP Cabinet, the Premier, and every minister also has their signature on that letter from the Minister of Justice that said no to the voices of the communities of Nova Scotia, said no, we won't accept your opinion about how our boundaries should be drawn, you have to conform to our opinion as an NDP Government - that was the effect of that letter.

So the commissioners went out again, Madam Speaker, and they wrote a second interim report, doing their best to fit into an even tighter straightjacket that the NDP had put them under. Keep in mind this is supposed to be an independent commission - an independent commission, not a commission that's put in a straightjacket by one Party - a truly independent commission. In fact, the Speaker of this House, in instructing the independent commission, wrote to them and told them that the instructions of this House, being the initial terms of reference, are the only and final instructions they can receive. Apparently that didn't include the NDP Minister of Justice who chose to put his own view

ahead of the House of Assembly and ahead of the people of Nova Scotia when he struck down that first interim report.

Even then, Madam Speaker, it would have been proper to come back to the House of Assembly and involve all three Parties in a debate over whether the commission's report met with the terms of reference of this House or didn't meet with the terms of reference of this House. We could have properly had that debate then, but that debate never happened because the NDP Minister of Justice and his colleagues on the government side, they didn't want that debate either; they didn't want a debate about the legitimacy of the protected seats. They made that decision in the backrooms of only their Party, and they didn't want to debate about the terms of reference when the initial report came out. They made that decision somewhere within the inner sanctum of the NDP.

Madam Speaker, here we are in the historic House of Assembly of the great Province of Nova Scotia where democracy was first brought to British North America, and we celebrate that. I find it hard to believe that it's in Nova Scotia where antics as undemocratic, as dictatorial, as so contrary to the will of the people have been carried out when it comes to something as important as determining our electoral boundaries - and those are two examples.

Now, we all know that the revised interim report identified Yarmouth as a seat that would need to be split in order to comply to the straightjacket terms of reference imposed by the Minister of Justice, but at least there was time then for the commission to travel the province and gather the opinions of the people of Nova Scotia another time, and that included visiting the people of Yarmouth who turned out in record numbers to say, no, that is not the right way to proceed, to the commission.

So the commission reported for a third time, again taking into account the views of the people that they had heard from, and tabled their final report. As we so famously know now, that report splits up the County of Shelburne and also Digby but, unlike Yarmouth and all the other communities that got their say before, there was no mechanism by that time for the people in those parts of Nova Scotia to express their opinion. Even the very people who are most affected by it had no mechanism to have their say - but I will say this: the people of Shelburne found their mechanism on their own. They organized their own meeting and they turned out by the hundreds. I do want to commend the Mayor of Clark's Harbour, Leigh Stoddart, and the other municipal leaders of the area, the Warden of Barrington, George El-Jakl, and the other municipal leaders who came together to call the community of Barrington together to express their views. I was very proud to be there that night, as the representative of my Party, to hear what they had to say.

They spoke very passionately about the community of Barrington and Shelburne County, how they are one community. Those who know the area reasonably well know they don't always get along with each other perfectly, but they are one community. In fact, as I know the member for Shelburne knows, one of the pastors in the area got up and spoke

at that meeting, in front of 300 people, and compared the relationship of the people of Shelburne County and Barrington to a marriage, that it may not be a perfect marriage, that they may not always get along - Reverend Shaun Hatfield was his name - but they have chosen to be together for generations.

Like every other marriage, no one outside should be able to split them up. What they have created, to paraphrase a book that pastor would know well, let no one else split up. That was the view of the people of Shelburne. Other than the few of us from this Legislature that were there, even after that meeting they had no opportunity to express their views to a committee of this House or to an independent commission.

Now, at least one good thing is going to come out this, the Law Amendments Committee is actually going to travel to Shelburne and make that case. I was very pleased to make that suggestion, and I know it was a multi-Party suggestion because the member for the area is quick to agree to it so we are of like mind on that. I hear today from the member for Digby-Annapolis a very valid question: well, Digby is facing the same situation - why not do the same for the people of Digby County as is being done for the people of Shelburne County? What is the difference between those two situations other than one is represented by an NDP member and the other is not?

That is not a good reason to draw a distinction between which community to hear from and which community to refuse to hear from, again, pointing to the great flaw in this manipulative process that we see by the government over this past year.

Now we're at the point of no return. I don't know how the government - and it's clearly in their hands now - is going to unscramble the egg, is going to uncook the hot dog, is going to find a way to undo the damage that has been done. No matter what they do now, some community somewhere is going to have to pay the price. I don't want you to think about that hot dog example too much, although much like a hot dog, the way this government has gone about drawing the electoral boundaries, it is best that you not look inside. That's how bad it is.

I speak today not only as the member for Cumberland South, or the Leader of my Party, but as a Nova Scotian who is very proud of the democratic history of our province, who is very proud of the communities that have come together to form Nova Scotia: anglophone, francophone, Mi'kmaq, African Nova Scotian, and on and on. It grows to this day with Iranians, Muslims, Lebanese, and on and on. This great historic House of Assembly ought to reflect all of those voices in this Chamber so that every Nova Scotian knows that they are truly a part of their province, that they are truly a part of the decision making of their province.

But as long as one Party takes control of the drawing of the electoral boundaries and manipulates it so badly, Nova Scotia will not have realized that great, great democratic tradition that we are known for. That's why when this bill comes to a vote, because of this

boondoggle, this embarrassing process driven by that government, we will be voting “no.” Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

MR. HAROLD THERIAULT: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I’m pleased to stand and speak on this bill. I won’t be long. I just want to make a few points, if I can, of what may happen, what’s going to happen, and what has happened, I guess, first of all.

What has happened is, in April the commission came to Tusket and Clare and heard from those people. Then in August they went to Yarmouth and Clare got together. The message was very clear from all those communities. The people from Clare were there saying, leave us alone, leave us where we are, leave us with our ridings; that’s something that was given to us 175 years ago; we want to continue that and keep that.

Then the commission even came to Annapolis, above Digby. I believe then just after that the final report came out, and lo and behold, here’s a new riding in it of Clare and Digby. The commission completely bypassed Digby, but went to other communities on each side of it to see how they felt.

I went to the one in Yarmouth. I went to that meeting, and I went to the one in Annapolis. I heard very clearly from the people of each side of that. Annapolis wanted things to stay the way they were and Yarmouth wanted things to stay the way they were. I would say a good one-third of the people in Yarmouth, of the 2,500 people, were from Clare. I looked at their flags that they proudly waved in that audience. They too said, leave our riding alone; we’ve had this for 175 years. I believe it’s part of an agreement that was made after the deportation was over.

I want to get into my family background just for a bit. Fifteen generations ago my forefather was from France, Jean Theriault. He came here in 1637, and we lived in the Clare area up until four generations ago. Four generations ago somehow they got by the deportation - they hid out well, I guess - and stuck around here and survived, and our family is still surviving. Four generations ago, my forefather, Augustiv Theriault, came across St. Marys Bay. They came over there in Petite Passage - they named it four generations ago. They came over there and fished out of that passage in the summertime to catch their codfish and stuff for the winter. They dried them there.

In the meantime, when they were over there fishing, they would row across St. Marys Bay and fish out into the Bay of Fundy, which was out through that gap of Petite Passage. While they were there catching their fish, I guess they got tangled up with my mother somehow, and that’s good. I’m glad that happened. The only thing I’m not glad that happened was - and I listened to the member for Argyle the other night, and he said he was pretty much in the same situation, but his father made sure that they kept their French language, because they lived in the French community. My forefather, Augustiv, stayed in

the English community, and our language died because our mother dominated over our language. I've always felt bad for that. I never really learned to speak any French. When I went to school, they only taught us to count to 10, but now my grandchildren - now five and six years old - are nearly fluent in French. I thank God for that, and I thank the new system of our schools for that.

Right now, with my background of being a Theriault and being 15 generations here, I'm worried about what's going to happen with Digby and Clare coming together. I truly worry about that, because it's going to be a nearly half-French community and nearly half-English community. I mean, that kind of puts me in the middle, because that's kind of where I am, I guess, my background: eight generations of Irish, 15 generations of French. I argue with myself sometimes, when no one's around but I don't want to argue, I don't really like arguing with other people. I like using common sense and common sense is a great thing.

I want to tell you how some people feel about this, about this boundary change. I heard one person say to me, if this happens, the French community will come out in droves, which they always have, when it comes to a vote for their people, that someone they want to represent them. They'll come out usually 80 or 90 per cent, but this time in that area they'll come out 100 per cent to make sure somebody from their community represents them. Where is that going to leave the other half, the English people who probably won't come out that strong, to get a person to represent them, from their people? I see a battle starting right there in that community.

I heard another person say this is probably one of the worst things that could happen to us, in the French community, since the deportation. They lost their right to be here and now they're losing their right that, I believe, they made an agreement 175 years ago in 1837, to have that distinct society and be represented that way and here they are losing that. I know just the way that man put it to me, how they are feeling. It's going to be a battle right in the community, I believe, to get that person, some person elected to represent the French and the English people. I can see it brewing, I can feel it brewing, and it hasn't even happened yet.

You know, another fellow told me that if you're a Star Trek fan - some of you may be. I mean, I am, a lot of people are; Star Trek. It's where the flip phones came from, from the first Star Trek, they had them back 30 years ago. Gene Roddenberry, he had quite a head on his shoulders. There was also another group in outer space called the Borg. The Borg flew around in outer space and any people they came across, they would try to assimilate them, to be like them.

AN HON. MEMBER: To absorb them.

MR. THERIAULT: To absorb them. "Resistance is futile" is what they would say when they got you, you all know that. You know, I think some of the people in the French



community are feeling the same way, they feel that by breaking up their ridings, taking their ridings away from them and putting them in with the English people, they feel they are losing that distinction and they feel that they want to be assimilated just like my great-grandfather was four generations ago. He was assimilated into the English community at no fault of his own, it just happened. We still love him and the whole family loves him and we know about him, but we lost that language by that happening, by what happened to my great-grandfather four generations ago.

Can that happen to the French communities of this province if we divide them up and bring them - if they lose the distinct part of their society, what they fought for and what they have had for 175 years. It's something to think about, I would say, and I know they are thinking about it because I've heard it.

With those few words, I think that's probably enough out of me about that but I hope the government is listening over there. I hope the Premier is listening because it would be a hard thing to live with, for the next 175 years, realizing that you may have become a Borg and assimilated the French people into the English society, with maybe not even realizing it; it's something to think about. With that, Madam Speaker, I'll take my seat.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Madam Speaker, I was listening to my colleague, the member for Digby-Annapolis and it really said a lot about what we're supposed to be doing in this House.

My uncle, who brought me in after my father passed away, he was a practical guy - not a whole lot of education, but an awful lot of common sense, and he used to say time and time again, if it's not broken, why fix it? Here in the Province of Nova Scotia we have a system that has been working. We have people who are being represented. In Nova Scotia one of the great things is nobody really looks around and asks, what's your background? They just say we're all Nova Scotians and we need to be treated fairly - and we normally are, but now this process has come upon us and it's not a process that any of us should be proud of. Our job here is to make sure that there is fair representation, to make sure that people get their voice heard.

In my time of being involved as a representative for Cape Breton West, never once, never once did anyone come to me and say, you know, in Richmond County they only have 7,500 voters and you have 14,000 - never once was that an issue. Why, Madam Speaker? Because they were a community of interest, there were interests of the people who lived in those areas and they were getting represented because of those interests. So this process came along - and I know we have to review it, that's part of our mandate, and I think we should, but just because you have to review a process, it doesn't mean that you have to change something that's working.

Madam Speaker, we as a House elected a committee and that committee went out and listened to Nova Scotians. They came back; they had some suggestions. They selected a group of people - normal, everyday Nova Scotians from every walk of life who had concerns about their community - who took on a volunteer position because they thought it was important to be involved, and what happened? They, in turn, went to community after community after community; they met with people; they listened to those people, and those people told them what they felt would be good for their community.

So what happened next? This group came back with an interim report – a report that did indeed leave the four protected seats intact. It made some changes in some other areas but there was a reason why these volunteers, these people who have been active in their community, came back with that report, Madam Speaker. It is because that's what they heard from the people around the Province of Nova Scotia and that was what we asked them to do. Now, when they issued their report, there was very little uprise. A lot of people thought it was a reasonable report and were ready to take it - except for the Minister of Justice. He didn't think they followed the mandate that was given to them.

The mandate they were given was given to them by the people of the Province of Nova Scotia who went and spoke to them and told them what it was that they needed and what they wanted. That was the mandate that they followed and that's the mandate that we're supposed to follow, because this House that we're in today, the people who are in here representing the people of the Province of Nova Scotia, are supposed to be doing just that - bringing forward their ideas and their concerns, not what's best for an individual Party or an individual person. (Applause)

We are given the trust to make sure that the wishes that they have made known to us are acted upon. We should all - every person in this House - be ashamed of how this process has taken place and how it has drifted away from the very mandate it was intended to do - to listen to the people of the Province of Nova Scotia.

You know, Madam Speaker, returning to the House of Assembly this session, the members of our caucus were very hopeful that we would spend our time talking about jobs and the economy, talking about families, talking about where we were going in this whole province, talking about things that I hear about every day when I am in my constituency - power rates, education, health care. Those are the kinds of things that I hear when I'm in the constituency of Cape Breton West.

People are upset by the boundaries but they throw up their hands and say, why do we bother talking? We go, we make our presentations, and nobody listens. Instead, what has happened, Madam Speaker, is that we have had heavy-handed interference by this NDP Government. What was supposed to be an independent process, a process to redraw the boundaries of this province, has been forced into an issue in this House. That is not what you do with an independent commission.

Madam Speaker, anyone who has been following this process from day one can see that there were flaws, from the time that there was that meeting just before Christmas, with another meeting just before New Year's, with members of the committee from as far away as Bras d'Or, or as far away as Argyle, or far away in different parts of this province, to call a meeting two days before family holidays, to try to set the rules so they could fit in a box that suited One Government Place. That's not what the people of the Province of Nova Scotia want and that's not what they deserve to get.

Madam Speaker, I want to make it perfectly clear that the people who served on that commission were good people, good Nova Scotians who have been putting their names forward in many different ways, at many different times, doing what they felt was good for the Province of Nova Scotia. They did it time after time. They did their job. They went out. They listened to what people had to say. They brought back the thoughts of those people, and what happened to them? They were chastised by the Attorney General of the Province of Nova Scotia.

That is not the way it should have happened. That man is just that, he's a man and he doesn't have that authority. He was overriding the authority of this whole building, of this whole House, of this whole system that we celebrated 250 years of democracy here in this province. He walked over what is the right way to do things, in order to satisfy a few on that side of the House.

There are very, very many great Nova Scotians. We had a sample of them with the people who were on this committee, Madam Speaker, and we walked over them, even to the point when we had the final report come out and there was a dissenting vote, and what does the Premier of this province do? He runs them over. He chastises them for saying what he believes. I thought that was what a democracy was about - saying what you believe and being able to say it and not have any repercussions.

Here we are, 10 days away from Remembrance Day, where we're going to be talking about many, many people who gave their lives so that we would have that right, and what does the Premier of this Province do? He chastises an individual who had the spirit and the belief in his convictions to speak up for what he believed. Shame on him.

Paul Gaudet is a very honourable individual, well known and well respected, not only in his community but in many areas. He is a name now that is recognized in many parts of this province because of the way he was treated by the Premier of this province. He deserves an apology from this Premier, that government, and this House.

Now, historically, the redrawing of our electoral boundaries in Nova Scotia has been an apolitical affair. Granted, there have been instances where the results have left some people unhappy and disappointed, but prior to this year, prior to this set of reviews, no one could ever say that a sitting government interfered in the process for political

purposes. Yet that's exactly what the NDP Government did here in the Province of Nova Scotia. Madam Speaker, that is not acceptable.

The last two times this was done, when the boundaries were drawn, the Progressive Conservative Party, our Party, was in government, and every effort was made to ensure the process was fair, and not political. Even the member for Richmond, who sometimes is not always that kind to the Progressive Conservative Party, made the point last week here in this place, he said: "I don't believe you'll ever find where any member of the House would say there was a political interference in 1992 or in 2002." I will table the honourable member's comments in full. He's right. The member for Richmond is right about that, and in this caucus we're proud of the fact that there was no political interference.

At another point in his speech, the member for Richmond explained that since he's been around this place and the electoral boundaries process for a long time - which he has, he's a long-standing member here, a hard-working member - he offered some advice to the chairman of the select committee, the Attorney General. The member for Richmond told us his goal was to "ensure we were able to do this in a fair, impartial manner as it was done the previous two times." And that is in the document that I just tabled, Madam Speaker.

What we have here are members of the Liberal caucus, who rarely award any credit to the members of the Progressive Conservative Party, acknowledging that historically our Party has kept politics out of this process.

MR. JIM BOUDREAU: Ha.

MR. MACLEOD: I hear a snicker coming from the member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour. He really wants to be part of the discussion and I'm hopeful that he's going to get on his feet.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: He's not allowed.

AN HON. MEMBER: A lot of time-outs over there.

HON. LEONARD PREYRA: We wanted to give Nova Scotians a chance to speak at Law Amendments.

MR. MACLEOD: Now we hear from one of those sources of the wind energy from that side of the House. (Interruptions) We're hearing now from the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage - the acting chairman, by the way, who gerrymandered the meetings that brought this around. This man is a political scientist - he spent much time telling the young people of our communities how politics worked in Nova Scotia; that's amazing. Then he takes part in a system that was working and turns it around and twists it so that it suits one Party in the House of Assembly. Shame on that individual, shame on him.

Do you know what? I'm proud to say that our Party continues to keep politics out of this process. In fact, our Leader, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, is the only Leader in this place who refused to try to petition the Electoral Boundaries Commission. That was because he respected the independence of the process. You only need to look at how the process has unfolded to see exactly how this NDP Government has put their own political interest ahead of what is best for the people of the Province of Nova Scotia.

Madam Speaker, a year ago the NDP first revealed their plans to start the Select Committee on Establishing an Electoral Boundaries Commission. As was said earlier, it happened here on Halloween. That night we thought it was a good thing. We were moving on a process that had a proven track record. Little did we know that indeed it was only a Halloween trick that was being committed by the government of the Province of Nova Scotia.

This government, this NDP Government, has interfered every step of the way. The NDP has interfered and intervened in ways unheard of by long-standing members of this House of Assembly or by anybody who has been a student of politics in the Province of Nova Scotia. We remember that when the Electoral Boundaries Commission first released their interim report, the Attorney General told them to go back to the drawing board. The report wasn't what he wanted. It wasn't what the NDP wanted, but it was what the people of the Province of Nova Scotia wanted.

After all, if you can't win a seat, it's just easy to get rid of it. It's easier, and that's what the Attorney General ordered the commission to do. In short, the Attorney General decided he could treat Nova Scotians like some kind of NDP "banana republic," where the government can draw the electoral boundaries any way they wanted. That's not the way it should be in Nova Scotia. That's not the way it is in Nova Scotia, and that's why people came out in droves against what was being done to them in places like Yarmouth, Shelburne, and other areas.

Madam Speaker, apparently demanding a new interim report wasn't good enough for the NDP. That didn't satisfy them. They wanted to see something else unprecedented in the Province of Nova Scotia. We saw members of the government, we saw Cabinet Ministers, we saw the Premier appearing before the Electoral Boundaries Commission and lobbying for changes. Never seen before, but this group decided that that's what they needed to do, because it wasn't exactly working out the way they wanted. There was pushback from the very people that they are supposed to be representing.

Now I can't speak for you, Madam Speaker, or anyone else, but I know I didn't make a presentation to the Electoral Boundaries Commission. I know I didn't even do a written submission to the Electoral Boundaries Commission, because it is the people I represent that this process is for, and it was those people who made their presentations. That's how this system is to work - not to have people like the Premier going before the

commission and instilling their wishes on a group of volunteers who they wouldn't take their advice from in the first place.

Madam Speaker, our caucus opposed the inappropriate political interference from the very beginning, and it's for that reason we find ourselves unable to support this legislation. People will ask, what was the result of this heavy-handed political interference? Well, one result was the division of Shelburne. The first report that was prepared by the Electoral Boundaries Commission, on the advice of Nova Scotians – and I want to keep going back to that – the commission went out, they listened to Nova Scotians, they came back with a report. They did their job, they listened to the community. As a result of that, Madam Speaker, that initial report was met with great praise, from all parts of this province, on how efficient a job they had done, how they had looked into and took into consideration concerns about communities of interest and minority situations that we've had in the past.

The commission did their job on that first report and Shelburne was happy. Residents in the protected constituencies were happy. There were some issues, of course, but the members of this caucus were confident that in the second round of public consultations the Electoral Boundaries Commission would get it right. Madam Speaker, had they been left alone to do their job, they would have gotten it right.

But no, what happens? The NDP stepped in and the Attorney General refused to accept the report. He ordered a new one, one that suited the NDP's liking. He took it from being about community of interest, about pride in community, and he turned it into a simple numbers game, a numbers game that hurt people right across this province. It's amazing, Madam Speaker, it is truly amazing, how one man can make every person in the Province of Nova Scotia so upset by writing one silly letter, that he had no business in writing in the first place. (Applause)

Madam Speaker, after the NDP's interference and because they ordered the elimination of the protected constituencies, the final report saw the constituency of Shelburne divided; divided without any consultation. So what's the result of that? The Attorney General says, well, we're going to go down and we're going to have a meeting there so that the Law Amendments Committee can hear what everybody has to say. But the members in our caucus who are on that committee weren't asked; the members in the Liberal caucus weren't asked and then today, when my good colleague from Digby-Annapolis said will you come to Digby-Annapolis and will you listen to their concerns? All we heard from the Premier was, well they can come to Law Amendments Committee and they can have their turn there and the best thing to do is get on with this so we can have the Law Amendments Committee quick so you can do what needs to be done.

Again, strange that we have time to go to an NDP Cabinet Minister's constituency but we don't have time to go to a constituency held by somebody in the Opposition. It was right for the member for Argyle, my caucus colleague, to urge the Law Amendments

Committee to meet in Shelburne, by a letter. What should have happened was, the committee should have been called into place and a discussion take place and at that discussion decide, as a group, if that could take place.

Madam Speaker, there are so many things that are wrong with this process but the worst thing that I see is we forgot, or at least that side of the House has forgotten, why we're here. We're here to represent the people who gave us the opportunity to be here. I remember when I first got elected, the member for Cape Breton Nova, who is no longer in the House anymore, who was one of the longer-sitting members, said to me, you know, when you look at it, it's pretty awesome the honour that's been placed on you. When you look at how many people are in the Province of Nova Scotia and only 52 have the privilege to sit in this House.

Think about that, Madam Speaker, and look around at all our colleagues, from many different areas of the province, from many backgrounds, from many different interests, but all here with the single purpose of doing what they believe is best for the Province of Nova Scotia, and then look at a group that decides they know better than everybody else. They know exactly what everybody needs to have happen. They know how to fix everything. I guess that's why we've lost 8,300 jobs. That's why pulp cutters in my community and around my community are wondering how they're going to survive and stay in business. That's why power rates have increased higher than they've been anywhere else, because they have all the answers.

Well, if those are the answers they have, my goodness, that should be enough warning for them to look at what they're trying to do to the boundaries and to the people of the Province of Nova Scotia. As my uncle said, if it's not broke, don't fix it - a man who had a lot of common sense, a man who made a nice living in this community, a man who is so much and so similar to many of the people who I have the privilege to represent.

Madam Speaker, it is a crime, an outright crime, as to what that group is trying to do with the Electoral Boundaries Commission. It is out of place to think that they know better than anyone in the Province of Nova Scotia. It is a shame that they think this is the only way they can win re-election, by gerrymandering rather than by giving good government. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton South.

HON. MANNING MACDONALD: Madam Speaker, I just want to go on the record here for a few moments. Much has been said about the boundary issue and what has happened surrounding this issue for the past number of months. I really take exception to a couple of issues here. One is the fact that the Premier continuously states, or did state, that the Law Amendments Committee decided to go to the constituency of the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Shelburne, with the committee, to discuss the concerns of the people of Shelburne and I think that's a great idea. I don't have a problem with that except

- well, I have two problems; one is that the Law Amendments Committee never met and decided to go anywhere. That's number one.

I'm a member of the Law Amendments Committee and I can tell you, Madam Speaker, that I was never consulted about where the Law Amendments Committee was going to go with this issue. My colleague, the House Leader, was never consulted and the two members from the Progressive Conservative Party were never consulted. This was done by One Government Place, the Premier, hastily trying to douse a fire, I guess, down in Shelburne County, with his Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture who was under siege down there. So the Premier decided that he was going to tell the Justice Minister that that committee is going to Shelburne.

Well, I can tell you, Madam Speaker, I'm a member of the committee and I'm not going to Shelburne because if I go to Shelburne, I'll go everywhere else in Nova Scotia with this committee so that people who want to hear - the member for Antigonish wants the committee to go down there. The members for the Acadian communities want the Law Amendments Committee to go there, and fair enough. If we're going to change the rules of this House, let's change it for everybody. Let's not cherry-pick where this committee is going to go to try to save the hide of a government Cabinet Minister. Let's be honest about this and say that if there's enough concern with this report, then the Law Amendments Committee should go around this province and hear all of those concerns before they come back here and file their final report and report back to the House of Assembly.

Madam Speaker, this is absolutely ridiculous. This is not democracy. If this is the way this government is going to operate, why do we have a Law Amendments Committee? Why don't we just have the Justice Minister and the Premier decide what's going to happen at the Law Amendments Committee and the rest of us can just take our places here? We have no say. I know that reasonable, thinking people would agree that at least the committee should meet and decide these issues at the committee level, knowing full well that the government has a majority on that committee and the government's going to get its way. That's fine, but at least we would have the ability to go before this committee and state our case as to whether or not we should go or we shouldn't go, and then watch the government do its will anyway.

Democracy has gone out the window here. This majority NDP Government is running the show and the Premier is developing policy on the fly every day. If a crisis comes up, the Premier tries to put the fire out on a daily basis, only to have another fire the next day. Now the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal is encouraging his people in Antigonish - another Cabinet Minister who was speaking freely and saying that the Committee on Law Amendments should go to Antigonish, that the Committee on Law Amendments should listen to the people of Antigonish, and I'm saying that I agree with that as well.



I also agree they should go to Digby, and you know what the Premier said about the people of Digby today? They can come to Halifax, and they can get in there and make their case. They can make their case. No thought about going to Digby, maybe because the member for Digby-Annapolis is not a Cabinet Minister. That could be. But they are not going to Antigonish yet either. We'll wait and see what happens there.

I suggest that if the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal can't get the Committee on Law Amendments to go to Antigonish and it's going to Shelburne, then that minister should quit the government and sit as an MLA and represent the people that he was sent here to represent. His people have said they want the Committee on Law Amendments to go to Antigonish. They want to be heard. If that minister can't deliver that, he should resign from that Cabinet and represent the people of Antigonish, because they're who sent him here, not the Premier.

The same goes for the other ridings. I don't want to talk too long on this issue today, because much has been said about it, but I can tell you that I, for one, as a member of that committee, think my rights in this House have certainly been compromised. As a member of the committee, I have not even had the courtesy of the Minister of Justice telling me what's going to happen. He never mentioned it to me. We heard it here in the House. He went out and told the press, and then the Premier said he did it first, and then he said, no, the Minister of Justice did it. Then he said the Committee on Law Amendments did it. Well, the Committee on Law Amendments didn't know anything. They had never met. What kind of democracy are we operating here, anyway?

For a moment, I want to go back to Cape Breton, and the fact that this report is having the effect of losing another seat in Cape Breton. If this report goes through, Cape Bretoners are going to lose yet another seat. When I first came to this House, we had 11 seats from Cape Breton Island in the House of Assembly. If this report goes through, we'll have eight. We've lost three seats. I suggest to you, why the hurry for this report to go through, anyway? Let's give it some more thought. The good people of Cape Breton Nova, that seat has disappeared - the seat of the Speaker is disappearing if this report goes through.

The community of Whitney Pier is not going to disappear. I'm not going to stand here and say that the community of Whitney Pier is simply going to fade into history by the demise of the name "Cape Breton Nova." What's going to happen here is that Cape Breton is going to lose one more voice in this House of Assembly representing that great part of Nova Scotia that I dearly love. (Applause) That doesn't seem to bother the government at all. That doesn't seem to bother the government.

We have Cabinet Ministers who are trying desperately to save their own seats, but no thought about what I think would be a rational decision for this entire House of Assembly to make. What's the hurry about putting this through? We're ahead of schedule on it anyway. Why not turf this report and go back to square one? The report is

compromised anyway; the report has been interfered with by the government. It wasn't an independent commission at the last of it. It was a gerrymandering of the worst kind by this government to suit its political will. That's all that's happening here.

Do you think if the government thought for one minute that the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture would survive if they didn't go down there, they would never send that committee down there. The fact is, the only way they're going to save his hide in this House is to go down there, but I don't know what they're going to do after they listen to them. It's going to have an effect going right across that part of Nova Scotia.

The Premier says no changes, so if there's going to be no changes, why is the committee trotting on down there, to have some kind of a circus there, and then walk out of there and do nothing for the good people of Shelburne? Worse than that, Madam Speaker, they won't even commit to go to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal's riding in Antigonish, so I guess they care less about him than they do about the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. That's the only thing reasonable Nova Scotians would suggest, in that situation.

I say to both those Cabinet Ministers, represent your people first. Represent the people in your ridings first. If you do that, you Cabinet Ministers may be around this House as long as I've been, if you represent the people who sent you here. Never mind listening to One Government Place because if you listen to One Government Place, you are surely going to wave your government out the door after the next election. The people of your ridings will say, thank heavens we got rid of those people because they wouldn't represent us the way they were sent here to do.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I just want to say that as a member of this committee - I've been a member of this committee for a long period of time - never have I been party to this kind of shenanigans going on here, to send a committee around the province, on some kind of a dog and pony show that doesn't mean anything. I think the people in the government Party should tell the Premier and tell the Minister of Justice that they should turf this entire process and go back to square one with a truly independent commission that will do its work without interference from the government. Thank you very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Madam Speaker, I realize that this boundary issue is one that has caused a lot of stress in communities across the province, it has caused a lot of stress with MLAs who represent those communities that have been impacted by it. It's something that impacts all sitting members; it's something that impacts Nova Scotians everywhere. The gravity of this, I think, is well understood by everybody in this House of Assembly.

I do want to address some of what I would consider to be outlandish attacks on our Leader and the attacks coming from the government side of the House, as well as the Third Party, saying that somehow Liberals are responsible for what is going on right now. There's been a quote used, from our Leader, when he presented at Annapolis - which I will provide in a second - which is used out of context and is misconstrued, basically to try to cover for this government's ineptitude in dealing with this issue.

In order to understand that, I am going to table a table here, this is Table 1 of the Electoral Boundaries Commission. In this table, it lists the amount of electors, the different populations in each current riding or constituency. If you note here, by looking at the data on this table, there were five constituencies in the southern part of Nova Scotia, on the South Shore and in the Valley, which are below the population requirements or electoral requirements that the NDP Government has set forth in the terms of reference. Those five are: Argyle, Clare, Digby-Annapolis, Queens, and Shelburne. I'll table this table right here.

The quote that has been used against our Leader, and I'll read this now and I'll table this as well, Madam Speaker, "I know other solutions have been looked at by the commission and I know that some others have been presented to you at meetings like this one - for example, like combining Clare and Argyle, or merging Argyle with the Municipality of the District of Barrington, then combining Queens with the remaining of Shelburne County, and combining Clare with Digby. All of these would meet the population target set by the NDP Government."

Nowhere in this quote does our Leader make a recommendation to the Electoral Boundaries Commission, he doesn't even come close to making a recommendation. What he highlights is that the terms of reference, as the NDP has set out, provides certain electoral numbers that need to be fulfilled. He basically repeated what it actually says in the commission's report - and I'll highlight that later - that if you're going to look at the population numbers, as the NDP have commanded the Electoral Boundaries Commission to do, then these are the options that the commission is looking at, as set out by the NDP Government, and I'll table this.

For some reason, this quote has been used to suggest that somehow the Liberal Party is responsible for this proposed split of Shelburne, which is absolutely ludicrous. It's unfounded and it's actually quite shameful to see a government resort to these sorts of base tactics to divert attention away from the fact that they've actually created this mess in the first place.

I was also disappointed with the Third Party because for a long time during this process both Opposition Parties stood united in our opposition to the way this electoral boundaries process had been dictated by this government. There was a long time that we were both doing what we thought was right: standing up for minority representation, protecting those ridings, and ensuring that the voices of Nova Scotians were heard. It was

unfortunate that the Third Party decided to jump on the NDP bandwagon and try to pinpoint this issue on the Leader.

I think the fact that we see both Parties doing this is just a clear example of who people in this House, in the other two Parties, think the biggest threat is and I would consider it a compliment, actually, because if we're going to look at quotes that were from people who presented during the Electoral Boundaries Commission public consultations, I have one here: "I believe that the proposal to split Shelburne County is a good one. I believe that the Clyde River boundary or somewhere in that area would make sense for that to go toward Queens County - again, because of communities of interest, flow of traffic. Argyle and the other half of Shelburne could go that way, and it would make sense."

I'll table this quote. It's from the Electoral Boundaries Commission meeting held in Bridgewater, I believe, on August 14<sup>th</sup>. That quote comes from the Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson who was a former Progressive Conservative Cabinet Minister. So if we're going to use these quotes to suggest that - now, am I going to sit here and say it's because of this former Tory Cabinet Minister that this boundary split happened? I'm not going to say that because it's not fair, you know, I'm not going to say that. She actually said, very specifically, this is a good idea. This is what we should do. Our Leader didn't say that.

I have another quote here if you want to take quotes out of context. This one isn't out of context. One of the other people that the New Democrats attacked and blamed for this split in Shelburne was Mark Furey, who I believe is seeking the nomination for the Liberal Party in Lunenburg West.

I have a quote here from the member for Lunenburg West: "The other thing is to acknowledge what many of the previous speakers have said . . ." - of course, I'm reading this because Mark Furey presented before the member for Lunenburg West and Mark Furey is one of the guys who the member for Shelburne has suggested is responsible for the split. So let's look here - this is the member for Lunenburg West: "The other thing is to acknowledge what many of the previous speakers have said: Mayor Downe, Mr. Furey, and Mr. Nauss who was, I think, one of the longest serving politicians in our country, not just in our area. The folks that spoke really do know the area well."

Now, I will continue on with more quotes from the member for Lunenburg West as well. "For all those folks who live in Lunenburg County but who were placed in the Queens constituency in the last review and for all those in the current constituency of Lunenburg West who - it is proposed - might be moved to the new constituency of Queens-Lunenburg . . ." So we see here that the member for Lunenburg West is, I would say, adequately representing the interests of his constituents in saying we have a community of interest in the Bridgewater area; we want to amalgamate what was lost to Queens back into the Lunenburg constituency. I think that's a very fair thing to do, as the member for Lunenburg West, because to have any communities divided, I think, is unfortunate.

When you take into consideration the data that I tabled earlier, the only way that that would work out is if Queens is paired with somebody else because there's a population deficit there. Am I going to sit here and argue that the member for Lunenburg West is responsible for the division in Shelburne because he argued that the rest of Queens be put back into Lunenburg - you know, not directly, but the rest of Queens is to go somewhere else. I'm not going to do that because it's not fair, and I'll table these comments as well. I will table these as well.

So clearly you can take any quotes from any member of any Party during this process and apply it in such a way that says someone is responsible for it, but really, and quite frankly, it's the process itself that was responsible for this and the population targets that were forced into these terms of reference by this government. The government right now is a majority government. No one else has power here. They are the only group of folks in this Chamber that have power to do anything, and so for this group to suggest that it's everybody else's fault that this happened, I think, is ridiculous.

I do have to address what the member for Shelburne, the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, said. The member, the Minister of Environment, stood in his place and laid a very vicious attack on the Liberals, saying we're responsible for this - it's on the record. I've read the quote that's on the record, and nowhere does it say to cut Shelburne in two. Nowhere did our Leader said that.

So let's look at what the member for Shelburne, the Minister of Environment, has said. I've got a quote here from sometime in October after the final boundaries report was submitted. The member for Shelburne, the Minister of Environment, is quoted as saying it "came out of the blue" in October and that he was "blindsided." He didn't know there was a potential split that could happen in Shelburne. I'll table these quotes.

So if the member for Shelburne, the Minister of Environment, was so blindsided, I wonder why he didn't read the July 20th report, which was the second interim report, which said, "The Commission considered the following ways to attain at least 75 per cent of the average number of voters in constituencies that included the voters of Clare and Argyle: (1) Merge the constituency of Clare with constituency of Digby-Annapolis. (2) Merge the constituency of Argyle with the constituency of Shelburne." It says very clearly in this report, which was presented on July 20th, that the split of Shelburne was a very real possibility. I'll table this page of the report. I'll table this for the minister to see, since he didn't read the report.

Okay, so say the minister didn't read the report. We'll give him the benefit of the doubt. He was blindsided. He didn't know it was a possibility, because he didn't do his due diligence and read the report that came out, knowing that every area in our part of the province would be affected.

Let's look at a quote here from the member for Queens. This is from August 14. This is a presentation. The member for Queens says to the Electoral Boundaries Commission - this is from the August 14th meeting where they were soliciting public feedback - "and I guess it would be dependent on where the boundary was drawn into Shelburne." I have another quote here from the member for Queens: "I'm not going to make recommendations to the committee where those boundaries should move, whether they should move toward the Shelburne area or whether they should move to where the committee has recommended them to move at this point in time." She doesn't make any recommendation. She doesn't say they shouldn't go to Shelburne, but she does recognize that there could be a potential boundary shift in Shelburne.

So let's give the minister the benefit of the doubt - he didn't read the report. He didn't do his job and he didn't read the report. Okay, but then why would a member of his own caucus know that this was possible and not him, the individual who represents Shelburne County? How, then, in October is this minister blindsided? Did the members of his caucus not share with him the fact that they were talking about potential shifts into Shelburne? What's happening here? I'm sympathetic toward the member for Shelburne, the Minister of Environment, because I went through, and might go through again, the same issue he's going through, with my community being torn in half, which is fair. The same goes for every Acadian member of this Legislature. I'm going to table these comments, please.

What I didn't appreciate was the fact that this minister, in a really desperate way, tried to pin this on individuals who had absolutely nothing to do with it. It's either that his caucus members were hiding this information from him and hiding the report from him, or he fell asleep at the wheel. Either way, the responsibility to represent our constituencies to the best of our ability falls on our shoulders and our shoulders alone. I don't ask anyone else in this Chamber to represent Yarmouth, and no one should be expected to represent the constituents of Shelburne besides the member for Shelburne, the Minister of Environment.

I am happy to see - I've had some feedback from Shelburne - that the community of Shelburne isn't buying this recent play by the NDP Government, and which was being supported by the Third Party. I have a quote here from a constituent from Shelburne, "Regardless, the NDP is evidently ready to attack the Liberals for putting this all in motion and then flip-flopping and covering up the fact that they recommended this in the first place. Classic Harper-Style Spin. The NDP can't be allowed to split up a county and simply blame someone else."

I'm very happy to know that constituents of Shelburne are actually aware of what happened and why this was happening in the first place. Let's look at this process from the beginning. We've had members stand up, including the new Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage and say this is about voter parity, it's about equity, it's about fairness in our democracy. It's about ensuring that people are represented in the best way possible, so that our democracy can flourish. Yet we set up terms of reference for a commission, in

secret, right before Christmas – when I say “we”, I’m speaking in whatever person for the government – the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage stands up and says this is about ensuring fair democracy.

Yet, we totally neglected to include other Parties in that process, through a process by which they’re meant to be included and they’re supposed to be included. This is a unilateral decision made by one Party, one member, to change the terms of reference of this Electoral Boundaries Commission and that has resulted, I think since I’ve been around and probably the last generation, in one of the moves that has hurt communities more than anything else, in the Province of Nova Scotia.

What happened to the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island after he did this? As deputy chair of that committee? He was appointed as Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage - Communities, Culture and Heritage. That’s the individual that set up a process - I know it wasn’t him, nothing from this government comes from anywhere but One Government Place, I’m sure. But he’s the one that did it, he was the instrument.

So you have a member, the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island, the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage, who, unilaterally, makes a change in the terms of reference for a very important process – the Electoral Boundaries Commission – a decision by which we eliminated protected Acadian ridings, and tore other communities in two. Now this minister is responsible for Communities, Culture and Heritage in the Province of Nova Scotia? There’s been no person that has done more damage to communities, that has taken away our culture and our heritage as much as that member and this government. That’s the post that he now holds, that’s scary to me.

I really think that the irony of all this, especially hearing that member get up and speak about the nature of democracy, we need to include everybody and everybody needs to be treated fairly or equally. The irony of this is that we’ve actually set up a process that was completely unresponsive to the wishes of Nova Scotians. We put a commission in place with terms of references that you cannot have protected ridings anymore. Most members of that commission felt the same way, they shared the opinion of government, going out into the field and consulting Nova Scotians. I know for a fact that many of them were determined to do what they felt was the right thing and eliminate protected ridings.

But what happened is, after these individuals, these volunteers, went out and consulted with Nova Scotians, they met with Nova Scotians from across the province, from Cape Breton down to Argyle and Clare during that part of the process. They said, you know what, it’s wrong to eliminate those because they’re actually important to our democratic representation in this province. To eliminate those would negatively impact the lives of many citizens. It would do damage to our ability to preserve and honour and to thrive our Acadian populations and culture. They came back with a very clear message. Protected ridings should stay. People want them and they’re important.

We hear that this is about creating a fair democracy, an equitable democracy but after that report came out, what happened? The Premier and the Attorney General said, no, no, we don't care what everybody said. We don't care what the consultations told you. We want you to do something else. This is in pursuit of fair and equitable democracy?

I know the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island - the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage - is a political science professor; my first course at St. Mary's was with him. I've always respected that member but I know that he knows that democracy is a lot more complicated than a math formula. Our democratic representation is a lot more complicated than a math formula. We learned that during the first process of this Electoral Boundaries Commission when these volunteers went out and talked to people. We're still learning about it now. We're having communities ripped in two. We're having people feel hurt and neglected throughout this but yet we still say democracy is only a math formula? It's not, Madam Speaker, and I hope that all the members over there know it.

When it comes to minority representation, there is a reason why you give special rights to minorities because without those rights they aren't heard, because they are not the majority. That's why these things happen. That's why there are protected seats in Nova Scotia, to give minorities a voice, a real one, one that sits in this House and can debate things and help make decisions.

Having these special representative seats for these minority groups - especially ones as historic and important to this province as our Acadian population or African-Nova Scotian population - is an important part of our democracy. I would say that eliminating these is not in the interest of equitable democracy because what it does is it ensures that the majority, and only the majority, have a voice here.

You look around this Chamber and you see what that looks like. We are becoming a more diverse House of Assembly, as we move forward, but we're not diverse enough. A lot of us share the same cultural heritage, the same racial heritage. I think that as a House of Assembly, we have an obligation to ensure that that's different, that all kinds of voices are represented in here. The reason why you have protected ridings for minorities is so those minorities can choose their representation and have a seat in this honoured Chamber, with everybody else.

I would argue, and this caucus has argued, along with the Third Party, that in order to have real equitable representation, representation that is fair, that is reflective of the complexity of our democracy, you need to give special rights to certain groups. That's the only way to level the playing field. In the case of Acadians, it's a necessary component to preserve, protect their language, culture and identity, which is very different from Anglophone Nova Scotians. It is different. It's a different history. It's a different culture. They are a different people. It's just unbelievable to see a government that has professed to be such a progressive movement, do something like this to minority groups.



So why would we do this? Everyone is going to speculate on the reasons why. Did the New Democrats run in their last election on eliminating minority ridings, protected ridings? Was there an outcry from the public to eliminate these? Were people in Halifax assembling, saying we're not being treated fairly because there are protected ridings - four of them out of 52 - in southwestern Nova Scotia and in Cape Breton?

So where does the motivation come from? There was no outcry. There was no protest to eliminate these protected ridings, but yet eliminating them is in pursuit of good governance and appropriate, equitable, fair democracy? What about the other side? There actually were assemblies. There actually were protests. There actually were movements to preserve these things.

In Yarmouth we had 2,500 people show up, the largest public gathering in Nova Scotia history, when it comes to government policy. In Clare we had 500, the first time, I think 300 the second time. In Argyle we had over 200. We had more in Richmond. The message from all those meetings was the same. In Yarmouth we said we want to keep our riding together, obviously, we're a community of interest; we want to stick together.

There was another message that night, one that would have been felt very clearly by anybody in that room. We want our neighbours to have a voice too. We want our minorities to be protected. We want our protected ridings to remain protected. Where was the response to that? Where was a response to some of the largest political movements that there has been in the last decade, to change something? There was none. This government was totally unresponsive to movements of people and to the wishes of people.

I think it's very, very unfortunate that they're allowed to do this, under the guise that this is for a better democracy for everybody. Trust us, you know, don't trust yourselves, we know what's best. You know, the Acadians, yes, of course, they want representation but that's not right because the only thing that matters is voter parity. We know that's not true. (Interruptions)

The members that I'm hearing on this side of the House bring up a very good point. When it comes back to the motivations to eliminate these, if it didn't come from the public, if it wasn't promised in your election platform, if it didn't really come from anywhere besides some meeting that the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island - the now Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage and the Premier; it came from two people probably, or maybe a few others in that caucus, I don't know - if it didn't come from public will, then where did it come from? I'm not levelling any accusations here but when one looks at the fact that no NDP representative has ever been elected in any one of those protected ridings, something I think now they're very proud of, perhaps we have a bit of political interference and influence coming into this, for political gain.

So the question, I guess you always have to ask when it comes to looking at motivations is, who's going to benefit the most? The most logical way to look at

motivation is who's going to benefit the most. I can understand where the Premier is coming from. Get rid of four seats that we'll never have and we'll get more seats in Halifax where we're stronger. Clearly the governing Party had the most to benefit from this and I think one can only assume that the reason for this whole fiasco is because they were trying to improve their political position in the Province of Nova Scotia and I think that's pretty shameful.

Members of the Third Party mentioned that, and I've heard this from members of our caucus who have been around for a while - never before has this process been set up in such a clandestine way, never before has government involved themselves so much in this process without consultation with the other Parties. The last time this happened, I believe it was under the Honourable John Hamm, who was Premier. According to members who were around the table at that time - and I'm sure there were members from the NDP there as well - the Premier actually, at the time, wanted consensus amongst the Parties, on what the terms of reference would be for boundaries. He wanted consensus because that's fair. These boundaries affect everybody and they should not be interfered because they're so important by the desire of one political Party alone, who is self-interested. Premier Hamm said, we're going to include everybody, we're all going to agree on these terms of reference, and that's how we're going to move forward. What happened when that was the case? Protected ridings were kept.

So to have a government, who under the guise says, you know, they're in pursuit of fairer democracy in the Province of Nova Scotia and not include the other Parties, even worse than that, it wasn't just not including other Parties, it was doing something without telling them. The only reason we picked up on this is because the members in the Opposition Parties picked up on the change in the wording in that document. Not only were we not included, we weren't told it was going to happen - right? Does that make sense to anybody? That started this whole fiasco, you know, and it has been pretty shameful.

You know, the Premier has had a very clear agenda to eliminate protected ridings. That has been laid very clear throughout this process and I also have some quotes here from the Premier. I'll just table them but for the first time I think ever in Nova Scotian history a Premier presented to the Electoral Boundaries Commission and pushed to eliminate protected ridings, and I'll table these comments right here. The language that's used is legal jargon but for anybody who can understand that, you know what he's talking about. He talks about deviation of population and, you know, why this agenda?

Then, after the whole process was done, we have a commission member who is an Acadian - who was appointed by the Liberal caucus, our one appointee - who disagreed with what had happened. That's a surprise to anybody? An Acadian, the future of their political representation is in question and he doesn't agree with it. Come on, obviously that's going to happen.

But instead of being the statesman that sometimes we all hope our Premier will be - you know we disagree in this House, we get emotional and say things to each other, but at the heart of it the Premier is the Premier and he needs to be the representative of everybody in this province, not just his Party. A Premier represents everybody, and this Premier instead of being a statesman, instead of accepting the criticism of one of the commission members for what it was - a very fair, articulate criticism that was well warranted - what does this Premier say to that commission member who volunteered all of his time over the course of these last number of months in a very stressful situation, doing it because he was asked to? What does he say him? He calls him a troublemaker; says he just been causing trouble from the beginning. Really? Is that what we want of our Premier - does that Party not demand more from the person who is leading you and who is leading our province.

You know I've even learned - I'm a backbench Opposition MLA . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: And a good one.

MR. CHURCHILL: Thank you.

AN HON. MEMBER: You're welcome.

MR. CHURCHILL: I've learned you can't just shoot from the hip and say what you always want to say sometimes. It's been a very humbling experience for me to learn that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Since when?

MR. CHURCHILL: I still haven't quite learned it; I'm getting better. I'm getting better, but I'm not the Premier so I get a little bit of leeway with what I say. But for the Premier to say these things I really think it was a blight on his administration and a real clear view into how he thinks about things and how he feels about minorities in the province, and it was really quite shameful.

If anyone remembers earlier during this process, after the first interim report was released, Dr. Jill Grant quit because she wanted to eliminate protected ridings. She left, she had a dissenting opinion and said I'm not even going to be a part of this anymore, I'm going to leave. Did the Premier scold her? She was a NDP appointee, by the way. Did the Premier say she's a troublemaker; she's just on there to cause trouble?

AN HON. MEMBER: Nope, you never heard that.

MR. CHURCHILL: No, you never heard it, but the gentleman who actually sat on that commission and endured all of this mess and tried to do his best to represent the principles that he believes in was chastised.

Clearly it wasn't anyone being a troublemaker, it was about the Premier not being able to handle criticism, which is symptomatic with that caucus over there, to be honest.

I want to go back and talk about the meeting that we had in Yarmouth. It was a very, very powerful moment in the history of our community - and anyone who was there can attest to it. I know we had members from the two Opposition Parties there, one of whom presented. But in mid-August, August 13<sup>th</sup> - mid-August, everybody is supposed to be away on vacation and forgetting about all their problems - in mid-August and, with only three weeks' notice, over 2,500 citizens congregated in the Yarmouth Mariners Centre. In mid-August - that's how engaged the citizens are on this issue, and to be the member from that area I just can't tell you how proud I was. I honestly can't tell you how proud I was of the people who showed up, of the folks who presented, of the volunteers who helped organize to get people out to that meeting.

I think it was a really telling moment for our community, where we all came together for one reason - to protect the status quo. To ensure that people in Yarmouth had a united voice, to be represented fairly in this House of Assembly and to ensure that our Acadian neighbours in Clare, Argyle, and our distant cousins in Richmond and in Preston had a fair say as well. Part of that request was ignored - not because the commission didn't want to listen to us, I know that for a fact they made it very clear, our hands are tied. That's what Dr. MacNeil said, our hands are tied; we have to change something; we can't keep the status quo no matter what you say, no matter how many people say it, no matter how many people this hurts, no matter what it does to damage the representation in this House of Assembly, our hands are tied.

Those are telling words. Especially from the chairperson of the commission that was supposedly independent - independent - an independent commission said their hands were tied. We all know the reason for that. It's not because of anybody on this side of the House. The Opposition Parties have stood steadfast in their opposition to how this has been handled by the government and we've stood steadfast in our desire to have our minority ridings protected.

It's because of the heavy handedness of this government, because of their willingness to put their own political agenda ahead of the interests of Nova Scotians and force an independent commission to do what they want it to do. Their hands were tied. Everybody should have been worried about that. There should have been outcry across the province to have an independent commission whose hands were tied. That has resulted in what we have today.

Minorities who have had longstanding representation in this House of Assembly, who have been protected by the majority, we've had their rights stripped. We've had their representation put into jeopardy. We also have communities like Yarmouth and now Shelburne, Antigonish, Digby who are affected as well, communities being torn apart or amalgamated with communities that might not necessarily have much in common in terms

of shared culture and identity, and the economy for that matter. It's all because of the terms of reference that were put in place on Christmas Eve by the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island, no doubt at the orders of the Premier, and that has thrown us all into this mess where communities are being impacted everywhere.

I think it's a very shameful thing that has happened here. To have the member for Shelburne, the NDP Caucus and other people say that somehow this is the responsibility of someone else, is ludicrous. The only reason we're here today is because of the government and because of their willingness to actually get involved in something they shouldn't have been involved in to begin with, for their own political gain - simple, plain and simple. Democracy has suffered as a result. Our democratic representation in this House of Assembly has suffered as a result. Acadians and African Nova Scotians, those protected ridings have suffered because of this.

This is an interesting fact too, which was just brought to my attention. Not only did the NDP not run on eliminating protected ridings, they actually supported them in 2001, the last time this happened. They actually supported it. In 2001 there were no objections to the protected ridings by that caucus, yet 10 years later, without telling anybody they were going to do it, they then decide to attack these ridings and eliminate minority representation in the House of Assembly.

I think it's quite telling about how this government has operated. This government did stand for a lot of things in Opposition, things that I supported as a student advocate and leader: affordable, high quality, accessible post-secondary education, a strong public education system, an opposition to corporate welfare and use of government funds to bail out large companies; protection of minority ridings. In Opposition, that's what this Party stood for. Why now, that they're in government, do they do the exact opposite? (Interruption) As the member for Argyle said yesterday, a lot of - and I'm saying former NDPers are saying, that's not my NDP, that's not what I signed up for. It's not what anybody signed up for, you didn't tell anybody you were going to do this, no one signed up for this.

I really do think that this is going to be a real serious black spot on the record of this government and it's going to be interesting to see how they handle this. As the member for Digby-Annapolis mentioned, the Premier because he has Cabinet seats in question is willing to bring the Law Amendments Committee to Shelburne which I think is a good thing and our Party supports that. Why are we only picking one community that has been affected when there have been other ones that haven't been heard. Digby hasn't been heard. The residents of Digby haven't had a meeting with the Electoral Boundaries Commission and the Premier said today, nor will they have a meeting with the Law Amendments Committee. So why only Shelburne, why not Havre Boucher, why not Digby, why not anywhere else that has been affected - Cape Breton Nova? I don't know, I guess people will just have to speculate on that.

In closing, again, this is something I think that will be a very, very serious mark on this government's record. It is going to be one that has actually regressed our democratic representation. It is one that has angered a lot of Nova Scotians from one end of the province to the other and, I know it's one that this government, when we go to the polls, is going to pay for. Thank you very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Madam Speaker, I'm probably the newest member of this Legislature here running on (Interruptions) the newest member, not new, the newest member, pardon me. It was only a year ago that I ran in the community of Cape Breton North and I'm fortunate to be the representative of the fine people there. When I ran, I ran on a specific set of boundaries. So after I'm in for a little while, I hear about a new review that's going to take place.

When the first review came out, I inherited an area of Cape Breton South in the Westmount area. That gives me about 2,500 more voters in my constituency which I'll be happy to take if it ends up that way. In saying that, the people in the Westmount-Coxheath area have a different area of interest than the people on the north side. They would do their banking in Sydney, they would go to school on that side of the water, they do their entertainment there. I spoke to a few people in that constituency and not one of them ever said to me that they just get up and take a drive to North Sydney to get a hamburger. There's no theatre there, they don't go to a hockey game there and when I heard the first report come out I heard the protected ridings were saved. In saying that, I never once heard that that was a bad thing. There were some changes to some of the boundaries in some of the constituencies, but it didn't seem like it was that bad, but then it comes back and we hear that they didn't follow the terms of the reference, so they have to go back to the drawing board.

I sat in on at least two of the hearings and not once did I hear that they should eliminate the protected boundaries. I heard of ways they should divide different boundaries up and then I hear about voter parity; one vote/one person. That probably works in the city, but how can you tell somebody in the riding of Victoria-The Lakes, that lives down in the Ingonish area, that has difficult access to his MLA if he has to go down and look at a road or deal with an education issue, it takes him two hours to get there - how does that confirm the voter parity? Well, Guysborough is a huge riding, a huge constituency. I'm sure the member there wouldn't be happy if he had to take on more, because the numbers had to go up.

After we saw the second report, where they divided places like Yarmouth, again, you have areas of interest that get divided. Madam Speaker, I just don't understand why you could take one community and divide it just on the basis of pure voter numbers. We heard it all over the province: areas of interest and communities of interest should stay together. If you kept the protected ridings, those protected ridings had a common interest.

Yes, some of us had to gain a bit more, but it wasn't done in a way that we couldn't represent the people we were meant to represent. I look at this, Madam Speaker, somewhat like I played a lot of hockey in my day, and I spent a lot of time in the penalty box. When I hear I could never go back to the referee or I could never go back to the referee in charge and say, you know what? I don't agree with his call, reverse it for me. The referees are given the rules to play by. They go by those rules.

The select committee was given rules to go by, and to the best of their knowledge, they went by those rules. They listened to the people of Nova Scotia and they came back with a report. When they came back with that report, we heard that wasn't good enough.

Madam Speaker, we in Cape Breton are going to lose one constituency. By losing that constituency we feel we may lose a good representative in this area. When it comes right down to it, the honour of being an MLA is about representing the people you are elected by. I'm pretty proud to be one of the 52. As a former Speaker from Cape Breton West said today, it's quite an honour to represent the people in Cape Breton North and be one of the 52 in this House of Assembly. It's a real privilege.

We put quite a task in the hands of the Electoral Boundaries Commission. They went around the province and they listened to the people of Nova Scotia. From what I could see, they were quite interested in what the people of Nova Scotia had to say. They listened and listened well, and they made a decision. The people on that committee were then told that that decision wasn't proper.

If the people in my constituency come to me and want me to bring up something in this House of Assembly or within my caucus, I make sure I do that. The people of this select committee did what they heard from the people of Nova Scotia, and that wasn't good enough. I'm sure the people we all represent in our constituencies, although we might not get the answer we want to hear, are quite happy when we bring them back an answer, that we've at least tried, we've done our best to represent the people in our fine communities.

I ask the question, is voter parity the only thing that matters - one vote/one person? Madam Speaker, I can't see where a person who has a constituency in Halifax, who can walk his constituency in 15 minutes but has a huge number of voters, can represent his people - or how we in the rural areas, who have huge geographic constituencies, can represent our people like he can represent his.

I don't think it's fair to say that sheer numbers is the way to go. There are completely different issues in the city than there are in rural Nova Scotia. People living in the city don't have road issues; they don't have a lot of housing issues; they don't have volunteer fire departments; they don't have schools in the numbers that we, in the rural areas, in a huge geographical area, have to deal with. So a lot of our day is taken up dealing with the issues that arise because it's rural Nova Scotia.

You have to drive to those areas. You can't walk to the school in Neils Harbour if you are in Victoria-The Lakes. I won't be able to walk to the school that is in Coxheath to deal with an issue that may come up. To get there takes time and that takes time away from the office work that we have to do, to be the representative of the people we represent. So to say sheer numbers, is what we call voter parity? I have to argue that because for us to represent a smaller number of people is a lot harder than someone in the city to represent a larger number of people.

When you go door-to-door in a large community, a large constituency, it takes its toll on you. To go to 13,000 or 14,000 people in the city where you get 500 or 600 people living in one apartment building, I would argue that that's a little easier, when you don't have to reach out and go to different areas and drive, and make sure you have someone to drive you there and to pick you up. When you do that and you have miles between houses and you want to make sure you represent all the people, you want to represent those people by getting to their door, hearing what they have to say. When you hear what they have to say, not once did I hear anybody say anything about having protected ridings is a bad thing in the Province of Nova Scotia.

Madam Speaker, I just had to voice my opinion on those few little points, so that the people in the larger ridings would understand that representing people in the Province of Nova Scotia is not just one vote/one person. Voter parity to me is making sure that all the people get represented and they get represented well enough so everybody has their voice heard in this Legislature. By having the protected ridings, the francophones and the African Nova Scotians have the opportunity to have that vote, to have that representation and to increase the size of some of the constituencies because the numbers in Halifax have improved and that the people here in Halifax will get a couple of extra constituencies: I don't think that's fair. I don't think it's fair to the people of rural Nova Scotia. I don't think it's fair to the MLAs who represent those areas in rural Nova Scotia.

With those few words, Madam Speaker, I'll take my seat but I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 94 for today.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn debate on Bill No. 94. 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: Madam Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise to meet from the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. After the daily routine, we will be doing Bills for Second Reading, Bill Nos. 94, 97, 102, 105, 107, 109, 110 and 111, and Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne if we have got the time.



Madam Speaker, I move that we do now rise to meet again at the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

We have now reached the moment of interruption and I now call, under Rule 5(5), as read earlier today, the resolution put forward by the honourable member for Cape Breton West and it reads:

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly commit to making . . .” (Interruptions)

Order, please. I can’t even hear myself talking. I’ll start again.

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly commit to making life affordable for Nova Scotians and urge the government to reverse their expensive policies so fewer adults will have to make that decision and fewer children will need to rely on food banks to eat.”

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

### **NOVA SCOTIA - LIFE: AFFORDABILITY - COMMIT**

MR. KEITH BAIN: Madam Speaker, I rise to speak for a short while this evening on tonight’s topic, and I’ll say it again:

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly commit to making life affordable for Nova Scotians and urge the government to reverse their expensive policies so fewer adults will have to make that decision and fewer children will need to rely on food banks to eat.”

You know, Madam Speaker, it’s sad that we need to debate this topic at all. This government has expensive policies and they know that. People can’t afford them, and they know that too. Once again we are seeing the devastating impacts of their policies. People not being able to afford food should not be up for debate but here we are.

The number of people who had access to a food bank in the last year was 23,561 and, Madam Speaker, more than a third of those Nova Scotians were children, that's 7,775 children. Now others might say that food bank use across the country has increased and they are correct. But as always, the increase in food bank usage in Nova Scotia is double the national average. Our province is behind on economic growth. We have devastating job numbers and the second lowest wage growth in the country but where we come out on top is with our high taxes and the number of families we force to food banks.

Madam Speaker, the HungerCount 2012 report indicates cost of living as one of the most significant factors forcing people to food banks. It has a disproportionate impact on those with low incomes. We all see prices going up, we hear about this every day, but this government is doing nothing to mitigate these effects in places where they are actually able to do something. Power rates have skyrocketed. We hear each day about what a challenge it has become for people to pay their power bills. It's not right. According to Stats Canada energy costs have increased more than 40 per cent since the NDP Government took over and told people to bite the bullet and pay more. They cannot argue that this has had no impact on people's pocketbooks. To make such a claim would be disrespectful and flippant and it won't stop there.

Gasoline prices have risen by nearly 35 per cent since the NDP took over. People simply can't afford transportation costs. To argue that this has nothing to do with pocketbooks would be insulting. The price of food has increased by nearly 10 per cent since the NDP took over. To claim that this has no impact on the struggle families are facing would be arrogant. Madam Speaker, this government has hiked up the HST by two per cent. That represents \$1,000 out of the pockets of every man, woman and child in Nova Scotia. That is \$1,000 out of the pockets of 23,561 Nova Scotians who are forced to seek out support from food banks.

Madam Speaker, the government incorrectly boasts about the jobs they have created in this province, but the truth is, we have lost 6,300 full-time jobs outside HRM. They tried to take credit for all the jobs they have created without telling people the number of part-time jobs in that wonderful number that they give. They try to claim that part-time work is just as good as a full-time job but the fact of the matter is part-time work does not provide the financial security of a full-time job.

The HungerCount report shows more people working below the poverty line, more people working below the poverty line in Nova Scotia and that they are accessing food banks. The report reads, ". . . a job - any job - is mistakenly believed to be a ticket out of poverty. This is true when the job pays enough to allow that to happen, but many jobs actually result in deepening poverty for families." I will table that, Madam Speaker.

There are so few jobs available that people are forced to take part-time work. The jobs lost are being replaced with fewer opportunities, with fewer benefits. This doesn't allow them to get ahead or gain control of their personal budget, in fact, it puts them further

behind. With the cost of living spiralling out of control, there are fewer and fewer options for those living in poverty.

In conclusion I would like to leave the members with these few points. This government has made life so unaffordable for Nova Scotians that the number of people who have been forced to rely on food banks has increased by more than 3,000. That is 3,000 new Nova Scotians who have had to make the hard choice between paying their bills and putting food on the table. That is 3,000 new Nova Scotians who cannot afford to hear statistics and empty promises from this government, that's more than 800 new children who have to rely on a food bank to keep them from being hungry. The government cannot ignore these numbers. They cannot avoid addressing this specific problem by boasting about investments they've made in other areas.

The bottom line is: family budgets are still stretched too thin. People are still having to make very difficult choices. These are the things that the government could have prevented but they did not. In closing, I hope these figures are a wake-up call for this government and I hope they change their tune and start addressing the things that matter most, when it comes to family pocketbooks. Thank you, Madam Speaker. (Applause)

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JIM MORTON: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in my place tonight to address this issue and to tell you the truth, I'm pleased that the member for Victoria-The Lakes has identified issues related to poverty and the use of food banks as something to address. Of course, it's important to be concerned about food bank use, it's important to all of us in Nova Scotia, but it's also important to avoid misrepresenting both the truth and to avoid ignoring what this government has already been doing and that's, I think, what the member for Victoria-The Lakes did in his remarks. He's probably doing that and maybe that happens often because there's more interest in scoring a point than there is in looking at the facts. Maybe there's more interest in misrepresenting the truth than in working co-operatively and trying to find ways together to create a better life, better lives for (Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. I've heard a comment that is unparliamentary about misrepresenting the truth, that is unparliamentary in the Chamber and if that (Interruption) Okay, I missed that, thank you. So I would ask that you retract that.

MR. MORTON: I will retract it.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. MORTON: I guess the point that I was trying to make is that there may be more of an interest in here in scoring a point than in looking at the facts as they stand. There are problems of course, it's no secret that far too many people are struggling to make ends

meet in Nova Scotia. I'm a social worker by training, I've seen this over the last 35 years, both here and in other provinces, poverty is not a problem unique to Nova Scotia, it's not a problem unique to Canada, it's not a problem unique to the western world. There are lineups at food banks, there have been for quite some time. I know the tragedy of watching, what I sometimes think of as those grey faces of people who are in those food banks.

People are there for many reasons. Sometimes it has to do with disabilities. Sometimes those disabilities may be physical; sometimes they may be emotional, or because of mental health problems; sometimes they may have to do with addictions; sometimes they may have to do with illnesses or injuries that aren't covered by the kinds of programs that provinces and federal governments have created over the years. Sometimes people are there because they are single parents who are raising children with an income, but an income that's not adequate to make all ends meet. Sometimes people are there because they have a new cost that they hadn't anticipated and just can't make that last dollar count.

I think people are there these days because costs are rising in a world that continues to be on the edge of recession. We live in a very difficult time. But I think when you look at this bigger picture, we've had here in Nova Scotia a very long history of neglect of those people who are most vulnerable in our community.

I recall, before I stood in this House, being in a meeting with two Members of the Legislative Assembly who once sat on the other side - in fact, they were on the government side at that point - who were talking with a group of citizens about poverty, and who both agreed that in their particular constituencies the issues of poverty and the calls they got in their offices were the most significant calls that they received. They were the highest in volume and the most distressing. But they added to that that it wasn't possible to talk about those matters because their general constituents just wouldn't tolerate that, wouldn't agree with their making that a priority.

I believe that it's that kind of thinking, turning a blind eye, turning one's back on poverty, decade after decade, that has left us with so much that needs doing. On the other hand, this government - our government - has been taking a close look at the realities of poverty. We've been taking practical steps, even in the midst of tough economic and recessionary times, to do something different.

I want to tell you, Madam Speaker, about a few of those things that we have been doing. Food banks have been mentioned in particular, but I want you to know that our government works with Feed Nova Scotia regularly to help identify needs in the community. On an ongoing basis we do that, and we've been helping in a particular way to support the Feed Nova Scotia Helpline, something which actually helps Feed Nova Scotia with its general work.

We've been moving to break the cycle of poverty by addressing all of the four recommended areas of action in the HungerCount 2012 report. That is something that the member for Victoria-The Lakes mentioned, but what he didn't mention is that we've been making investments in affordable housing. We've been making investments in support for seniors. We've been making significant investments in social assistance programs. We've been doing a great many things to support the development of good jobs in our community.

Madam Speaker, we've been increasing income assistance rates in the most significant way that any government has done in the last decade. Earlier this year we increased the Child Tax Benefit by 22 per cent - the first increase, if you can believe that, over the last 10 years, and it was by 22 per cent. I think and I hope that everybody in this House knows, although it wasn't mentioned earlier this evening, that we removed the provincial portion of the HST from home energy. We did that as an election commitment and we did that immediately. We removed the HST as a cost from children's clothing, from footwear, from diapers, and from feminine hygiene products, all of which make those people who are most vulnerable - just make a little more progress in their lives.

As my colleague, the member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley has said, we've used a form of intelligent taxation to fund an Affordability Tax Credit and a Poverty Tax Credit, both of which are designed to help those who are the most vulnerable, whether they are families or single adults who live in poverty, to cope a little better.

We've allowed income assistance recipients to keep more of the money they earn. We've done that, Madam Speaker, for two reasons: one is to make their budgets go a little bit further, but we've also done that to encourage those people who are most vulnerable to have more incentive to work. We know that if people work they will accrue all the benefits that all of us in this House have the privilege of doing because work increases self-esteem and increases a sense of worth in every possible way, other than just from income. Those are extremely important things.

Another thing that we've done, speaking of Income Assistance, is we've increased rates this year by 10 per cent. If I can keep going, Madam Speaker, we've removed the provincial income tax for seniors who receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement. We've increased the seniors' property tax rebate by \$200, which now brings it to \$600 this year. I could go on and on talking about the numbers of things that we do but the short time that I've been given to talk about these things tonight just won't allow me to cover all those things. I do want you to know there are many initiatives that I haven't been able to mention that we've covered.

We understand that these measures by themselves are not enough. Each initiative I've mentioned, and the many that I haven't, are important and we know there are many more initiatives that we'll seek to accomplish in the months that lie ahead. Each of these initiatives has been introduced within a larger context that everyone in this House should well understand. We've been making investments and changes in the way we deliver

education because we know that having a secure educational foundation is absolutely critical to our future. We've been making adjustments in the way we deliver health care and in the way we think about health because we know that if people have access to the right kind of health services in the kind of Medicare that we provide in this country, they will be better off, particularly if they're poor.

We've made investments in growing the economy to create better jobs. We've had a lot of talk in this House, some of it negative, about the big projects, the big and bold and, I think, important investments that we've been making in this province, but we've made hundreds of investments in small- and medium-sized businesses, all designed to help our economy grow and create better jobs, which is to the benefit of all of us. It will lift all of us in this province. We believe that getting our fiscal house in order is absolutely critical because if we can do things to stop paying more and more on our debt, a debt that has been run up by those people on the other side, that we'll have more resources to place in services like this.

I need to take my place at this time because there's just not enough time to talk about all of the things that could be done and need to be done. I want to assure you that we are concerned about these issues.

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

MS. KELLY REGAN: Just to remind that what we're debating is: "Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly commit to making life affordable for Nova Scotians and urge the government to reverse their expensive policies so fewer adults will have to make that decision and fewer children will need to rely on food banks to eat."

Poverty advocates, women's organizations and housing advocates are all wondering why this NDP Government is ignoring Nova Scotia's most vulnerable citizens. This is a far cry from what we saw from that Party when they were back in Opposition. Back then they were going to change everything. They were going to make life better and we have not seen that under this government. Three and one-half years in, life is not better for Nova Scotians.

According to the most recent HungerCount, food bank usage is up 39.3 per cent in Nova Scotia - 40 per cent for all intents and purposes, that's almost half. You have to ask yourself, what the heck is going on? I remember many years ago when my husband was chair of Metro Food Bank and they were doing a fundraiser, he spent either 24 or 48 hours ensconced in a block of ice to raise awareness, I don't know - it was 'put a chill on hunger', or something like that. It was to awareness about the food bank, and also one of the things they were talking about at that time was shutting their doors. They wanted to make sure that food banks didn't become part of the fabric of our society, so their goal was to shut the doors of Metro Food Bank.

Well, not only have we not shut the doors to Metro Food Bank, in fact, we've moved in the wrong direction. Food banks are seeing a marked increase in the number of users who are employed, and no surprise; we have the second-lowest wage growth in the country. We are also seeing a displacement of full-time jobs becoming part-time jobs. So while the Party opposite trumpets their job creation record, the fact of the matter is, we are losing full-time jobs and they are being replaced by part-time jobs and you can't live on a part-time job, (Interruptions) they are not good paying jobs, by and large.

This is also the government, we actually were treated to the really pathetic sight, or I guess it was the sound, of a minister of the Crown bashing the poor, not this past summer, the summer just over a year ago, talking about people who were poor accessing hot tubs, turned out there weren't actually any hot tubs that were accessed, but it was disgraceful. I remember thinking, how can this be? How can this actually be happening here in Nova Scotia? If someone from our Party had done that, if someone from the Third Party had done that, they would have been in high dudgeon. They would still be howling about it.

Instead, it was the NDP. They are supposed to be on the side of the poor and downtrodden and they were down there kicking them. Maybe that is what is at the root of the Premier handing out \$500 million to corporations that have laid off workers, cut wages and slashed benefits - more Nova Scotians head off to the food bank.

The key factor at the root of the need for food banks is low income and families, of course, in addition to that, are facing cost pressures. Energy costs have gone up 30 per cent under this government.

They always talk about the fact that they took the tax off the power bills. What they don't tell you about and what the member who just finished speaking didn't tell you about was, they may have taken that off but they put on the efficiency tax and that rakes in far more money than that tax break ever paid off.

Nova Scotians are being forced to make a choice, they say 'heat or eat' and they can't do both. You know, it's funny because I had an e-mail from – it turned out to be a neighbour, I didn't realize it was a neighbour, I hadn't met the gentleman before but he sent me a letter recently about power rates and he was wild about it. I called him, we had a lovely chat, it turned out we had lived in some of the same towns and we started talking about it. He said, I don't know how single mothers are doing it, I don't know how people who are on minimum wage are doing it.

We chatted some more and he took the power rate petition door-to-door in our neighbourhood because he is so ticked off. What adds insult to injury is that these folks, folks who are poor, are being asked to pay for efficiency programs that they're never going to be able to access because you have to lay out the money in the first place. So they're never going to be able to access it, yet they're footing the bill so that you and I can make

changes to our houses. That's not fair, there's no way they should have to pay for that, that should come from the shareholders of Nova Scotia Power. (Applause)

One of the things we heard at the Community Services Committee is that housing is a key to whether a family in crisis is going to make it through, sort of intact, and to move on to thrive. So what have we seen from this government? We have seen that there are 1,800 families waiting for public housing in this province. They like to talk about, we've made investments, most of the money was federal, let's be clear, let's be clear about that, 1,800 families waiting for a decent place to live. It's hard to think about where your next meal is coming from when you don't even know where you are going to sleep tonight.

I was surprised to discover that the government doesn't even consider couch surfing being homeless because they said, well, you actually have a place to sleep. The fact that you have no security about where you are sleeping; the fact that you may, in fact, be forced to provide services to someone you don't want to, or that you are living in an unsafe place, apparently is not a problem; the fact of the matter is, couch surfing is not an adequate response to a housing problem.

When we say there are 1,800 families that are waiting for housing, that doesn't include the number of homeless people; it doesn't reflect the number of poor families and seniors living in inadequate shelters, or who are worried about whether they are going to eat or heat their homes. Nova Scotia needs a plan for affordable housing and we don't need band-aid solutions.

You know, people expected better from the NDP. They thought – I have had so many people say to me - you know, I thought I would give them a chance. I thought they were telling us what they could do and I thought that they could actually do it. They didn't know their taxes were going to be raised because they weren't told that before the vote and they didn't expect this kind of thing from this government. They voted for the NDP; they gave them a chance and those same people are saying to me, it's not going to happen next time. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: That concludes our late debate this evening. I would like to thank everyone for participating in it and the House now stands adjourned until 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

[The House rose at 6:27 p.m.]



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**NOTICE OF QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS****(RESPONSES)****Given on May 17, 2012****PURSUANT TO RULE 30****QUESTION NO. 1**

By: Mr. Alfie MacLeod (Cape Breton West)

To: Hon. Charlie Parker (Minister of Natural Resources)

(1) Will the minister explain for me the proposed changes being planned for the 2012 moose hunt in the Pollet's Cove, Aspy Fault Wilderness Area? Information given to me indicates an association of six guides in the zone 5 area has been formed and are in the process of obtaining the tags for the non-motorized hunt from the Department of Natural Resources to sell to the highest bidder. I am cognizant of the annual draw, but can the minister confirm for me that guides are available to purchase tags once drawn for?

(2) Will the minister provide for me in as much detail as possible how many times over the past 10 years applicants' names have been drawn multiple times in the annual Cape Breton Moose Hunt Draw while others who have put their name into the draw have never been called once? Does the minister and the department view this as simply the luck of the draw or is the department looking into ways to provide individuals who have never participated in the Cape Breton Moose Hunt an opportunity to do so in Cape Breton?

RESPONSE:

*July 17, 2012*

*Mr. Alfie MacLeod, MLA  
Cape Breton West  
1990 Kings Road  
Sydney River, NS B1L 1C4*

*Dear Mr. MacLeod:*

*I am responding to both of your questions tabled in the House on May 14, 2012, regarding the 2012 Moose Hunt in the Pollet's Cove-Aspy Fault Area and the Cape Breton Moose Hunt Draw.*

**Question 1**

*A number of changes have been made to the moose Hunting Regulations this year, several of which pertain to the Pollet's Cove - Aspy Fault Wilderness Area (PCAFWA). As of January 2012, the Wilderness Areas Protection Act prohibits the use of motorized vehicles in the PCAFWA, which is also a Moose Management Zone (Zone 5). As a result of this legislated change, the following modifications have been made to the Moose Hunting Regulations:*

*(a) The boundary lines between Zone 1 and Zone 5 have been redefined. Previous changes to the regulations added Zone 5 (the PCAFWA), which for expedience was described as lying within Zone 1. This change removes confusion and establishes Zones 1 and 5 as two completely discrete Moose Management Zones.*

*(b) Four consecutive one-week moose hunting seasons were established for Zone 5. Given the challenges for hunters to kill and remove moose without the use of all-terrain vehicles in the PCAFWA's rugged terrain, a four-week hunt will help to ensure that guides are available for those who wish to employ them and that enough moose are harvested from Zone 5 to meet management goals.*

*(c) The three-day moose hunt in December will occur in both Zone 1 and Zone 5. Expanding the winter moose hunting season in Zone 1 to include Zone 5 actually maintains the same area for hunting during the December hunt as had been available in the past. With the separation of Zone 5 from Zone 1, the inclusion of Zone 5 in the winter open season is necessary to achieve management goals. While the three-day hunt will take place in both zones, only non-motorized moose hunting is permitted in Zone 5.*

**Question 2**

*With regard to your question pertaining to guides who take hunters into the PCAFWA for the non-motorized hunt, I can assure you that the department is not considering any transfer of moose tags to guides or guide organizations at this time. Staff of the Department of Natural Resources and Nova Scotia Environment are in the process of examining a number of options for the future management of moose in Zone 5. The allocation of licenses to guides, as is done in other jurisdictions like Alberta, is just one of the possible approaches to be considered.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Charlie Parker  
Minister*

**QUESTION NO. 3**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. Ramona Jennex (Minister of Education)

(1) With the decision by the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board to close the Newport Station and District Elementary School in the next two to three years, space and room at the Three Mile Plains Elementary School has just become a larger scale issue. Can the minister confirm the status of the gymnasium expansion at Three Mile Plains Elementary School originally scheduled for next year as outlined in April 2009?

RESPONSE:

*July 20, 2012*

*Mr. Chuck Porter, MLA  
Hants West  
58 Gerrish Street  
Box 3873  
Windsor, NS B0N 2T0*

*Dear Mr. Porter:*

*Thank you for your question of May 14, 2012.*

*The 2012-13 capital plan includes \$110 million for new and renovated schools, more buses and expansion of the Student Information System. This represents a significant investment in the young people of our province.*

*We asked school boards to review and update their capital priority lists to ensure they are current and reflect their most pressing priorities. Enrolments have declined dramatically and priorities may have changed. School renovation projects not in this year's capital plan will be part of upcoming capital plans if school boards still identify them as pressing priorities.*

*The Annapolis Valley Regional School Board identified Three Mile Plains Elementary School as a priority. The Department of Education will take that into account when we develop the capital plan for next year.*

*Sincerely,*

*Ramona Jennex  
Minister of Education*

**QUESTION NO. 8**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

To: Hon. John MacDonell (Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)

(1) Under Societies Act legislation, in the absence of a proper resignation letter, why is the Registry of Joint Stocks unable to revoke the registration of the Fisheries Safety Association of Nova Scotia for non-compliance with their by-laws?

**RESPONSE:**

*Mr. Neil Ferguson  
Chief Clerk  
Office of the Clerk  
House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia  
PO Box 1617  
Halifax, NS B3J 2Y3*

*Dear Mr. Ferguson:*

*Thank you for your letter of May 29, 2012, regarding a written question tabled by Chris d'Entremont in the House on May 14, 2012.*

*I believe Mr. d'Entremont's question is referring to an issue between certain members, or former members, of the Fisheries Safety Association of Nova Scotia and their executive which was brought to the attention of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies. Unfortunately we cannot speak to the specifics on this or any other issue relating to a specific society but we can provide some general information about the Societies Act (the "Act") and the role of the Registry.*

*The Registry of Joint Stock Companies administers the statutory filings required under the Act. The proposed memorandum of association (which sets out the objectives) and by-laws (dealing with various government matters) of each society are reviewed by the Registry on incorporation to ensure their terms comply with the Act. Proposed amendments to the Memorandum or By-laws are also reviewed.*

*The Registry also maintains a source of public information respecting the information filed by each society, including the names of directors, officers and recognized agent and the address of the registered office.*

*The Registry does not, however, have the statutory authority to investigate or intervene in the affairs of any society, nor does it have authority to revoke the registration of a society*

*for failing to comply with its by-laws. Only where a society fails to file the necessary annual updates and fees is the Registrar authorized to place it in a default status and, following some period of time, strike the organization from the Register.*

*Societies are self-governing - ultimately under the control of their membership. It is the membership that elects directors and officers and, as such, also has the power to remove them pursuant to the terms set out in the by-laws. It is the membership that must exercise control should they believe their society management is no longer adhering to their mandate - or their by-laws.*

*The Act does provide for the issuance by a society of a penalty for a member's contravention of the by-laws at section 14. The provision enables a society to impose a fine not exceeding five dollars. Such fines are recoverable by the society and belong to the society.*

*Yours truly,*

*John MacDonell  
Minister*

### **QUESTION NO. 13**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

To: Hon. Frank Corbett (Minister of Communications Nova Scotia)

(1) Will the Minister of Communications Nova Scotia make available copies of any and all hard copy and electronic correspondence, including, but not limited to, e-mails, faxes, letters, memos, et cetera, sent or received by the Office of Communications Nova Scotia between January 15, 2011 and March 5, 2012 regarding the development and execution of the Ships Start Here campaign and follow-up on this matter, including, but not limited to, any involvement/exchange with MT&L.

RESPONSE:

*July 17, 2012*

*Mr. Neil Ferguson*

*Chief Clerk  
Office of the Clerk  
House of Assembly  
Halifax, NS*

*Dear Mr. Ferguson:*

*I am writing to provide a response to a written question which was tabled during the last Session of the House of Assembly by Chris d'Entremont.*

**QUESTION**

*Will the Minister of Communications Nova Scotia make available copies of any and all hard copy and electronic correspondence, including, but not limited to, e-mails, faxes, letters, memos, et cetera, sent or received by the Office of Communications Nova Scotia between January 15, 2011 and March 5, 2012 regarding the development and execution of the Ships Start Here campaign and follow-up on this matter, including, but not limited to, any involvement/exchange with MT&L.*

*From the beginning, 'Ships Start Here' has been an unprecedented partnership of public, private, non-profit and academic sectors. This cooperation and collaboration between more than 70 organizations represents the way to do business on a global scale. It will serve as an important model for future endeavours.*

*The campaign websites received almost one million views. More than 10,000 people pinned messages of encouragement on the canadianshipsstarthere.ca map, and thousands of lawns were marked with 'Ships Start Here' signs.*

*'Ships Start Here' not only built support, but created awareness locally. The province needed students to start thinking about shipbuilding as a career, we need skilled workers to think about coming home, and we needed businesses to think about ramping up the supply chain. This campaign achieved those goals.*

*All partners have contributed to this effort by giving freely of their time and expertise, and in many cases through financial or in-kind donations. Overall, the partnership's investment represents a small percentage of the potential value of the shipbuilding contracts.*

*If further details are required, a request may be made through a Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act request.*

*Sincerely,*

*Frank Corbett  
Minister of Communications Nova Scotia*

**QUESTION NO. 20**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. Charlie Parker (Minister of Energy)

(1) At the Renewable Marine Energy Strategy technical briefing with stakeholders, department staff referred to surveys that have been done that show a band that Nova Scotians are willing to pay for the transformation to renewable energy. Will the minister release the information from consultation and research that the department has done to determine how much Nova Scotians are willing to pay for renewable energy and how is that compared to department data on how much Nova Scotians can afford to pay?

RESPONSE:

*July 8, 2012*

*Mr. Chuck Porter  
MLA – Hants West  
c/o Mr. Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk  
The Clerk's Office  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Province House  
PO Box 1617  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2Y3*

*Dear Mr. Porter:*

***Re: Response to Question Raised by the Opposition, May 17, 2012***

*We are pleased to provide the following response to your question raised in the House on May 17, 2012:*

***Question 20:*** *At the Renewable Marine Energy Strategy technical briefing with stakeholders, department staff referred to surveys that have been done that show a band that Nova Scotians are willing to pay for the transformation to renewable energy.*

*Will the minister release the information from consultation and research that the department has done to determine how much Nova Scotians are willing to pay for renewable energy and how is that compared to department data on how much Nova Scotians can afford to pay?*

*Nova Scotia Power has done research and polling a number of times over the last decade. This information, as well as information on the cost of renewable energy,*

*would be included in the Integrated Resource Plan and other public documents filed with the Utility and Review Board.*

*Renewable energy development is not the problem, rather it is the solution. Nova Scotia's electricity rates are increasing mainly as a result of our dependence on coal. Coal has increased in price by 75 per cent in the last seven years. Nova Scotians cannot afford to continue down this path. Renewable energy development is the lowest-cost option for diversifying our energy mix and bringing stability to electricity rates over the long term. Incorporating renewable energy into our energy mix to meet our 2015 renewable energy targets will add an incremental one to two per cent per year to the factors that affect rates. This is all public information. Continuing to rely on a single energy source will cost Nova Scotians far more.*

*In addition, doing nothing is not an option. Current provincial regulations and gazetted federal regulations will require Nova Scotia Power to transform the electricity sector away from its current dependence on coal to meet greenhouse gas and a variety of other pollutant caps. Energy efficient and demand reduction strategies, as well as large-scale renewables, are the lowest-cost solution.*

*I hope the information provided has answered your concerns.*

*Yours sincerely,  
Charlie Parker  
Minister*

### **QUESTION NO. 23**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. Charlie Parker (Minister of Energy)

(1) Former New Brunswick Premier Frank McKenna has been lobbying to have Alberta oil piped east to the Irving refinery in New Brunswick. What has the Nova Scotia Department of Energy done to advocate for bringing Alberta oil to Nova Scotia?

RESPONSE:

*July 8, 2012*

*Mr. Chuck Porter  
MLA - Hants West  
c/o Mr. Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk  
The Clerk's Office*



*1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Province House  
PO Box 1617  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2Y3*

*Dear Mr. Porter:*

***Re: Response to Question Raised by the Opposition, May 17, 2012***

*We are pleased to provide the following response to your question raised in the House on May 17, 2012:*

***Question 23:*** *Former New Brunswick Premier Frank McKenna has been lobbying to have Alberta oil piped east to the Irving refinery in New Brunswick.*

*What has the Nova Scotia Department of Energy done to advocate for bringing Alberta oil to Nova Scotia?*

*We would expect that such a project would be driven by the private sector. A number of companies have approached gov't to discuss the potential of west to east oil pipeline to deliver Alberta oil to refineries and other markets in eastern Canada. We have indicated our interest in such a proposal and a willingness to continue discussions. To date, there has been no specific proposal that has come forward.*

*I hope the information provided has answered your concerns.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Charlie Parker  
Minister*

**QUESTION NO. 24**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. Charlie Parker (Minister of Energy)

(1) How much does a kilowatt of wind energy cost Nova Scotia Power to produce?

RESPONSE:

*July 8, 2012*

*Mr. Chuck Porter  
MLA – Hants West  
c/o Mr. Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk  
The Clerk's Office  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Province House  
PO Box 1617  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2Y3*

*Dear Mr. Porter:*

***Re: Response to Question Raised by the Opposition, May 17, 2012***

*We are pleased to provide the following response to your question raised in the House on May 17, 2012:*

***Question 24:*** *How much does a kilowatt of wind energy cost Nova Scotia Power to produce?*

*On average, NSPI wind projects are producing electricity at an average cost of 8.3 cents / kWh.*

*I hope the information provided has answered your concerns.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Charlie Parker  
Minister*

**QUESTION NO. 25**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. Charlie Parker (Minister of Energy)

(1) Is the Premier, his government or any of the staff in negotiations with Nova Scotia Power or Emera to potentially secure more than 160 MW or 20 per cent of our electricity needs from Muskrat Falls that was already announced and, if so, at what cost?

RESPONSE:

*July 8, 2012*

*Mr. Chuck Porter  
MLA - Hants West  
c/o Mr. Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk  
The Clerk's Office  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Province House  
PO Box 1617  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2Y3*

*Dear Mr. Porter:*

***Re: Response to Question Raised by the Opposition, May 17, 2012***

*We are pleased to provide the following response to your question raised in the House on May 17, 2012:*

***Question 25:*** *Is the Premier, his government or any of the staff in negotiations with Nova Scotia Power or Emera to potentially secure more than 160 MW or 20 per cent of our electricity needs from Muskrat Falls that was already announced and, if so, at what cost?*

*Under the terms of the agreement, Nova Scotia will receive 170 MWs of Lower Churchill hydroelectricity - or 20 per cent of the total power generated from the project - for 20 per cent of the cost. This will be roughly eight to 10 per cent of Nova Scotia's annual needs.*

*Under the Agreement, Nova Scotia will have access to the additional power travelling through Nova Scotia to market, at market prices. This could result in as much as 20 per cent of the province's annual consumption could come from Lower Churchill.*

*I hope the information provided has answered your concerns.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Charlie Parker  
Minister*

**QUESTION NO. 26**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. Charlie Parker (Minister of Energy)

(1) Why will the Premier not allow an independent review of the full Muskrat Falls project?

RESPONSE:

*July 8, 2012*

*Mr. Chuck Porter  
MLA - Hants West  
c/o Mr. Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk  
The Clerk's Office  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Province House  
PO Box 1617  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2Y3*

*Dear Mr. Porter:*

***Re: Response to Question Raised by the Opposition, May 17, 2012***

*We are pleased to provide the following response to your question raised in the House on May 17, 2012:*

***Question 26:*** *Why will the Premier not allow an independent review of the full Muskrat Falls project?*

*Government brought in the Maritime Link Act during the Spring session to ensure the project would be reviewed by Nova Scotia's Utility and Review Board, a quasi-judicial independent body. We have confidence in the Board to do a rigorous review to examine the costs and ensure that the project will achieve the benefits anticipated for Nova Scotia ratepayers. In addition, the Maritime Link portion of the project is also subject to the environmental assessment process that applies to the project.*

*I hope the information provided has answered your concerns.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Charlie Parker*  
*Minister*

**QUESTION NO. 27**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. Charlie Parker (Minister of Energy)

(1) What was the date when the Premier, any member of his government or staff was first made aware Nova Scotia Power would be filing to increase power rates in 2013 and 2014?

RESPONSE:

*July 8, 2012*

*Mr. Chuck Porter*  
*MLA - Hants West*  
*c/o Mr. Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk*  
*The Clerk's Office*  
*1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Province House*  
*PO Box 1617*  
*Halifax, Nova Scotia*  
*B3J 2Y3*

*Dear Mr. Porter:*

***Re: Response to Question Raised by the Opposition, May 17, 2012***

*We are pleased to provide the following response to your question raised in the House on May 17, 2012:*

***Question 27:*** *What was the date when the Premier, any member of his government or staff was first made aware Nova Scotia Power would be filing to increase power rates in 2013 and 2014?*

*Government received the general rate application at the same time as everyone else - the day it was filed with the Utility and Review Board. Nova Scotia Power notified government that it was being filed - as it does with all its stakeholders, but no one in government saw the application until it was filed with the Board.*

*I hope the information provided has answered your concerns.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Charlie Parker  
Minister*

**QUESTION NO. 28**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. Charlie Parker (Minister of Energy)

(1) Was the Premier, any member of his government or staff involved in discussions about Nova Scotia Power's two-year rate increase before the rate application was filed with the Utility and Review Board in May?

RESPONSE:

*July 8, 2012*

*Mr. Chuck Porter  
MLA - Hants West  
c/o Mr. Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk  
The Clerk's Office  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Province House  
PO Box 1617  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2Y3*

*Dear Mr. Porter:*

***Re: Response to Question Raised by the Opposition, May 17, 2012***

*We are pleased to provide the following response to your question raised in the House on May 17, 2012:*

*Question 28: Was the Premier, any member of his government or staff involved in discussions about Nova Scotia Power's two-year rate increase before the rate application was filed with the Utility and Review Board in May?*

*The Province has ongoing discussions with Nova Scotia Power on a number of issues, including the cost of electricity. This is a major issue for Nova Scotians. It's something on everyone's mind. However, the Province has no influence over the rate application filed by Nova Scotia Power. This is solely managed through the*

*UARB. Government is an intervener before the Board and is treated like all other interveners. The power rate decision rests with the Board. It will weigh the evidence and make decision.*

*I hope the information provided has answered your concerns.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Charlie Parker  
Minister*

**QUESTION NO. 29**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. John MacDonell (Minister of Agriculture)

(1) On April 2, 2012, a FOIPOP request was sent to your department regarding untendered outside consultants. As of May 11, 2012, we have received no response from your department. Will the minister please provide a listing of - or a record indicating - all untendered outside consultants hired by the department between June 1, 2009 and April 1, 2012 and deliver it by May 31, 2012?

Consultant is defined as anyone hired to give advice of any kind to anyone in government, including, but not limited to, policy, administration, implementation, accounting, legal, technical, medical, communications, economic and financial.

Please include: description of work, amount paid, amount of the consultant (for current hires), and all jobs currently being considered and those not yet approved.

RESPONSE:

*July 19, 2012*

*Ref.# M36*

*Mr. Chuck Porter  
MLA, Hants West  
Progressive Conservative Caucus Office  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Bank of Montreal Building  
Suite 601, 5151 George Street  
Halifax, NS B3J 1M5*

*Dr. Mr. Porter:*

*Below are responses to written questions that you tabled in the House of Assembly on May 17, 2012 pursuant to Rule 30(1).*

**QUESTION:** *On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, a FOIPOP request was sent to your Department (Agriculture) regarding untendered outside consultants.*

*As of May 11<sup>th</sup> we have received no response from your department. Will the Minister please provide a listing of, or a record indicating all untendered outside consultants hired by the department between June 1, 2009 and April 1, 2012 and delivery (sic) it by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012?*

*Consultant is defined as anyone hired to give advice of any kind to anyone in government - including but not limited to policy, administration, implementation, accounting, legal, technical, medical, communications, economic and financial.*

*Please include: description of work, amount paid, amount of the consultant (for current hires), and all jobs currently being considered and those not yet approved.*

**ANSWER:** *FOIPOP application AGR-12-5 was released to applicant by cover letter dated May 11, 2012 signed by Deputy Minister Paul LaFleche.*

**QUESTION:** *Based on the Auditor General's report there is no quality assurance which includes key operational activities. In the Auditor General's report there is no plan to implement this guideline. Is it enough to say nothing has happened yet? What consequence would cause government to do things differently?*

**ANSWER:** *A manual for meat inspection is currently being developed. A quality assurance program will be based upon completion and adoption of this manual. In the meantime, the effective linkage between the inspectors within the meat inspection program and food safety specialists within the Department allows for ample prevention, response and mitigation of food related public health concerns.*

**QUESTION:** *The Auditor General's report revealed that the Department of Agriculture is not ensuring compliance with the meat inspection regulations. The Auditor General says, "Many facilities are not taking meat safety as seriously as they should."*

- a) *If there's one thing that Minister should take seriously it is the food supply of Nova Scotians. Have changes been put in place since the report that can give Nova Scotians confidence that government is taking meat safety more seriously?*



b) *The Auditor General found that there is no formal policy in place for auditing the food processing facilities of our province. There is an informal policy that says they should be inspected monthly. Has that policy been formalized?*

**ANSWER:** *(a) Yes changes have already occurred, (1) performance appraisals have been initiated for meat inspectors, (2) compliance dates are being noted on inspection reports . . . all other changes as recommended by the Auditor General are being applied as the completed changes become available.*

*(b) There will be a formalized policy for audits based upon risk assessment anticipated to be in place this September.*

**QUESTION:** *The Federation of Agriculture in their outlook 2021 entitled “Homegrown Success” notes that in many other provinces and countries in which Nova Scotia farmers must compete, those provinces and countries have much better incentive programs making it even more difficult for Nova Scotia farms to compete? One example is the potential of farm buildings being exempt from the municipal tax base. Does the minister see this as something the present government can afford to do?*

**ANSWER:** *The revenue generated from property taxes rests with the Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations budget. The cost of exempting all farm buildings would have to be explored through SNSMR. Once that determination has been made, government would be in a position to determine whether the resources required are available.*

**QUESTION:** *Why can't the definition of community be expanded to include individual farm operations and supporting business and allow the farms to qualify for the COMFIT PROGRAM without forming a cooperative?*

**ANSWER:** *The Renewable Energy Strategy and the embedded Comfit Program are the responsibility of the Department of Energy. The Department of Agriculture does not set the definitions within those programs. Clarification of the reasoning behind the definitions will have to be sought from Energy.*

**QUESTION:** *When does the minister plan to implement a mandatory point of origin labelling on all agricultural products so Nova Scotians when they go into a grocery store will know precisely where the food they are buying is coming from? At the present time, Nova Scotians have no idea unless they ask (sic) 75 - 80% of the time whether the food in front of them is locally produced.*

*ANSWER: Country of Origin labelling is a federal responsibility, so I cannot comment further on this topic at this time. My department does look after “branding” of Nova Scotia products under the Select Nova Scotia initiative.*

*I trust that this letter answers these outstanding questions. Should there be other questions, I am always happy to respond.*

*Yours truly,*

*John MacDonell  
Minister*

**QUESTION NO. 83**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. John MacDonell (Minister of Agriculture)

(1) Based on the Auditor General’s Report, there is no quality assurance that includes key operational activities. In the Auditor General’s Report, there is no plan to implement this guideline. Is it enough to say nothing has happened yet? What consequence would cause government to do things differently? I ask that the minister deliver an answer by no later than May 31, 2012.

RESPONSE:

*July 19, 2012*

*Ref.# M36*

*Mr. Chuck Porter  
MLA, Hants West  
Progressive Conservative Caucus Office  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Bank of Montreal Building  
Suite 601, 5151 George Street  
Halifax, NS B3J 1M5*

*Dr. Mr. Porter:*

*Below are responses to written questions that you tabled in the House of Assembly on May 17, 2012 pursuant to Rule 30(1).*

**QUESTION:** *On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, a FOIPOP request was sent to your Department (Agriculture) regarding untendered outside consultants.*

*As of May 11<sup>th</sup> we have received no response from your department. Will the Minister please provide a listing of, or a record indicating all untendered outside consultants hired by the department between June 1, 2009 and April 1, 2012 and delivery (sic) it by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012?*

*Consultant is defined as anyone hired to give advice of any kind to anyone in government - including but not limited to policy, administration, implementation, accounting, legal, technical, medical, communications, economic and financial.*

*Please include: description of work, amount paid, amount of the consultant (for current hires), and all jobs currently being considered and those not yet approved.*

**ANSWER:** *FOIPOP application AGR-12-5 was released to applicant by cover letter dated May 11, 2012 signed by Deputy Minister Paul LaFleche.*

**QUESTION:** *Based on the Auditor General's report there is no quality assurance which includes key operational activities. In the Auditor General's report there is no plan to implement this guideline. Is it enough to say nothing has happened yet? What consequence would cause government to do things differently?*

**ANSWER:** *A manual for meat inspection is currently being developed. A quality assurance program will be based upon completion and adoption of this manual. In the meantime, the effective linkage between the inspectors within the meat inspection program and food safety specialists within the Department allows for ample prevention, response and mitigation of food related public health concerns.*

**QUESTION:** *The Auditor General's report revealed that the Department of Agriculture is not ensuring compliance with the meat inspection regulations. The Auditor General says, "Many facilities are not taking meat safety as seriously as they should."*

- a) If there's one thing that Minister should take seriously it is the food supply of Nova Scotians. Have changes been put in place since the report that can give Nova Scotians confidence that government is taking meat safety more seriously?*
- b) The Auditor General found that there is no formal policy in place for auditing the food processing facilities of our province. There is an informal policy that says they should be inspected monthly. Has that policy been formalized?*

**ANSWER:** (a) Yes changes have already occurred, (1) performance appraisals have been initiated for meat inspectors, (2) compliance dates are being noted on inspection reports . . . all other changes as recommended by the Auditor General are being applied as the completed changes become available.

(b) There will be a formalized policy for audits based upon risk assessment anticipated to be in place this September.

**QUESTION:** The Federation of Agriculture in their outlook 2021 entitled “Homegrown Success” notes that in many other provinces and countries in which Nova Scotia farmers must compete, those provinces and countries have much better incentive programs making it even more difficult for Nova Scotia farms to compete? One example is the potential of farm buildings being exempt from the municipal tax base. Does the minister see this as something the present government can afford to do?

**ANSWER:** The revenue generated from property taxes rests with the Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations budget. The cost of exempting all farm buildings would have to be explored through SNSMR. Once that determination has been made, government would be in a position to determine whether the resources required are available.

**QUESTION:** Why can't the definition of community be expanded to include individual farm operations and supporting business and allow the farms to qualify for the COMFIT PROGRAM without forming a cooperative?

**ANSWER:** The Renewable Energy Strategy and the embedded Comfit Program are the responsibility of the Department of Energy. The Department of Agriculture does not set the definitions within those programs. Clarification of the reasoning behind the definitions will have to be sought from Energy.

**QUESTION:** When does the minister plan to implement a mandatory point of origin labelling on all agricultural products so Nova Scotians when they go into a grocery store will know precisely where the food they are buying is coming from? At the present time, Nova Scotians have no idea unless they ask (sic) 75 - 80% of the time whether the food in front of them is locally produced.

**ANSWER:** Country of Origin labelling is a federal responsibility, so I cannot comment further on this topic at this time. My department does look after “branding” of Nova Scotia products under the Select Nova Scotia initiative.

*I trust that this letter answers these outstanding questions. Should there be other questions, I am always happy to respond.*

*Yours truly,*

*John MacDonell  
Minister*

#### **QUESTION NO. 84**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. John MacDonell (Minister of Agriculture)

The Auditor General's Report revealed that the Department of Agriculture is not ensuring compliance with the meat inspection regulations. The Auditor General says, "Many facilities are not taking meat safety as seriously as they should."

(1) If there's one thing that the minister should take seriously, it is the food supply of Nova Scotians. Have changes been put in place since the report that can give Nova Scotians confidence that government is taking meat safety more seriously?

(2) The Auditor General found that there is no formal policy in place for auditing the food processing facilities of our province. There is an informal policy that says they should be inspected monthly. Has that policy been formalized?

I ask that the minister deliver an answer by no later than May 31, 2012.

RESPONSE:

*July 19, 2012*

*Ref.# M36*

*Mr. Chuck Porter  
MLA, Hants West  
Progressive Conservative Caucus Office  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Bank of Montreal Building  
Suite 601, 5151 George Street  
Halifax, NS B3J 1M5*

*Dr. Mr. Porter:*

*Below are responses to written questions that you tabled in the House of Assembly on May 17, 2012 pursuant to Rule 30(1).*

**QUESTION:** *On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, a FOIPOP request was sent to your Department (Agriculture) regarding untendered outside consultants.*

*As of May 11<sup>th</sup> we have received no response from your department. Will the Minister please provide a listing of, or a record indicating all untendered outside consultants hired by the department between June 1, 2009 and April 1, 2012 and delivery (sic) it by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012?*

*Consultant is defined as anyone hired to give advice of any kind to anyone in government - including but not limited to policy, administration, implementation, accounting, legal, technical, medical, communications, economic and financial.*

*Please include: description of work, amount paid, amount of the consultant (for current hires), and all jobs currently being considered and those not yet approved.*

**ANSWER:** *FOIPOP application AGR-12-5 was released to applicant by cover letter dated May 11, 2012 signed by Deputy Minister Paul LaFleche.*

**QUESTION:** *Based on the Auditor General's report there is no quality assurance which includes key operational activities. In the Auditor General's report there is no plan to implement this guideline. Is it enough to say nothing has happened yet? What consequence would cause government to do things differently?*

**ANSWER:** *A manual for meat inspection is currently being developed. A quality assurance program will be based upon completion and adoption of this manual. In the meantime, the effective linkage between the inspectors within the meat inspection program and food safety specialists within the Department allows for ample prevention, response and mitigation of food related public health concerns.*

**QUESTION:** *The Auditor General's report revealed that the Department of Agriculture is not ensuring compliance with the meat inspection regulations. The Auditor General says, "Many facilities are not taking meat safety as seriously as they should."*

- a) *If there's one thing that Minister should take seriously it is the food supply of Nova Scotians. Have changes been put in place since the report that can give Nova Scotians confidence that government is taking meat safety more seriously?*

b) *The Auditor General found that there is no formal policy in place for auditing the food processing facilities of our province. There is an informal policy that says they should be inspected monthly. Has that policy been formalized?*

**ANSWER:** *(a) Yes changes have already occurred, (1) performance appraisals have been initiated for meat inspectors, (2) compliance dates are being noted on inspection reports . . . all other changes as recommended by the Auditor General are being applied as the completed changes become available.*

*(b) There will be a formalized policy for audits based upon risk assessment anticipated to be in place this September.*

**QUESTION:** *The Federation of Agriculture in their outlook 2021 entitled “Homegrown Success” notes that in many other provinces and countries in which Nova Scotia farmers must compete, those provinces and countries have much better incentive programs making it even more difficult for Nova Scotia farms to compete? One example is the potential of farm buildings being exempt from the municipal tax base. Does the minister see this as something the present government can afford to do?*

**ANSWER:** *The revenue generated from property taxes rests with the Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations budget. The cost of exempting all farm buildings would have to be explored through SNSMR. Once that determination has been made, government would be in a position to determine whether the resources required are available.*

**QUESTION:** *Why can't the definition of community be expanded to include individual farm operations and supporting business and allow the farms to qualify for the COMFIT PROGRAM without forming a cooperative?*

**ANSWER:** *The Renewable Energy Strategy and the embedded Comfit Program are the responsibility of the Department of Energy. The Department of Agriculture does not set the definitions within those programs. Clarification of the reasoning behind the definitions will have to be sought from Energy.*

**QUESTION:** *When does the minister plan to implement a mandatory point of origin labelling on all agricultural products so Nova Scotians when they go into a grocery store will know precisely where the food they are buying is coming from? At the present time, Nova Scotians have no idea unless they as (sic) 75 - 80% of the time whether the food in front of them is locally produced.*

*ANSWER: Country of Origin labelling is a federal responsibility, so I cannot comment further on this topic at this time. My department does look after “branding” of Nova Scotia products under the Select Nova Scotia initiative.*

*I trust that this letter answers these outstanding questions. Should there be other questions, I am always happy to respond.*

*Yours truly,*

*John MacDonell  
Minister*

### **QUESTION NO. 93**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. John MacDonell (Minister of Agriculture)

(1) The Federation of Agriculture in their Outlook 2021, entitled *Homegrown Success*, noted that in many other provinces and countries in which Nova Scotia farmers must compete, those provinces and countries have much better incentive programs making it even more difficult for Nova Scotia farmers to compete. One example is the potential of farm buildings being exempt from the municipal tax base. Does the minister see this as something the present government can afford to do?

RESPONSE:

*July 19, 2012*

*Ref.# M36*

*Mr. Chuck Porter  
MLA, Hants West  
Progressive Conservative Caucus Office  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Bank of Montreal Building  
Suite 601, 5151 George Street  
Halifax, NS B3J 1M5*

*Dr. Mr. Porter:*

*Below are responses to written questions that you tabled in the House of Assembly on May 17, 2012 pursuant to Rule 30(1).*



**QUESTION:** *On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, a FOIPOP request was sent to your Department (Agriculture) regarding untendered outside consultants.*

*As of May 11<sup>th</sup> we have received no response from your department. Will the Minister please provide a listing of, or a record indicating all untendered outside consultants hired by the department between June 1, 2009 and April 1, 2012 and delivery (sic) it by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012?*

*Consultant is defined as anyone hired to give advice of any kind to anyone in government - including but not limited to policy, administration, implementation, accounting, legal, technical, medical, communications, economic and financial.*

*Please include: description of work, amount paid, amount of the consultant (for current hires), and all jobs currently being considered and those not yet approved.*

**ANSWER:** *FOIPOP application AGR-12-5 was released to applicant by cover letter dated May 11, 2012 signed by Deputy Minister Paul LaFleche.*

**QUESTION:** *Based on the Auditor General's report there is no quality assurance which includes key operational activities. In the Auditor General's report there is no plan to implement this guideline. Is it enough to say nothing has happened yet? What consequence would cause government to do things differently?*

**ANSWER:** *A manual for meat inspection is currently being developed. A quality assurance program will be based upon completion and adoption of this manual. In the meantime, the effective linkage between the inspectors within the meat inspection program and food safety specialists within the Department allows for ample prevention, response and mitigation of food related public health concerns.*

**QUESTION:** *The Auditor General's report revealed that the Department of Agriculture is not ensuring compliance with the meat inspection regulations. The Auditor General says, "Many facilities are not taking meat safety as seriously as they should."*

- a) If there's one thing that Minister should take seriously it is the food supply of Nova Scotians. Have changes been put in place since the report that can give Nova Scotians confidence that government is taking meat safety more seriously?*
- b) The Auditor General found that there is no formal policy in place for auditing the food processing facilities of our province. There is an informal policy that says they should be inspected monthly. Has that policy been formalized?*

**ANSWER:** (a) Yes changes have already occurred, (1) performance appraisals have been initiated for meat inspectors, (2) compliance dates are being noted on inspection reports . . . all other changes as recommended by the Auditor General are being applied as the completed changes become available.

(b) There will be a formalized policy for audits based upon risk assessment anticipated to be in place this September.

**QUESTION:** The Federation of Agriculture in their outlook 2021 entitled “Homegrown Success” notes that in many other provinces and countries in which Nova Scotia farmers must compete, those provinces and countries have much better incentive programs making it even more difficult for Nova Scotia farms to compete? One example is the potential of farm buildings being exempt from the municipal tax base. Does the minister see this as something the present government can afford to do?

**ANSWER:** The revenue generated from property taxes rests with the Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations budget. The cost of exempting all farm buildings would have to be explored through SNSMR. Once that determination has been made, government would be in a position to determine whether the resources required are available.

**QUESTION:** Why can't the definition of community be expanded to include individual farm operations and supporting business and allow the farms to qualify for the COMFIT PROGRAM without forming a cooperative?

**ANSWER:** The Renewable Energy Strategy and the embedded Comfit Program are the responsibility of the Department of Energy. The Department of Agriculture does not set the definitions within those programs. Clarification of the reasoning behind the definitions will have to be sought from Energy.

**QUESTION:** When does the minister plan to implement a mandatory point of origin labelling on all agricultural products so Nova Scotians when they go into a grocery store will know precisely where the food they are buying is coming from? At the present time, Nova Scotians have no idea unless they ask (sic) 75 - 80% of the time whether the food in front of them is locally produced.

**ANSWER:** Country of Origin labelling is a federal responsibility, so I cannot comment further on this topic at this time. My department does look after “branding” of Nova Scotia products under the Select Nova Scotia initiative.

*I trust that this letter answers these outstanding questions. Should there be other questions, I am always happy to respond.*

*Yours truly,*

*John MacDonell  
Minister*

**QUESTION NO. 94**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. John MacDonell (Minister of Agriculture)

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Minister*

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By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

To: Hon. John MacDonell (Minister of Agriculture)

(1) When does the minister plan to implement a mandatory point of origin labelling on all agricultural products so Nova Scotians, when they go into a grocery store, will know precisely where the food they are buying is coming from? At the present time, Nova Scotians have no idea unless they ask 75 to 80 per cent of the time whether the food in front of them is locally produced.

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Minister*



**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 1630**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas in 1967, the first Canadian McDonalds restaurant opened its doors in Richmond, B.C., and today 2.5 million guests visit McDonalds every day across Canada; and

Whereas on August 10, 2012, dozens of local residents from Hants West were excited to cheer on Windsor native Ryan Cochrane during the K2 1,000-metre race at the 2012 Olympics in London; and

Whereas the McDonalds restaurant in Windsor held a free breakfast for the kids at 6:30 a.m. during the broadcast of the event, where local residents watched the race on two big-screen televisions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly applaud the staff of McDonalds for making this event special for those who wanted to cheer for their hometown Olympian, and thank them for their efforts.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1631**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Ryan Cochrane began paddling with his brother Justin at the Pisiquid Aquatic Canoe Club in Windsor when he was just seven years old, and was the first athlete from the club to go to the Junior World Championships; and

Whereas in 2012 Ryan and his kayaking partner Hugues Fournel won gold at the Pan American Games in Mexico and had already won two World Cup bronze medals when they headed to London in August for the 2012 Olympics, where they placed 9<sup>th</sup> overall in the K2 1,000-metre event; and

Whereas in addition to spending many grueling hours practicing on the water, Ryan is also working on a degree at Mount Saint Vincent University;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ryan on his impressive performance at the Olympics and wish him the very best in Rio de Janeiro at the 2016 Olympics.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1632**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas, founded in 1999 by Dr. Abdullah Kirumira and headquartered in Windsor, BioMedica Diagnostics Inc. is a leading Canadian biotechnology company and manufacturer and is internationally recognized for its focus on providing affordable medical diagnostic solutions to emerging economies of the world; and

Whereas the Honourable Bernard Valcourt, Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister of State for ACOA, was on hand for the unveiling of a commemorative plaque in Windsor on August 15, 2012, during BioMedica's grand opening; and

Whereas this event marks the completion of a project that was awarded in early 2011 and is expected to create up to 10 new positions, bringing the total number of employees at BioMedica in Windsor to more than 25;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate founder and CEO of BioMedica Diagnostics Inc., Dr. Kirumira, on the grand opening of their manufacturing facility and wish him and his team all the best for future success.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1633**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Doris Hagmann, originally from Switzerland, is a tireless volunteer throughout the community as well as the owner of the Avon Emporium & Shipwright Inn, located in Summerville, Hants County; and

Whereas there is always something happening at the Avon Emporium, ranging from themed brunch buffets such as the Wild Game Buffet, jam sessions every Wednesday evening, and various community events; and

Whereas when there is an event that needs catering in Summerville or the surrounding area, you will likely see Doris there with her vast array of homemade delicacies and pastries;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Doris Hagmann on the success of the Avon Emporium & Shipwright Inn and thank her for her invaluable contribution to her community.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1634**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Maria Rego of Windsor was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Maria Rego on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish her all the best in her future.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1635**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Terry Miller, originally from Three Mile Plains and son of Reg and Laura Mae Mumford, was named Bass Player of the Year at the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Eastern Canadian Bluegrass Musical Awards held in Truro on October 20<sup>th</sup>; and

Whereas Terry won the Bluegrass Award while playing with the band, New Shade of Blue, but he is also well-known for his work with the popular band, The Spinney Brothers; and

Whereas Terry, a former RCMP officer who now works for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, is a long-time musician and enjoys making people feel good with his music;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Terry Miller for his outstanding bass-playing ability, and wish him continued success in all of his musical endeavours.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1636**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas response times for emergency vehicles are critical at any given time of the day or night; and

Whereas the Hantsport and Wolfville Fire Departments are presently attempting to convince the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to put into place a median crossover near the West Brooklyn Mountain Road overpass on Highway No. 101; and

Whereas until such a median is in place, victims will be waiting extra minutes for emergency assistance, because if Hantsport is responding, for example, to an accident in the eastbound lane of Highway No. 101 they have to drive by the accident, enter Wolfville Fire Department territory, turn around and come back - with the Wolfville Fire Department having to do the same thing on the opposite side of the highway;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly urge the minister responsible for Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to immediately have his officials do the right thing and put this crossover into place.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1637**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas originally selected in 1939 for its fog-free climate, 14 Wing Greenwood is nestled in the heart of Nova Scotia's beautiful Annapolis Valley; and

Whereas in 1942, CFB Greenwood was established as a Royal Air Force Station, was used as a training base during WW II, and before the end of the war produced operational forces; and

Whereas today 14 Wing is home to three operational squadrons and celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> year of operations this year with numerous festivities and celebrations, which included a formal Sunset Ceremony on August 22<sup>nd</sup>;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate 14 Wing Greenwood on their 70<sup>th</sup> year of operations, and thank them for their dedication and commitment to our country and our community.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1638**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas for many years the Royal Canadian Legion has sponsored the Annual Essay, Poem, and Poster Contest that is open to all Canadian schoolchildren; and

Whereas Natalie Rippey, a student at West Hants Middle School, won first place in the Black and White Poster category at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 9 in Windsor; and

Whereas the primary goal of the contest is to foster a tradition of remembrance amongst Canadians by instilling in our youth the importance of recognizing our veterans and the sacrifices that were made, and are still being made today;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Natalie Rippey on her award-winning poster, and wish her all the best in future competitions.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1639**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Meander River Farm is located in Ashdale and is operated by Alan and Brenda Bailey and their daughter, Campbell; and

Whereas the Bailey's farm consists of three-quarters of a hectare of hops, with eight different varieties being grown; and

Whereas neighbours and friends assist at the Meander River Farm where the Baileys are considered to be one of the first in Nova Scotia to grow hops on a commercial scale;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly applaud the ingenuity and work of the Bailey family who were able to sell their entire crop to a Halifax microbrewery this year, and wish them continued success.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1640**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Wentworth Creek Farm, located outside of Windsor, is a newly remodelled farmhouse belonging to partners Kim Frank and Troy Burgess; and

Whereas Wentworth Creek Farm is an active farming operation, producing and selling everything from hops to chickens; and

Whereas the remodelled farmhouse is the place where Kim grew up;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly applaud the work of Troy Burgess and Kim Frank and their two children in making Wentworth Creek Farm an exciting, thriving farm operation.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1641**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Falmouth native Brian Johnston began a musical program at Windsor Regional High School 39 years ago and he believes he is lucky to have turned something he loves into a full-time job; and

Whereas former student and Canadian Juno-Award winning musician Mike Murley nominated Brian Johnston for the 2012 Valley Arts Award which was recently awarded during the 9th annual Deep Roots Musical Festival in Wolfville; and

Whereas over his almost four decades of teaching, Brian has had a positive impact on hundreds of young musicians who were fortunate enough to be in his class;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly applaud Brian Johnston for his outstanding musical and teaching career and congratulate him on his Valley Arts Award nomination.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1642**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas for many years, The Royal Canadian Legion has sponsored the Annual Essay, Poem and Poster Contest that is open to all Canadian school children; and

Whereas Jillian Adams, a student at Avon View High School, won first place in the senior category for her Remembrance Day essay at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #09 in Windsor; and

Whereas the primary goal of the contest is to foster a tradition of Remembrance amongst Canadians by instilling in our youth the importance of recognizing our veterans and the sacrifices that were made and are still being made today;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jillian on her award winning poster and wish her all the best in future competitions.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1643**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the West Hants Ground Search and Rescue team has been busy learning new technology which will assist with the tracking of lost people who have conditions such as dementia, autism and Alzheimer's; and

Whereas the Project Lifesaver Association of Nova Scotia (PLANS) distributes tracking bracelets to clients and teaches rescue groups how to find the wearer; and

Whereas Project Lifesaver certification was awarded to Hants West Ground Search and Rescue team members Josh Sheaves, Harlen Schofield, Michelle Wile, John O'Brien,

Barry White, Jeanine Strong and Jason Butler for completing the training which uses radio frequency to help searchers find at-risk individuals in a timely manner;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the seven team members on their certification and thank the Hants West Ground Search and Rescue team for providing such a valuable service to the community.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1644**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas after 27 years of teaching and several years as play director, Susan Spence-Campbell retired from Brooklyn District Elementary School in June with a surprise performance; and

Whereas an ensemble comprised of Susan's current and former drama students gathered at Brooklyn District to pay tribute to their beloved director with a few farewell numbers that have been performed and perfected on the school's stage over the last several years; and

Whereas Susan's passion for seeing children realize their potential when it came to the arts was obvious when she allowed the children who may not have always had the chance to excel at something, the opportunity to shine;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Susan Spence-Campbell for her dedication and commitment to the children during her 27 years and wish her all the best in her retirement.

#### **RESOLUTION 1645**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause, without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Captain Daniel Lavers, of Windsor, was presented with a token of appreciation during the 2012 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in June; and



Whereas Captain Lavers was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Windsor Fire Department where he followed in his father's footsteps and has been a dedicated volunteer for the past 10 years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Daniel on receiving the volunteer appreciation award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1646**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause, without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Leesa White, owner of Our Mothers Keeper in Windsor, was presented with a token of appreciation during the 2012 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet; and

Whereas Ms. White has contributed to charitable causes such as Friends of Ferals, the SPCA, Hope for Wildlife, Harvest House, the Matthew 25 Food Bank, the Breast Cancer Society, Movemeber, The Windsor Day Care Capital Campaign, the Family Resource Centre and the Windsor Business Enhancement Society;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly applaud Leesa on her volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to so many worthy causes.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1647**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Rotary Club members are committed to service above self, to support educating and job training, providing clean water, combating hunger, improving health and eradicating polio; and

Whereas at a ceremony in June, the Rotary Club of Windsor named Hugh MacNeil, of Newport, as Rotarian of the Year for his dedication to the club and its initiatives; and

Whereas Mr. MacNeil supported the club's annual Food Bank Drive and also played an integral role in the annual Food For Thought program, which is an annual ticket selling initiative to raise funds for the local area school breakfast and lunch programs;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Hugh MacNeil on receiving the Rotarian of the Year Award from the Rotary Club of Windsor and thank him for his commitment and dedication to helping others.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1648**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Rotary Club members are committed to service above self, to support educating and job training, providing clean water, combating hunger, improving health and eradicating polio; and

Whereas Windsor Rotarian, Sara Lee Lewis, was recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow in special appreciation for the ways in which her life exemplifies the humanitarian and educational objectives of the Rotary Foundation; and

Whereas Sara Lee Lewis is the co-founder of the world-renowned Mermaid Theatre in Windsor, where she has served in various capacities and currently holds the title of managing director;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sara Lee Lewis on her special recognition as a Paul Harris Fellow with the Rotary Club of Windsor and thank her for her many contributions and commitment to helping others.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1649**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas owned and operated by Stewart Creaser and Lorraine Vassalo, Avondale Sky Winery is surrounded by the ever changing tidal landscape of the St. Croix and Avon rivers, rolling hills, and the panoramic Avondale sky; and

Whereas since opening its doors in the Fall of 2011, the winery has seen rave reviews by wine connoisseurs and has received a Good Award for Tidal Bay, one of their exquisite white wines; and

Whereas with a mix of 16 different white, red, rosé and sweet wines to offer, there is sure to be something to please everyone's palate;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Stewart and Lorraine on their first year of business and wish them continued success.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1650**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas OnTree Fun & Adventure Park is a family-owned business located among the trees of Martock, Hants County, which was opened in the Spring of 2012 by Farhad Kheirabadi, Uwe Gaudig and Juergen Weigelt; and

Whereas combining European standards with Nova Scotia's beautiful natural environment, OnTree is one of the best of its kind in the country and offers excitement and physical challenges for all ages and abilities, with a variety of climbing tracks, high rope courses and zip lines; and

Whereas with decades of experience and special construction, safety and rescue fields, OnTree ensures a safe and reliable experience for the whole family;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the owners of OnTree Fun & Adventure Park on their grand opening and wish them great success.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1651**

By: Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas a church is a place in which people can unite for praise and worship, as well as for special occasions such as Christmas, Easter, baptisms, and weddings; and

Whereas the Windsor Plains United Baptist Church is celebrating 200 years of worship and service in Hants West during 2012, with special events taking place in July and October; and

Whereas these celebratory events will include special guest preachers, a family fun day, a dinner theatre hosted by their Sunday School drama troop, and an annual Roll Call Service with the president of Acadian Divinity College as their guest speaker;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the members of the Windsor Plains United Baptist Church on their 200<sup>th</sup> year, and wish them all the best for many years to come.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1652**

By: Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the term “camera obscura” is Latin for darkened room, and was first used by German astronomer Johannes Kepler in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century; and

Whereas working with the Dalhousie School of Architecture, the Cheverie Crossway Salt March Society celebrated the opening of its very own camera obscura in early June, with over 100 schoolchildren in attendance to get a glimpse of this very unique project; and

Whereas with a three-stage plan involving construction of walking trails, a camera obscura, and an interpretative centre, the Cheverie Crossway Salt Marsh Society has now completed phase two of their exciting plan:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Cheverie Crossway Salt Marsh Society on the grand opening of their camera obscura, and applaud their achievements and wish them all the best with the completion of their plans.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1653**

By: Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have a proud tradition of selflessly serving and protecting communities from coast to coast; and

Whereas after 37 years in the RCMP, Inspector Trudy Murray, originally from Nova Scotia, is retiring as the longest-serving female police officer in Canada; and

Whereas Inspector Murray is retiring in her adopted province of Newfoundland and Labrador, but never tires of spending time in Nova Scotia with her mother, Glenna Murray, of Hantsport;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Inspector Murray for her many years of exemplary service to the RCMP, and wish her all the best in her retirement.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1654**

By: Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas since being founded in 1972, the gifted artists of the Mermaid Theatre have introduced children's literature to youngsters everywhere; and

Whereas the Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday this past June, which drew hundreds of guests to the company's Gerrish Street headquarters in Windsor; and

Whereas during an average season Mermaid Theatre presents more than 400 performances for 200,000 spectators, and their whimsical puppets have performed for almost five million spectators in four continents over 40 years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mermaid Theatre on their 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday, and wish them many more years of successful theatre and performing arts.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1655**

By: Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Yukon River Quest is the world's longest annual canoe and kayak race, which invites paddlers from around the world to test their endurance by racing day and night; and

Whereas Tim Lynch from Windsor, and Faro, Yukon Territory, and Dave Lewis from Milton, N.S., came first in the men's tandem class and fourth overall in the Yukon River Quest race held in June; and

Whereas Tim and Dave completed the 715-km race from Whitehorse to Dawson City, Yukon, in an impressive time of 43 hours and 18 minutes;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tim Lynch and Dave Lewis on their amazing accomplishment, and wish them continued success in future competitions.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1656**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

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

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Logan Rowlands on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish Logan all the best in his future.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1657**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

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

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Layla Green on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish her all the best in her future.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1658**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Katrena Thomas of Windsor was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Katrena Thomas on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish her all the best in her future.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1659**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

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

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate John Liam Lynch on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish him all the best in his future.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1660**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Jack O'Flaherty of Windsor was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jack O'Flaherty on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish him all the best in his future.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1661**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Colton James of Windsor was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and



Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Colton James on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish him all the best in his future.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1662**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

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

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Claire Jurgens on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish her all the best in her future.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1663**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Chiang Kuan-Yi of Windsor was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chiang Kuan-Yi on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish Chiang all the best in the future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1664**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Tina Fang of Windsor was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tina Fang on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish her all the best in her future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1665**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Thomas Wong of Windsor was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Thomas Wong on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish him all the best in his future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1666**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Sean Liu, of Windsor, was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sean Liu on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish him all the best in his future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1667**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Olki Rahola-Drdul, of Windsor, was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Olki Rahola-Drdul on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish Olki all the best in the future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1668**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Peggy Yoston, of Windsor, was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Peggy Yoston on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish her all the best in her future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1669**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

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

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 1670**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Melissa Bancroft, of Windsor, was recently recognized as a Bronze Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the bronze level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Melissa Bancroft on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish her all the best in her future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1671**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Kyla Walsh, of Falmouth, was recently recognized as a Silver Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the silver level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kyla Walsh on being a Silver Award Achiever and wish her all the best in her future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1672**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

Whereas Patrick Wu, of Windsor, was recently recognized as a Silver Award Achiever after completing the required activities for the silver level; and

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Patrick Wu on being a Silver Award Achiever and wish him all the best in his future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1673**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

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

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

Whereas the goal of the award is to encourage young people's participation in activities that they already enjoy and others they have yet to experience in a non-competitive and fun environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Taylor Yeomans on being a Bronze Award Achiever and wish her all the best in her future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1674**

By: Mr. Leo Glavine (Kings West)

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

Whereas the citizens of Kings County decided their 11 councillors for the next four years in the municipal election on October 20<sup>th</sup> returning councillors are Diana Brothers, Wayne Atwater, Patricia Bishop, Dale Lloyd and Mike Ennis; and

Whereas the council will have six first-time representatives in Kim MacQuarrie, Emma van Rooyen, Pauline Raven, Brian Hirtle, Bob Best and Gary Connolly; and

Whereas Kings County is one of only six counties that continues to grow its population and be a leader in many rural initiatives;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature extend congratulations, recognize their official swearing in on November 6<sup>th</sup> and wish them every success in public office.