



DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2012

Sixty-first General Assembly

Fourth Session

2:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Gordon Gosse

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

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

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

Therefore be it resolved that the expected sale of the Bowater Mersey timber lands provide the single greatest opportunity for Nova Scotians to gain greater control of a major renewable resource, and the province should ensure that those lands become an asset of maximum value for the people of Nova Scotia.

It was submitted by the honourable member for Queens.

We will now begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand before you and the other members of the Legislature today to share our plan to consult with Nova Scotians on the future of affordable housing in the province. Having an affordable home is fundamental to the health and well-being of families. In the past, previous governments have often focused on the wrong kinds of housing to meet the needs of people with disabilities, seniors, and families with low incomes. Worse, they didn't really have a plan for Nova Scotia families who were struggling to make ends meet.

Mr. Speaker, this government has a plan and we're taking action. For the first time Nova Scotia will create a strategy to address the housing needs of Nova Scotia families. For the first time Nova Scotians will have a plan to make housing more affordable and to improve the health and diversity of our communities. Starting today, Nova Scotians from across the province will be able to help shape what affordable housing will look like for families, for generations to come.

Over the next few weeks public meetings will be held in seven communities across the province. Key meetings will also take place with our housing partners. Nova Scotians will also be able to learn more about this public engagement process and submit their feedback on-line, by visiting our Web site at: housing.novascotia.com.

Mr. Speaker, this public consultation will seek feedback on innovative, practical housing solutions. This includes: build diverse, mixed communities; act as a catalyst for partnership and change; make owning your home more affordable; and make housing the first step in greater independence.

Mr. Speaker, the rest of this public consultation will be a housing plan that offers people better housing options and community supports. When people can choose the housing that's right for them, our communities are healthier, more vibrant, and offer more opportunities. Developing a new, affordable housing strategy comes at a very important time. As our economy is growing and we are creating more jobs, we are seeing the price of real estate go up in some areas. That is putting home ownership out of reach for many of those with modest income.

Between our growing economy, changes in our population and the withdrawal of federal support, Nova Scotians face a choice. We can go back to the failed policies of the past, which have left many families without an affordable place to call home, or we can move forward, together, and create a new and innovative approach that works for families and helps make home ownership a real option to more Nova Scotians.

I would like to encourage all Nova Scotians to get involved, because this is a very important public consultation process. The time has come to build a new foundation for housing in Nova Scotia, and it's an exciting time, Mr. Speaker. Together let's create a blueprint that will shape our future and last for generations. I would like to table our discussion paper on a Housing Strategy for Nova Scotia - and members will also receive a copy. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to remind the honourable member that when you have information to be sent out in the House, it's information to be passed out, it's not to be tabled - and to members of the Assembly - except for Tabling Reports, Regulations and Other Papers.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister's office for sending this statement in advance. We would all agree, I think, that more has to be done to create affordable housing in this province.

The Minister of Community Services announced last Fall that there would be a housing strategy. I have to ask, where is this strategy? It's three and a half years into a four-year mandate and we don't have the strategy yet. It would seem that the minister has been dragging her feet on this. Why was this consultation not done before? How much consultation needs to be done in order for this minister to act? The 1,800 families who are waiting to get into public housing do not need more consultation - they need action from this government. Families are being forced from their homes because they can't make ends meet. Rents are increasing; power rates continue to climb; and food bank usage is on the rise. Affordable housing just isn't about just building new stock, although we certainly need it across this province.

I implore this government to be creative and consider how we can better deliver supportive housing options - but you haven't done it yet - and how we can ensure that people can stay in their homes and get the emergency repairs they need without being cut from programs because their Child Tax Benefit takes their income a few dollars over the income cut-off. For a family living in poverty, having a roof over their head can mean all the difference in the world. Just yesterday, at the Community Services Committee, government members heard that this NDP Government is not doing enough to address poverty in this province.

We haven't heard anything about this government's commitment to the Poverty Reduction Strategy that had all-Party support in 2009. Does this government support it or not? It was recently reported that one in 13 seniors in HRM is living in poverty. Seniors are having greater difficulty being able to stay in their homes and making sure they are properly maintained, let alone being able to secure affordable accessible housing.

Many families living in poverty are not considering whether or not they are able to buy a home; they are simply trying to keep the home they have - if they have one. Nova Scotians need more than a consultation from this government. The Liberal caucus has raised this question many times. How is it that this government has over \$0.5 billion to spend on corporations, but not that kind of money to help our most vulnerable? It is the job of the government to support society's most vulnerable. Nova Scotians who are living in poverty and who are trying to keep a roof over their heads are wondering, when will the NDP do the job they were elected to do and help them?

So to the homeless person tonight who cannot find a warm, safe place to sleep, to the single mom who can't pay for rent because her power bills are too high, and for the senior couple in rural Nova Scotia who cannot get repairs done to their house, here's your consultation. Thank you.

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

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to thank the minister for providing us with a copy of her statement in advance.

Having access to affordable housing is important for families, but here are some startling statistics that I will table at the end of my response. First, from 2009 to 2012, the cost of shelter in Nova Scotia has increased 8.6 per cent; I will table that. In the past three years, Nova Scotia has lost 7,400 full-time jobs. I'll table that as well. Included in what I've tabled, it also says that the full-time workforce shrank by 2 per cent and that Nova Scotia's performance on full-time jobs was the second worst in the country. In order for families to even think about being housing secure, they need to have jobs. That's the first step, something this government has apparently forgotten about.

Water, fuel, and electricity costs also come into play when families are looking at housing. From 2009 to 2012, the cost of those utilities rose an astounding 19.8 per cent. Because of bad policies coming from that government, like their "bite the bullet" electricity plan, not only are Nova Scotians struggling to provide shelter for their families, they're struggling to afford to stay warm in the cold winter months.

As mentioned before, in 2009 a Poverty Reduction Strategy was introduced, and we've seen little or no progress on that. Also, the recently-released HungerCount, which I will table, clearly illustrates the toll this government's high-tax, high-energy policies have on the hard-working people in our province. Can you imagine? Almost 3,000

hard-working Nova Scotians with jobs couldn't make ends meet and used a food bank in the last year. It's shameful that that government is making life harder for Nova Scotians who are playing by the rules and doing all the right things. What I see is a government grasping at straws as the reality of the past three years of poor decisions and bad management is finally catching up with them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction before I begin my statement?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, with us in the gallery today are PROJEX Technologies, represented by Barry Brad, the CEO; Robert Zunti, who is the executive vice president; and Scott Richards, who is the president of the Atlantic Region. All three of these gentlemen were with me earlier today for the announcement that PROJEX is expanding its workforce here in Nova Scotia. I would ask the members of the Legislature to welcome our guests. (Applause)

I am pleased to rise today to talk about yet another great opportunity for Nova Scotia that this government has helped bring home. Like the shipbuilding contract, this is an opportunity that creates good jobs for the people of the province and allows Nova Scotians working out west to return home to live and work. Of course, I'm talking about PROJEX Technologies of Alberta. This is an engineering consulting firm that passed over the options to set up in Calgary and India to expand its workforce right here in Nova Scotia. This company is already recruiting Nova Scotians out West, and it will hire and retain more engineering graduates to work in the up to 440 new jobs over the next five years, supporting western energy projects from Halifax. (Interruption)

This is great news for Nova Scotia, although based on the Liberals' reputation as job-killers, I am sure that they will find a way to disagree with it. (Interruption) Did you just listen to what your members were saying?

Mr. Speaker, you don't have to take my word that having PROJEX set up shop here is a great opportunity for Nova Scotia. You just have to ask Veronica Nicksy, a fourth-year engineering student from Dalhousie University who just completed her co-op term with the PROJEX pilot office in Halifax. Veronica said, "the province is doing the right thing by helping bring in innovative companies like PROJEX" giving her and her classmates the opportunity to work in their field without having to make the difficult choice to leave home.

Or how about Paula Gallagher, chair of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors who called today's announcement "an excellent testament of the

competitiveness of Halifax and its unique sustainable competitive advantage in engineering.”

The 440 people working at PROJEX will earn almost \$140 million with benefits over the first five years. This is money they will be able to spend in their communities and to make life better for families. (Applause) The job creation over the first five years of that period will generate an estimated \$18.2 million in direct tax revenue for the province. Overall the net tax for the province is \$7 million through this agreement; this is money that will go into schools, health care, roads in this province.

Nova Scotia is a great place to invest and do business. Just look at Jazz Air or Baskin Robbins, two successful companies that made the choice to shut down in Ontario and to bring their business to Nova Scotia. They are good jobs that will keep Nova Scotia working and this government is committed to keeping young people here at home and providing more opportunities for those who moved away to come back.

Our jobsHere plan is focused on learning, innovation and competitiveness. The PROJEX expansion here is an example of all three and the bottom line is its good jobs in Nova Scotia. Our government will continue to work with companies like PROJEX to create the high-paying jobs of the future so young people, our Nova Scotians can build a life here and help Nova Scotia turn the corner toward economic growth and prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, because of these kinds of jobs, the future starts here.

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

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Premier for sending a copy of his remarks to our office earlier. If the PROJEX deal ends up creating the promised 440 jobs for Nova Scotia, it will be good news. I say “if” because this government has made big promises and failed to live up to their job numbers.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier promised 500 jobs at DSME but there are less than 60 working there today. The government said they’d be saving hundreds of jobs with their investment in Scanwood; that company went bankrupt. These are just a few examples. In total this government agreed to give six companies \$590 million and watched them lay off more than 1,300 Nova Scotians. The people of this province understandably doubt the Premier’s job numbers and targets.

If the PROJEX deal ends up bringing 440 Nova Scotians home to this province, it will be good news. We certainly need to keep our sons and daughters in our province. (Applause) In fact, since the NDP Government took office we’ve seen more than 4,000 young people leave our province. If the promised 440 jobs actually arrive here, it will help put a small dent in the number of young Nova Scotians who have left for other provinces because of this government’s economic management of our province’s poor labour market.

If the promised 440 jobs actually are created in Nova Scotia, that will help address our youth unemployment rate that sits at 18.3 per cent - an unemployment rate that has increased since the NDP Government has taken office. I have mixed feelings about the need to use payroll rebates to attract employers here. The benefit of this tool is that companies actually have to create the jobs to receive the benefit, but it worries me that our economy is so uncompetitive that we need to use these tools to bring employers here. It worries me that since taking office, this government has made our economy less competitive by increasing taxes, ignoring power rates, ignoring fuel costs and driving up the cost of doing business.

These payroll rebates are good stopgaps, Mr. Speaker, but this government's actions are taking this stopgap and turning it into a permanent, economic development tool. These payroll rebates, however, are being used to help an out-of-province company compete for, or poach, talent from Nova Scotia businesses. Businesses expect to have to compete with other companies for talent, but they shouldn't have to compete with the government subsidized companies for talent. That's an unfair advantage and that's the government picking winners and losers.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, these 440 jobs are created in this province, and I say, hope, because this government's big deals generally don't work out. These government deals are usually oversold, overhyped and under delivered. I hope these 440 jobs are created because we need to get more than the 40,000 unemployed Nova Scotians back to work.

I am left to say "I hope" because we, the Official Opposition, know this government's track record and the more than 40,000 unemployed Nova Scotians are living with the example of this government's track record. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to respond to the announcement.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start, first of all, by welcoming PROJEX to the House of Assembly today, their officials who are here. (Applause)

And also, of course Mr. Speaker, welcoming them to Nova Scotia; it is great that they are here. They already accomplished something unique because I don't usually get such applause from that side of the House for something that I say. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party has the floor.

MR. BAILLIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome them here but of course I don't have an \$11.4 million handshake for them like the Premier has here today but still, we welcome them.

On the topic of financial handouts I can't help but comments on the Premier's creative accounting. He seems quite proud to point out that he believes that he is going to make a profit for the taxpayer of \$7 million, but let's be clear: there is no profit in what's happening today. It is an outright expense of \$11.4 million financed by the taxpayers of Nova Scotia. The absurdity of the Premier's argument is clear if you take it to its logical conclusion. If we were to refund the taxes paid by all the companies of Nova Scotia, or refund 90 per cent of the taxes paid of all Nova Scotia companies but allowed them to keep the final 10 per cent, the Premier would claim a profit by doing that. But, of course, common sense tells us that's not the way it actually works.

PROJEX is obviously welcomed here. They have a desire to bring Nova Scotians home from out West and recruit others but, Mr. Speaker, that is true of all Nova Scotia companies, including the companies that exist and operate here today, some of whom have been here for many years, like Stantec, like AMC, like CBCL. Those are all companies currently existing, currently hiring engineers that have not asked for nor received a cent of government assistance for their efforts but they share the same objectives as all Nova Scotian companies share, the objective of recruiting people from out West.

If the government's assistance was limited to truly new jobs that were truly coming here from other parts of the country or around the world, they might have a stronger case but, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is using the blunt instrument of tax assistance to pay for jobs. They are even moving from one end of Hollis Street in Halifax down to the other end of Hollis Street in Halifax. That is not creating a new job in Nova Scotia, that's using taxpayers' money to move jobs around. That is one of the great weaknesses in the Premier's creative accounting here today.

Mr. Speaker, to compare this transaction of paying one company to hire people, even from other Nova Scotia companies, to compare that to the shipyard contract is laughable - the whole point of the shipyard contract is that it gives Irving 35 years of work building real ships for Canada's Navy, that then allow Nova Scotia companies, without a grant from the Government of Canada, to line up for that work and win that work on the basis of the quality of their service, on the basis of their pricing, and to hire Nova Scotians along the way.

Even in that transaction the Premier saw an opportunity to throw taxpayers' money at the Irving group. But that was not the intent of the shipyard contract, it was to kick-start our local economy by lifting all boats at the same time and that is the opposite of what the Premier is doing here with this deal, where he has picked one company, to the exclusion of all others in the industry, to support. It's the exact opposite of what happened with the shipyard contract.

Mr. Speaker, we all want to build a truly great economy for Nova Scotia - PROJEX does, we all in this House do, but this has got to stop. The only true way to make Nova Scotia a great place to invest in and create jobs is when taxpayer-financed assistance like

this becomes unnecessary and we focus on the real way of building our economy, from the ground up - balance the budget once and for all; stop the growth in debt to our kids; lower taxes like the HST so families can get ahead; build affordable power rates that allow businesses to grow and people to pay their bills; and get back to fair and balanced labour laws so Nova Scotia can attract companies, good companies like PROJEX, without having to pay them to be here. Thank you very much. (Applause)

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1800

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

Whereas November is Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Month; and

Whereas Canada has among the highest rates of Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis in the world, and Nova Scotia has the highest rates of these diseases in the country; and

Whereas 200,000 Canadians suffer from inflammatory bowel diseases that have no cause, no cure, and limited public understanding;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in recognizing November as Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Month, and commend the organizations that support the sufferers of these diseases in their efforts to raise awareness and find a cure.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Education.

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Before I make this resolution, may I please make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MS. JENNEX : Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take the opportunity to acknowledge Kelsey Hagen and Keely Wilkins, who are in the gallery today because they are visiting the Department of Education with their fathers as part of Take Our Kids to Work Day.

So, Kelsey and Keely, if you wouldn't mind rising and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

The honourable Minister of Education.

RESOLUTION NO. 1801

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

Whereas Grade 9 students across the province are participating in Take Our Kids to Work Day, to see career opportunities first-hand; and

Whereas Kids and Learning First, our plan to help every student succeed, links learning to the workplace to help prepare Nova Scotia students for good jobs and citizenship; and

Whereas Grade 9 students will have more opportunities to explore career options in high school through programs such as co-op, skilled trades, options and opportunities, and the new personal development credit;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the importance of Take Our Kids to Work Day, and that government endeavours to provide education options and career training possibilities for students to ensure that more of our graduates are able to stay and work here in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 1802

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

Whereas Nova Scotians celebrated artistic excellence at the seventh annual Creative Nova Scotia Awards held October 26th at the Brewery Market in Halifax; and

Whereas filmmaker Thom Fitzgerald was the winner of the prestigious Portia White Prize and visual artist Kim Morgan was awarded the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia Masterworks Arts prize; and

Whereas Christmas Island was awarded the Community Arts and Culture Recognition Award, Germaine Comeau received the Prix Grand-Pré Award, and the Established Artist Recognition Award went to Ami Mackay, Michael Melski, Otis Tomas, Sarah Maloney, and Shimon Walt;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the award winners and finalists at the seventh annual Creative Nova Scotia Awards for their achievements and contributions to the vibrant arts and culture of this 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 Minister of Natural Resources.

RESOLUTION NO. 1803

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is known for its natural beauty and its scenic trails; and

Whereas hiking is a great way to promote health and physical activity, to view Nova Scotia scenery, and to spend time with friends and family; and

Whereas Nova Scotia author Michael Haynes has recently published a new edition of *Hiking Trails of Mainland Nova Scotia* that illustrates and promotes the great network of trails and trail systems found throughout the province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Michael Haynes for his continuous efforts in promoting hiking, walking, and snowshoeing throughout Nova Scotia, and wish him well with the launch of his new edition of *Hiking Trails of Mainland Nova Scotia*.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 122 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 475 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Trade Union Act. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

Bill No. 123 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 260 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Liquor Control Act, to Permit the Interprovincial Importation of Wine. (Mr. Chuck Porter)

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

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove on an introduction.

MS. KELLY REGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce in the west gallery the newly re-elected HRM councillor Tim Outhit, the member for District 16 - Bedford-Wentworth, and his daughter Elizabeth Outhit, who with her friend Tineke Weld, are here as part of Take Our Kids to Work Day. I ask the members to give them the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism on an instruction.

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, in the gallery opposite I'm pleased to recognize and wish he would stand and get a warm welcome from the House, Liam Hodder. Liam is a 15-year-old student at Lockview High, and today is kind of a special day for Liam because today is also his birthday. He's here in the House observing and he is also joined by this mom and dad.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: I'd like to draw the attention of the House to the west gallery where a young man from Windermere, near Berwick, a student at École Rose-des-Vents is here as part of Take Our Kids to Work Day and he has a major interest in politics so I'm sure he'll enjoy the session. I'd like for Ryche Copeland to stand and get a warm welcome from the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Environment.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, we have a theme going here today. With your permission of an introduction, this is Take Our Kids to Work Day and I am pleased that we have several students who have been spending some time in Environment today, they are in the east gallery. Joining us today are Geordie House, Meghan Rudderham, Alicia Wilson, Madison Silver, Amy MacDonald, Keh-Shawn Skeir, Brooke Bishop, Dayna Leblanc, Virginia Olsen, Tina Skeir, and Aimee Standen. I invite all members to give everybody a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I was asked not to introduce this person but I think a parent has to embarrass their child at one time in their life. In your gallery, Mr. Speaker, is my daughter Taylor who is a Grade 9 student at Sackville Heights Junior High in the French Immersion Program. She spent the morning at the Organ and Tissue Bank and now is spending some time here in the Legislature, so I wish everybody would give her a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: We might as well just keep the theme. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. These two gentlemen aren't necessarily - they are a little bit older than Grade 9 students - but I want to bring the attention of the House to your gallery, Mr. Speaker, two gentlemen who had purchased at a church auction to follow me around for a day. They spent about two bucks and they won.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask you to give them a warm welcome to the House; their names are Floyd Fullerton and Teunis Voerman, please rise. (Applause)

AN HON. MEMBER: Give them their money back.

MR. WHYNOTT: I should pay them.

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1804

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure given the introductions that this one will receive unanimous support. I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas today is Take Our Kids to Work Day; and

Whereas Grade 9 kids across the country will join their parents and guardians to experience a full day of work; and

Whereas the goal of this day is to help students understand the importance of staying in school and encourage them to explore career choices in a practical way, even if that means coming to the House of Assembly;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House wish all of the students experiencing a full adult work day the best of luck and encourage them to stay in school so they can be successful in whatever path they choose.

Just as a final comment, I too am a dad of a student in Grade 9. I did invite her to come here today but she felt that her Grade 9 class was more orderly and peaceful than the House of Assembly and chose to stay there.

So with that little ad lib, 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.

HON. LEONARD PREYRA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission, I'd like to do an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. PREYRA: In the east gallery today is a distinguished community activist who lives in the constituency of the member for Halifax Needham but spends all of her waking hours in my constituency and does great work there. She has chosen to continue her activism by offering to serve as a member of the school board and last night was sworn in as the Halifax Regional School Board District 4 Representative, Cindy Littlefair. I'd like to ask her to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1805

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

Whereas municipal and school board elections were held in Nova Scotia on October 20th, which resulted in the election of Cindy Littlefair as the school board representative for District 4 of the Halifax Regional School Board; and

Whereas Ms. Littlefair was, for more than 10 years, a member and chair of the St. Mary's Elementary School Advisory Council and Queen Elizabeth High School's School Advisory Council, and has worked for 28 years in the film, television and print industries, including her current position as the Human Resources Manager of the Shambala Sun Times; and

Whereas Ms. Littlefair has demonstrated a record of commitment to strengthening communities, including her effort to prevent the closure of St. Mary's Elementary School, as well as her work recently to help in organizing a memorial service for our late friend, Raymond Taavel, which helped unite and heal diverse communities;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Cindy Littlefair on her being elected to represent the family of schools in District 4 and that we wish her a successful term on the Halifax Regional School Board.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

RESOLUTION NO. 1806

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

Whereas Diane Roberts, an Antigonish town councillor for five terms, decided not to reoffer in the recent municipal election; and

Whereas in her 19 years on council Ms. Roberts served often as deputy mayor, sat on many committees and attended Union of Nova Scotia Municipality conferences; and

Whereas Ms. Roberts was a fixture at community events during her tenure on town council and will no doubt continue to serve the community in any way she can;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House thank Diane Roberts for her 19 years of service on town council and wish her all the best in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 1807

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

Whereas on June 6th, 2012 Tim Horton's held its annual Camp Day; and

Whereas the Chester Tim Horton's raised over \$5,800 to help send deserving kids from economically disadvantaged homes on a once in a lifetime camping adventure; and

Whereas this year's Camp Day across Canada raised a record \$11 million, which will help more than 15,000 kids;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates and thanks all volunteers and staff from the Chester Tim Horton's for raising money on Camp 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 Minister of Health and Wellness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1808

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

Whereas Give Kids the World is an organization which provides children with life-threatening illnesses a family trip to their 70-acre resort in Florida; and

Whereas Evelyn MacNamara of Lower Sackville became involved with Florida's Give Kids the World resort in support of a close friend whose son had a terminal illness; and

Whereas Evelyn spearheaded a fundraiser on August 11th in Lower Sackville, where more than \$5,800 were raised in the Power of 10 campaign;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House commend Evelyn MacNamara of Lower Sackville for her commitment to raising awareness and funds to help children with life-threatening illnesses travel to Give Kids the World Village in Florida with their families for a memorable experience, and wish her future success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 1809

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

Whereas Shelburne County advanced care paramedic Peter Nickerson was awarded an Exemplary Service Medal for Emergency Medical Services by Lieutenant Governor John James Grant on September 19, 2012; and

Whereas Peter Nickerson began his career as a paramedic in his home community of Woods Harbour 21 years ago as a volunteer medic, returning to school at the age of 50 to complete his advanced care paramedic training at much cost to his family, both time-wise and financially; and

Whereas Peter Nickerson is trusted and held in high esteem by the community he serves for the respect, dignity, and quality of care he shows all his patients;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Peter Nickerson for receiving an Exemplary Service Medal for his 21 years of service as a paramedic and wish him all the best as he continues his career in emergency medical services.

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 Natural Resources.

RESOLUTION NO. 1810

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

Whereas Jason Sanford of Scotsburn, Pictou County, was the only Nova Scotian to be a member of the 2012 Canadian Men's National Softball Team; and

Whereas the Canadian Men's National Softball Team won a gold medal at the Pan American Championships, held in Columbia in September of this year; and

Whereas Jason Sanford has been playing softball for over 23 years and has now won a gold medal at the Pan American Games, his next goal being to win at the International Softball Federation Men's World Championship in New Zealand in 2013;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Jason Sanford and the Canadian Men's National Softball Team for winning a gold medal at the Pan American Games in September 2012, and wish them further success in New Zealand in 2013 at the International Softball Federation Men's World Championship.

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 Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

RESOLUTION NO. 1811

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

Whereas the announcement in August 2011 that NewPage would idle their mill in Port Hawkesbury was met with great disappointment and put 1,400 jobs at risk; and

Whereas this NDP Government demonstrated its commitment to Nova Scotians by standing with and negotiating on behalf of the families in the Strait area and beyond during this difficult time, despite the relative silence from the member for Richmond; and

Whereas an agreement was reached this Fall to sell the mill, ensuring employees will be able to continue living and working in their communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House, in particular the member for Richmond, commend the NDP Government for making strategic investment decisions that protect good jobs in rural Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill.

RESOLUTION NO. 1812

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

Whereas Will Fisher, a former student at Cobequid Educational Centre and a graduate of Humber College's jazz program, has recently released his debut CD, *Portage*; and

Whereas Will Fisher's debut album *Portage* has been nominated for a 2012 Nova Scotia Music Award as Jazz Recording of the Year; and

Whereas during his CD release tour, Will Fisher performed to a hometown, sold-out crowd and has now returned to his former high school to work with students in the music program;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulates Will Fisher on his 2012 Nova Scotia Music Award nomination and wishes him continued success in his music career.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

MS. BECKY KENT: Mr. Speaker, with your permission, may I do an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MS. KENT: Thank you. If I could draw the attention of the members to the east gallery, we have a young lady by the name of Katherine Logan who is sharing her day with me. She's a Grade 9 student at Eastern Passage Education Centre and a proud young New Democrat, within this last year. She is also the daughter of my constituency assistant, Margaret Keats-Logan, but equally important to me anyway, she affectionately considers me, or calls me, her second mom, so she's here as part of Take "Your" Kids to Work Day. If I could ask the members to share in a warm welcome for Katherine today. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

RESOLUTION NO. 1813

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

Whereas taking young people to work for the day is a good way to educate today's youth about the workforce and allow them to experience new and exciting career opportunities; and

Whereas the success of Take Our Kids to Work Day can be attributed to teachers, parents, school boards, government and of course the students; and

Whereas Katherine Logan, a Grade 9 student of Eastern Passage Education Centre, has joined the members of the Legislative Assembly today to learn and witness democracy in action;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House welcome Katherine Logan to Take Our Kids to Work Day and wish her well as she continues her studies.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Queens.

RESOLUTION NO. 1814

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

Whereas music is such an integral aspect of Nova Scotia's cultural identity; and

Whereas the vast number of music festivals and events of all levels across Nova Scotia clearly illustrate the importance of this art in the hearts of Nova Scotians; and

Whereas Nova Scotia Music Week, an annual event showcasing, celebrating and honouring our musicians and industry professionals, will be hosted in Liverpool, Queens County, from November 8th to November 11th, 2012;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates Liverpool, Queens County, for hosting Nova Scotia Music Week, November 8th to November 11th, and invite all Nova Scotians to Liverpool for this wonderful celebration, recognizing all who contribute to the musical legacy of 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 Pictou East.

RESOLUTION NO. 1815

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

Whereas the talented and dedicated people of Cape Breton have often been an incentive for businesses to expand; and

Whereas Stream Global Services has recently announced expansion plans, which may result in up to 400 new jobs being created in Glace Bay; and

Whereas creating good jobs in Nova Scotia is one of the driving forces behind the NDP Government's jobsHere strategy;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House congratulate Stream Global Services on its success to date and acknowledge the important role the jobsHere plan played in encouraging its expansion in Glace Bay.

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 Atlantic.

MS. MICHELE RAYMOND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and with your permission I would like to make an introduction first.

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MS. RAYMOND: I'd like to draw the attention of the members of the House to the Speaker's Gallery, where you will find a person who is very well known to all of us, Chris Martin. Chris is here, not necessarily in his capacity as one of the talented and dedicated people who find themselves in the House of Assembly every day, but in fact as a musician whose family, I am proud to say, originally hails from Ketch Harbour, although they migrated to town at some point.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

RESOLUTION NO. 1816

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

Whereas bluesman and composer Chris Martin and his partner Tiffany Spencer are the founders of Let's Riot! Music, Canada's newest independent music label, and producers of the Rockabilly Riot series at the Seahorse Tavern, a series which has even invaded the Moncton music scene; and

Whereas Chris Martin and the Trouble Shooters have been nominated for Music Nova Scotia's Blues Recording of the Year for *A Whole 'Nother Thang*; and

Whereas Chris Martin also makes a mean soup, as all members of the House should know;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Mr. Martin when they are next in the kitchen of the House of Assembly, and wish him and his bandmates success at the Nova Scotia Music Awards in Liverpool on November 11th.

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 Timberlea-Prospect.

RESOLUTION NO. 1817

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

Whereas the Jerry Lawrence Provincial Park in Lewis Lake continues to serve as a popular recreational destination for Nova Scotians of all ages; and

Whereas seniors and physically-challenged Nova Scotians, in particular, enjoy the unique features of this park; and

Whereas this busy park was well maintained from May through to October by staff of the Department of Natural Resources;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature thank the Department of Natural Resources for their good work at the Jerry Lawrence Provincial Park in Lewis Lake.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1818

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

Whereas Mr. Bruce Oakes has been a long-time resident of Bridgewater and is a well-known musician in the area; and

Whereas Mr. Oakes has spent hours of his life playing at charitable events, for old-time dances and public events, and with a number of bands, including the Bridgewater Fire Department Dixieland Band; and

Whereas Mr. Oakes continues to be an integral part of the volunteer community, playing a multitude of instruments, and on many occasions adding a perfectly-pitched baritone voice to the mix;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House thank Mr. Bruce Oakes for his many years of volunteer service using his musical talents to brighten the lives of his fellow citizens, and wish him health, happiness, and success in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cumberland North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1819

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

Whereas support of community and physical activity are part of the backbone that makes up rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Roy Mattinson has organized baseball games and looked after the Pugwash ball field for more than 30 years, and has recently been honoured by having the Pugwash ball field renamed after him; and

Whereas Alex Parker, the 19-year-old grandson of Roy Mattinson, entered the Kraft Canada contest by writing an essay about his grandfather that ultimately resulted in the Village of Pugwash receiving \$25,000 to help pay for upgrades to the ball field, and also to have the right to have TSN SportsCentre broadcast live from Pugwash;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Roy Mattinson and Alex Parker for their commitment to their community and the sport of baseball.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Kings North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1820

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

Whereas in July 2012, Chorus Aviation announced expansion plans for Jazz Aviation, moving approximately 150 good jobs to Nova Scotia; and

Whereas not only will the move help grow the economy of Nova Scotia, it will provide good jobs for skilled Nova Scotians; and

Whereas this move to Nova Scotia is proof that our government is dedicated to the creation of good jobs and turning the corner from the country's worst economic growth in 20 years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House welcome the expansion of Jazz Aviation bringing good jobs to Nova Scotia to support Nova Scotian families.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Lunenburg.

RESOLUTION NO. 1821

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

Whereas the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lunenburg was founded in 1772, making it the oldest Lutheran congregation in Canada; and

Whereas the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, which has had 18 pastors over the years, is celebrating its 240th Anniversary this year, under the leadership of Reverend Vivian S. Roberts; and

Whereas the celebration took place on Sunday, November 4th, including a community potluck at the Lunenburg Community Centre, followed by a special anniversary service at the church;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize the long history of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Town of Lunenburg and congratulate the congregation for reaching its 240th Anniversary.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

RESOLUTION NO. 1822

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

Whereas the Ringside World Boxing Championships, held in Kansas City, Missouri, is the largest amateur boxing tournament in the world; and

Whereas Taylor Ross, the pride of Whitney Pier, recently was the first female boxer from Cape Breton to compete at this prestigious event; and

Whereas Taylor Ross captured the title in the Female Intermediate Division for 13 and 14-year-olds;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Taylor Ross, a resident of Whitney Pier, the home of the Speaker of the Nova Scotia Legislature, on her outstanding achievement and wish her all the best in her future boxing 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 Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville.

RESOLUTION NO. 1823

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

Whereas part café, restaurant and pantry, Edible Matters opened their doors this summer at their location on the Hammonds Plains Road; and

Whereas owner Ian Bunting and the new business has created over 30 jobs in the area, including hiring graduates from the NSCC culinary school; and

Whereas head chefs Jamie MacAulay and Chris Burton pay close attention to where their ingredients come from, using local fresh produce and meat, impressing ChronicleHerald's food critic Bill Spurr;

Therefore be it resolved that this House welcome Edible Matters to the Hammonds Plains community, and wish head chefs Jamie MacAulay and Chris Burton and owner Ian Bunting and their staff continued success with the café, restaurant, and pantry, and creating 30 good jobs in a local area.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

RESOLUTION NO. 1824

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

Whereas on June 11th, Cancer Care Nova Scotia presented its annual Excellence Awards, recognizing the work of cancer health care professionals and volunteers; and

Whereas the Excellence in Patient Care Award for a Volunteer was presented to Jim Mulcahy, a two-time cancer survivor and volunteer advocate from Antigonish; and

Whereas Mr. Mulcahy is a member of local and provincial committees that are working to create programs and policies that have a patient-centric focus such as the Cancer Care Nova Scotia's Patient Engagement Project and St. Martha's Regional Distress Screening Implementation Team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House thank Jim Mulcahy for his work on behalf of cancer patients and survivors, congratulate him on receiving the Excellence in Patient Care Award, and wish him all the best.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 1825

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

Whereas Aaron Nickerson, Clark's Harbour, was presented with the Nova Scotia Golf Association's 2012 Male Player of the Year Award at the association's annual banquet on October 27, 2012; and

Whereas Aaron Nickerson won the award by topping the leaderboard in points earned during the 2012 season at sanctioned tournaments across the province, including his second Nova Scotia Mid-Amateur Championship title on June 24th; and

Whereas Aaron Nickerson, who also won the NSGA Male Player of the Year Award in 2010, has been an ambassador for the province over the years at numerous golfing events, including the 2012 Canadian Mid-Amateur Championships as the leader of Team Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Aaron Nickerson for being named the 2012 Male Player of the Year by the Nova Scotia Golf Association.

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 Natural Resources.

RESOLUTION NO. 1826

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

Whereas Scotsburn Dairy has been making Baskin-Robbins products for the last several years; and

Whereas in July of this year, Baskin-Robbins announced that as of October 2012 Scotsburn Dairy would be their exclusive supplier of ice cream for all 113 of their shops across Canada; and

Whereas this deal will bring more work and will mean more hours, more shifts, and likely more employees at their plant in Truro;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Scotsburn Dairy on becoming Baskin-Robbins exclusive supplier, and applaud Baskin-Robbins for seeing the opportunities available in Nova Scotia and choosing to move their business here.

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 Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

RESOLUTION NO. 1827

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

Whereas in 2007 hundreds of citizens in Canso and Guysborough County presented a petition urging the Progressive Conservative Government to meet with them to discuss what they described as their “economically depressed region of Nova Scotia” and to help them “seek ways and means of replacing employment lost by the closing of the only major industry in the area”; and

Whereas this petition, tabled by the NDP member for Pictou East, was ignored by the Progressive Conservative Government who refused to support the people of Guysborough County in their time of need; and

Whereas the NDP Government has time and time again proven their commitment to supporting rural communities like Canso and Guysborough County, and made investments in local companies like Authentic Seacoast, which is bringing 35 new jobs to the area and expects to bring even more in the years to come;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate the NDP Government for demonstrating their commitment to growing the rural economy and, unlike previous Progressive Conservative Governments, recognizing the value of small business in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill.

RESOLUTION NO. 1828

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

Whereas Brenda Leenders, a Public Health nutritionist in Truro, helped organize the 2011 Foodgrains Bank Atlantic Food Justice Camp and participated in the Foodgrains Bank Food Study Tour to Haiti; and

Whereas Brenda Leenders, who is a founding member of Harvest For Hunger Nova Scotia, has recently been appointed as provincial regional coordinator for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a partnership of 15 churches and church agencies working together to end global hunger; and

Whereas in her new volunteer position, Brenda will work to raise awareness about global hunger issues and provide support for fundraising for the Foodgrains Bank;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Brenda Leenders on her appointment as the regional coordinator for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and that we thank her for her work in raising awareness and funds for global hunger.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

RESOLUTION NO. 1829

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

Whereas Rev. Johni Matthew Pichappilly, pastor of St. Andrew's Parish in Eastern Passage, has published his new book, *The Table of the Word*, and just released his fifth music album, *The Meditation of The Soul*; and

Whereas Father Johni has an esteemed reputation as a singer/songwriter in his native India, once singing for tens of thousands of fans at a concert there; has released five music albums in the last six years; and has written around 500 songs; and

Whereas Father Johni has been the rector at St. Andrew's Parish in Eastern Passage for two years, dedicating his days to the members of this parish, and invited the entire community to his book launch and CD release on September 20th at the Eastern Passage Lions Club;

Therefore be it resolved that this Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate Father Johni Matthew Pichappilly on his recent book launce and CD release as well as the admirable dedication he has shown to the people of the Parish of St. Andrew's in Eastern Passage, since taking on the position of priest.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Queens.

RESOLUTION NO. 1830

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

Whereas small businesses and entrepreneurs define the character of our communities and breathe life into our streetscapes; and

Whereas Mark and Melanie Baillie of Hell Bay Brewing Company are expanding their operation; and

Whereas on New Year's Day 2013, Hell Bay Brewing Company will be located on Legion Street in downtown Liverpool, Queens County;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Mark and Melanie Baillie of Hell Bay Brewing Company for their entrepreneurial spirit and contribution to the business community of Queens County.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 1831

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

Whereas the Citadel Theatre Society is a not-for-profit society whose mission is to promote arts and culture through the operation of the Spatz Community Theatre at Citadel High School; and

Whereas the Spatz Community Theatre is a multi-functional performance space that provides exceptional theatrical experiences to Citadel High students and the greater Halifax area, while serving as a vital community resource for public lectures and activities; and

Whereas on November 2, 2012, the Citadel Theatre Society hosted Splash at the Spatz 2, a benefit performance and fundraiser for the Spatz Community Theatre, featuring award-winning comedian Ron James;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize the Citadel Theatre Society for its work in bringing the Spatz Community Theatre to fruition as a valuable community resource, particularly in the promotion of arts and culture, and extend congratulations on staging a highly successful fundraiser.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Pictou East.

RESOLUTION NO. 1832

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

Whereas Cecilia McRae of Big Island, Pictou County is committed to improving the lives of persons suffering from mental illness at many levels of our society; and

Whereas Cecilia McRae is a founding member of the Pictou County Family Support Group which assists family members, caregivers and friends of those with mental illness; and

Whereas in 2009, Cecilia McRae was elected as the president of the Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia and appointed to the minister's task force on mental health;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly thank and congratulate Cecilia McRae for her passion and dedication in support of thousands of Nova Scotians with mental illness.

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 Atlantic.

RESOLUTION NO. 1833

MS. MICHELE RAYMOND: Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to ask for an introduction but I'm afraid I'm dealing with a bashful author so I will simply read the resolution.

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

Whereas Yury Vasiliev is a native of Moscow and worked for many years in the diplomatic service, specializing in African affairs; and

Whereas Yury Vasiliev has recently published *Over the Equator*, a partly fictionalized account of the travels and tribulations of Philip Efremov, an 18th Century Russian explorer who spent 9 years in freedom and in slavery in different parts of Africa; and

Whereas Yury Vasiliev has now retired to live in Nova Scotia, where as a member of the Corps of Commissionaires, he spends long days in the House of Assembly;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Mr. Yury Vasiliev on the publication of *Over the Equator: Pages from the Journal of Russian Trailblazer Philip Efremov*, and remember yet again how privileged we are in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to be joined by so many talented people from across the province and around the world.

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 Chebucto.

RESOLUTION NO. 1834

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's highly skilled paramedics play an important and vital role in our health care system; and

Whereas for over a decade, the province has trusted Tri-Star Industries to build high-quality ambulances that keep our paramedics on the road and deliver better care sooner for all Nova Scotians; and

Whereas Tri-Star Industries will expand its operation in Yarmouth, ensuring over 60 good jobs remain in southwest Nova Scotia and creating at least 16 new positions, which is sure to please the member for Yarmouth;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House, in particular the member for Yarmouth, applaud the NDP Government's commitment to creating jobs and growing Nova Scotia's economy.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

RESOLUTION NO. 1835

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

Whereas the St. Margarets Bay Lions Club has been recognized by Lions International for its continuing efforts to raise funds for seeing eye dogs; and

Whereas the St. Margarets Bay Lions has raised more money for this program than any other Lions Club in Canada; and

Whereas at its annual Spring road toll, the St. Margarets Bay Lions raised \$6,959, money that will be used to sponsor the club's 13th seeing eye dog;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate the St. Margarets Bay Lions on their great work, living up to the motto of Lions International, "We Serve," by providing funds for the Seeing Eye dog program.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1836

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

Whereas Ms. Mae Forbes, a resident of Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, and formerly of Seal Harbour, Guysborough, celebrated her 102nd birthday on October 5, 2012; and

Whereas Ms. Forbes has volunteered over the years for a number of organizations in the Bridgewater area, including the Dawson Daisy for the last 38 years; and

Whereas Ms. Forbes has, over the course of many years, won countless awards for her volunteer work, including Maritimer of the Week;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House thank Ms. Mae Forbes for her many years of volunteer service to her community, and congratulate her on the occasion of her 102nd birthday.

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 Cumberland North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1837

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

Whereas LED Roadway Lighting is the leading designer and manufacturer of LED (light-emitting diode) based street lighting, which reduces energy use and greenhouse gas emissions; and

Whereas our government has been proud to support LED Roadway Lighting and to see this company experience significant growth over the last couple of years; and

Whereas LED, a global leader in innovative technology, has chosen to grow their business in Amherst, Nova Scotia, creating good sustainable jobs in this province;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly join me in congratulating LED Roadway Lighting on their successes to date, and for the good work this company is doing to create good jobs for Nova Scotian families and grow our economy.

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

MADAM 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 Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville.

RESOLUTION NO. 1838

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

Whereas on July 14, 2012, Anchor Industries Society (AIS) hosted their 3rd Annual Fun Fair at their location in Lower Sackville to raise awareness and funds towards their Building Futures campaign; and

Whereas the successful event featured many fun activities including a bouncy castle, face painting, bean bag toss, and a large dunk tank, in addition to the delicious treats served on on-site; and

Whereas Anchor Industries Society works tremendously hard all year to support community members with intellectual disabilities and special needs through fundraising and their restaurant, The Ladle, their print shop, The OffShoot Shop, and their gift and card business, All Wrapped Up;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly congratulate Anchor Industries Society on their successful 3rd Annual Fun Fair, and thank them for the incredible work they do all year round for persons with intellectual disabilities.

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

MADAM SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Kings North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1839

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

Whereas Valley Waste Resource Management provides waste management services to the Annapolis Valley, serving approximately 83,000 residents and 38,000 households and commercial units, with the main goals of fiscal responsibility, social acceptance, and environmental soundness; and

Whereas Valley Waste Resource Management officially opened their new administrative office on October 4, 2012, which, in addition to being incredibly energy efficient, is designed to demonstrate the possibilities of using reused and recycled materials, and features the use of chipped post-consumer tires to make aggregate for the foundation; concrete sidewalks and flooring containing recycled glass; asphalt shingle mix in the paving; cellulose insulation from old newsprint; plastic lumber made from recycled materials; and interior finishes using reclaimed wood; and

Whereas Valley Waste-Resource Management's new building will be one of the first commercial buildings in Canada to be accredited with both Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), and Passive House certification;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature congratulate Valley Waste-Resource Management for making its office building a model of what is possible and for making the Annapolis Valley an acknowledged leader in effective waste management.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Lunenburg.

RESOLUTION NO. 1840

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia Music Awards highlight the best that Nova Scotia's music industry has to offer including artists, performers, media, and industry professionals and venues, while connecting communities with the music that they love; and

Whereas Lunenburg native Joel Plaskett has been nominated as Songwriter of the Year and Entertainer of the Year, while Spectacle Lakes resident Jordi Comstock has been nominated as Musician of the Year; and

Whereas Acadia Broadcasting in Bridgewater has been nominated as Corporate Sponsor of the Year and Radio Program of the Year for *That East Coast Show*, while the show's host, Jonathan Crouse has seen his annual summer event, Riverfest, nominated as Event of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate all nominees of the 2012 Nova Scotia Music Awards taking place in Liverpool and recognize the strong South Shore talent being recognized in the Province of Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Richmond.

RESOLUTION NO. 1841

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

Whereas the NDP MLA for Kings North chose to make an unprovoked and personal attack against one of the current longest-serving members of this Legislature; and

Whereas the rarely seen or heard-from MLA for Kings North, first elected in 2009, can only dream of having the electoral success of the member he personally attacked; and

Whereas if the NDP MLA for Kings North, NDP caucus staff, or anyone else in the NDP is truly interested in looking through history for elected members who have faced criminal convictions, they need look no further than within the current and past NDP caucus;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in reminding the MLA for Kings North, NDP caucus staff, and all NDP MLAs of the wise saying: "People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones."

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

Order, please. The time has arrived for the Oral Question Period. The time is 3:33 p.m. and we will end at 5:03 p.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

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

ERDT - GOV'T.: ECONOMY CREATION - EFFECTS

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. The government has a habit of over-promising and under-delivering when it comes to job targets. I sincerely hope that we are able to bring 440 Nova Scotians home. Too many of our sons and daughters have fled the province because of the government's economic mismanagement; 4,000 young Nova Scotians have left our province since the NDP have taken office. My question to the minister is, why has the government created an economy that is forcing young Nova Scotians out of our province at an accelerated rate?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in my place and respond to that. What we are doing and what we declared when we came into government, we were going to do things differently. We were going to create employment and stop the out-migration of Nova Scotians. We've done that. We will continue to do that - 7,600 new jobs since we've been government, as opposed to 20 years of a last-place finish.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, young people need help from this government. Even though they've needed it for three years, government has sat idly by while they've left our province. Those who remain are struggling to find work. Youth face the unemployment rate in the province of almost 19 per cent, which is an increase since the NDP Government has taken office in 2009. My question to the minister is, why has this government pursued economic policies that have forced young Nova Scotians either to leave our province or to the unemployment line?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, we are creating high-paying jobs so our young people do not have to go to Alberta.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, they must be creating those jobs elsewhere, because young Nova Scotians are leaving.

This government likes to hype the government's job announcements. We need to look no further than the example of DSME Trenton. Remember when the Premier promised 500 jobs? There are less than 60 people working there today. Nova Scotians look at this Premier with his job targets with suspicion. He agrees to give \$590 million to six companies and watch them lay off 1,300 Nova Scotians. (Interruptions) Do you want me to start over again, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: No, that's fine.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is, with so many botched business deals and missed job targets, why should Nova Scotians trust you now?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I think with what this government has done - when I look at Shelburne Shipyards, when I consider the game changers that are on the horizon for the future of Nova Scotia - the Irving Shipbuilding contract, 11,500 jobs, not to mention Muskrat Falls - we've worked toward the future.

Now, I can understand how some past governments didn't understand that philosophy. If we had 20 years, just think what we could have done.

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

PREM. - PROJEX FUNDING: CHOICE - EXPLAIN

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, today the Premier announced he's giving \$11.4 million in taxpayers' money to PROJEX Technologies, an engineering firm that set up in Nova Scotia last year. There are many engineering firms already established in Nova Scotia, including six that have moved here in recent years, all without financial assistance from the NDP.

My question to the Premier is, why PROJEX and not these other companies? Was it simply because they asked?

THE PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, we're not giving anything to anyone. In fact, as he pointed out, PROJEX is an engineering company out of Alberta. They will come to Nova Scotia - or expand in Nova Scotia, to be more appropriate - 440 jobs, the average paycheque around \$90,000 per a job. At the end of the five years, those 440 jobs will represent almost \$50 million a year into the economy of Nova Scotia. That's 440 families with good jobs paying money into our economy. They're new jobs and new work. It's an export business, taking work from other places and doing it here.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier says they are new jobs and we all wish that that was true. PROJEX is on a hiring spree right now - 20 people they've hired from Stantec, an existing Nova Scotia engineering firm; another eight they've hired from SNC-Lavalin, another existing Nova Scotia engineering firm; and they've hired engineers from AMEC/Whitman Benn, another existing Nova Scotia engineering firm, all with taxpayer incentives to move jobs from one end of Halifax to the other end of Halifax. That is not job creation. It's simply using taxpayers' money to move existing jobs around.

Yesterday the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism said he doesn't see how the government investment in DSTN gives them an advantage over other companies. Obviously, it does. We had hoped the Premier would see the difference. Obviously, he doesn't either. So my question to the Premier is, why is he using taxpayers' money to simply move existing jobs around?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, that couldn't be further from the truth. In fact, this is work that this company has that is done in Alberta for Alberta companies. Now, they can either hire people Nova Scotia to go to work in Calgary and do the work or they can hire people in Halifax to do the work. The work for the other company remains with them; they can hire their own employees and, in fact, what this does is it widens the supply of engineers in the province by keeping new graduates here, by attracting back engineers from other parts of the country into Halifax. It increases the supply for the engineering community, creates 440 well-paying jobs, puts \$18 million into the tax pockets of the province to be able to be spend on health, education, new roads. I wish it was stuff that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party understood.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I really wish the Premier would understand that paying one company to move a job from one end of the City of Halifax to the other end of the City of Halifax is not actually creating a new job. Common sense tells us that. Our own local engineering firms are telling them that.

What the Premier says is true of this one company that he has chosen to sprinkle taxpayers' money on is true of all engineering firms in Nova Scotia, Mr. Speaker. The difference now is those other firms are having their own tax dollars used against them to compete for engineers in Nova Scotia. That's what's wrong with the NDP approach.

I really wish that what the Premier was saying about jobs coming from Alberta to here was exclusively true but it's not, so I will ask the Premier if that's the case, can he get up in the House right now and assure all of us and all Nova Scotians that no taxpayer money will pay one company to recruit from another?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, all the companies in Nova Scotia in a sector compete on a broad basis; they advertise and people answer those advertisements. For example, in the case of PROJEX, more than 700 people from outside the Province of Nova Scotia have already applied for jobs to come back to Nova Scotia. This particular arrangement also requires the company to hire new grads, to hire engineering graduates from the schools of engineering in the region, so that young people can actually stay in the province and get good jobs here. That is the difference between this government and the ex-government.

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

ERDT - DSME: HOUSTON JOB CREATION - MIN. AWARENESS

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism said, "Mr. Speaker, DSTN, as I said, are diversifying; they've been working on a market strategy. They're looking to markets all over the world;" He was certainly correct, an internal company communication indicates that DSME is preparing to open an engineering company in Houston, Texas.

My question to the minister is, when did the government become aware that the government business partner, DSME, was creating jobs in Houston, Texas, and not in Nova Scotia?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I don't know where it's considered as a prerequisite that a parent company of a company that's based here in Nova Scotia has to tell the Province of Nova Scotia how they're expanding their business. I don't know why they feel they would have to tell us.

MR. MCNEIL: I'm surprised, Mr. Speaker, the way these guys are writing cheques, that every company wouldn't be telling them.

Mr. Speaker, DSME is preparing to open an engineering firm in Houston, Texas. In the last year the number of unemployed in North Shore has increased by more than 17 per cent and the unemployment rate is continuing to go up.

Mr. Speaker, this government promised 500 jobs but according to this government, only a fraction of those jobs can be created. My question to the minister is, with so many unemployed people in Pictou County, will the minister guarantee that none of the \$60 million that he has invested will be spent to create those jobs in Houston, Texas?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is an obvious one, simply no.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, is the minister not guaranteeing that? We all remember Resolute, the \$25 million we handed over to Bowater, which they quickly took to Quebec to invest in Quebec. (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker, we all remember the \$25 million that they gave to Resolute, that they took out of the province and invested in Quebec. There are more unemployed Nova Scotians than in December 2008, in the middle of the recession. We've lost 3,400 full-time jobs since this government has taken office. This government has watched six companies it agreed to give \$590 million to lay off more than 1,300 Nova Scotians. Now this government-owned company is getting ready to create jobs in Texas. Who knew jobs here was referring to Texas?

My question to the minister is, given the announcement that we talked about here today, did the government attempt to convince DSME to create those engineering jobs here instead of in Houston, Texas, to fulfill the \$60 million obligation it has with the people of Nova Scotia?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the Leader of the Opposition doesn't understand the global economy when it comes to employment and jobs and the way employers work around the world. The Leader of the Opposition's numbers are

misleading. The fact of the matter is that since we took over government we have created 7,600 jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition on a new question.

ERDT - DSME: DIVERSIFICATION - AUTHORIZATION

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Yesterday the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism said, "I can speak on behalf of this Premier, this Party: we want DSTN to be successful. We want them to create good jobs for the good people in Pictou County. That's why we have recommended to them to diversify, look at a larger market, and be competitive."

So my question to the minister is, since the government told DSME to diversify, was it the minister or the Premier who told them to enter into markets that put them in direct competition against other Nova Scotian companies?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, DSTN in Pictou - we took a facility that had been lying idle for a very long time. We turned that facility into a productive site with a partnership with a world-famous, world-renowned, world-recognized partner. We've done this with confidence. We still have confidence in DSTN. We know that if that Party over there would get out of the way we would see more success in the Province of Nova Scotia.

MR. MCNEIL: Improving the infrastructure of this plant to create wind turbines that no one is buying - that's a really good investment of taxpayers' money. DSME plans to compete against Nova Scotia businesses, which will require upgrades to the plant and equipment. The company's diversification will also require additional training and specialized certification.

The government told DSME to diversify and DSME listened, but this will cost money. My question to the minister is, does the minister plan to give DSME more money to fund the costs associated with the upgrades that will require for his diversification plan?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, this question comes as no surprise to me, because it was that Leader, that Party over there that spoke against 400 jobs in the South Shore. It was that Party over there that spoke out against Irving Shipbuilding. It was that Party over there and that speaker that spoke out against Port Hawkesbury, against NewPage. It was that Party, that Leader over there that spoke out against all those things about job creation in the Province of Nova Scotia, and on top of that, about a 30 to a 50 per cent hike in power rates.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, it was that government and that minister that increased power by 30 per cent - that's not fiction, that's reality in Nova Scotia. (Applause) It was that minister and that government that promised 400 jobs to people of the South

Shore when Resolute cashed the cheque and headed off to Quebec - not a single job. (Interruptions) It was that government that wrote a cheque to Scanwood just before they go bankrupt; it was that government that wrote \$155 million to Stern at the same time they were sending pink slips out to half the workforce in the Strait area. (Interruptions) That's not economic development. That's not an economic development strategy - that's an open door for big business to walk in and pick the pockets of a sorry government. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, we now know that this government encouraged DSME to enter into the oil and gas sector and shipbuilding business, and they sat idly by while their business partner is creating jobs in Texas. So my question to the minister is, as he was telling his business partner to diversify to compete against oil and gas companies in Nova Scotia, should there be any other sector in this province that should be concerned about your government's diversification plan?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you the facts - it was this government that invested in Stream in Glace Bay; it was this government that invested in Shelburne so they could have a viable shipyard today; it was this government that invested in Eden Valley in Berwick; it is this government that makes investments that will produce good jobs for good Nova Scotians in the Province of Nova Scotia; and it's this government that will take care of the future unlike previous governments in this province.

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

PREM.: ECONOMY - IMPROVE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, for the Premier; 7,400 Nova Scotians have lost their full-time jobs since October 2009, and in every age category full-time jobs are now disappearing in our province. In fact we hear weekly of more layoffs, whether it's Minas Basin Pulp and Power or Bowater, and the list goes on and on. All the while the Premier and his government have given out half a billion dollars to specific companies.

My question to the Premier is, in light of this evidence, will he abandon his expensive corporate welfare spending spree and get on with the job of actually making our economy better?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I really hope the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party doesn't think that anybody is taking him seriously, because the reality is that every jurisdiction in North America - in fact, almost every jurisdiction in the world - has a business retention and attraction mechanism of some kind, whether it is something like a rebate program which relies on the actual creation of jobs and the actual expenditure of the payroll money in order to recover anything. It's essentially companies being paid with their own money.

What the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party or, for that matter, the Leader of the Liberal Party, never says, for example with respect to Irving, which was in the area of \$300 million, is that is a commercial loan, a commercial loan to Irving at a commercial rate, repayable to the Province of Nova Scotia (Interruptions) Let me finish – repayable to the Province of Nova Scotia at a commercial rate with the proviso that if they create the jobs that are expected and pay to the province some \$2.4 billion in tax revenue, they can earn the forgiveness of it.

Even for the inexperienced Leader of the Opposition, surely he would see, as the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party would see, the good sense of that kind of an arrangement.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all members in the House appreciated the Premier's description of the rest of the world, but here is what is unique about Nova Scotia - we have the highest taxes in the whole country under his government; we have skyrocketing power rates in this province, under his government; we have a string of deficits and new debt on the backs of all Nova Scotians, under his government. That is what is unique about Nova Scotia that gets in the way of building a modern, dynamic and growing economy.

Mr. Speaker, Michelin, for example, is one of our largest employers – 3,500 jobs in rural Nova Scotia – good, high-paying jobs. It has now been 125 days since they cancelled their expansion plans, leaving the people of the Annapolis Valley waiting and waiting for those good jobs. So my question to the Premier is, why are the residents of the Annapolis Valley still waiting for those good jobs?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the reason why Michelin has been successful and has been here in Nova Scotia is because, among other things, including capital grants, they took advantage of payroll rebates. That's what brought them to Nova Scotia and that is what has kept them here and that is part of the business plan that they continue to pursue.

Now, Mr. Speaker, on power rates, we have increases in power rates because the power generating stations in this province are based on coal, fossil fuels, based on decisions made by the previous government. The deficits that we have, as shown by the audit that was done and by the economic panel, is a result of the decisions on spending made by the former government. (Interruptions)

Yes, Mr. Speaker, their complaint is that we haven't cleaned up their mess fast enough.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, apparently, according to the Premier, Michelin had nothing to do with their own success, which I'm sure will be news to the workers and the people of Michelin, which is a worldwide success story – investing in plants all over the world, except for the ones here during his term as Premier. The question is why, when

Michelin does so well everywhere else, Nova Scotians, particularly those in the Annapolis Valley, are still waiting 125 days to find out why those jobs aren't coming here. In fact, if the Premier wants to look around him, 688,000 full-time jobs have been added everywhere in Canada except Nova Scotia, under his term in office, where we're down 7,400 full-time jobs.

So, Mr. Speaker, here is a suggestion, a cost-free way to make Nova Scotia attractive again for Michelin and for all kinds of other companies, will the Premier reconsider his first contract clause now and send a signal, a cost-free signal, that this can be a good place to create jobs again?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the simple reality of this actual situation is - and Statistics Canada, even the most recent Statistics Canada, show that there are 7,600 more jobs in Nova Scotia than there were when we came to power - from the peak employment pre-recession until now, we have more jobs in Nova Scotia despite the fact that our economy, just like economies around the world, had been battered by some of the strongest economic recessionary pressures in the history of modern society.

Mr. Speaker, we have managed through those. We have grown the economy. We've won the largest industrial contract in the history of the province. We're building our way into energy self-sufficiency and we're bringing 440 new engineering jobs to the province, just announced today.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay.

ERDT: DSME TOUR - DETAILS

MR. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, during an October 18, 2011 meeting of the Economic Development Committee it was decided that a tour of the DSME facility would be arranged. This was enthusiastically agreed to by the government members who had the utmost confidence in DSTN investment at that time. We have yet to have the tour and repeatedly are told it's not possible due to scheduling conflicts. However, on December 16, 2011 DSME announced 40 layoffs. So my question to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism is, did the minister know about the pending committee tour and did he express concern to the chairman regarding a visit to a facility destined for layoffs and diversification?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I've toured DSTN prior to DSTN and certainly after. It was such a nice, positive result to see the before and after. I would never interfere, nor have I ever interfered with, anything with respect to a planned tour of any facility in the Province of Nova Scotia.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, on December 18, 2011, there were 40 layoffs announced at DSME Trenton. On May 25, 2012, another 26 people were laid off. We have

seen media reports saying 70 people are employed at the plant, and in August the minister said approximately 66 people were now employed. Just last week he said there were less than 60 at DSME Trenton. This minister said he gets daily briefings from the company, and given his government's commitment to create 500 jobs, I would hope he routinely asks about the current levels of employment.

My question to the minister is, based on his DSME briefing today, will the minister tell us how many people are working at the site today and when the plant is expected to hit a workforce of 500 people?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, as we all know, DSTN is an active plant. They're looking at more global markets; they're expanding their market strategy; they're reaching out to other markets. We are patient here. Along with the federal government, when we first were approached and we approached DSTN, unlike other governments we didn't sit back and wait for things not to happen. We go out and we make things happen.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, in response to media questions regarding DSME, the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism said, "I don't see how the fact that we've invested in a company, I don't see where that gives them an advantage over other companies." The minister went on to say, "They've got every right as taxpayers, as a business, to compete."

I will remind the government side that the minister is responsible for an annual budget of \$187 million of taxpayers' money and is supposed to be the brainpower behind economic development initiatives in this province. Given the magnitude of his portfolio, it is alarming to learn that he doesn't understand the basic fundamentals of competition.

On behalf of taxpayers, small businesses, the private sector, economists, and business professors everywhere, my question is, how can the minister justify his position on DSME, that receiving \$60 million and being 49 per cent government-owned does not give DSME an advantage over local companies who pay for their salaries and expenses with their hard-earned business revenues?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, DSTN - and it's DSTN - like any other company in the Province of Nova Scotia, has every right to have the same opportunities that other Nova Scotians have when it comes to bidding on contracts. We have a fair, transparent procurement process here in the Province of Nova Scotia. It's about fairness. We've created jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia. You heard the Premier earlier today talk about engineering jobs. We create jobs from everything from the individual who is going to carry their briefcase to the person who is going to get an engineering degree.

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

ERDT: JOBSHERE PROG. - RENAME

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I believe my comments today may surprise the members of the NDP Government. I rise today in my place to commend the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism on the success of his jobsHere program. Under this minister's watch, 13,019 Nova Scotians have found good-paying jobs - in Alberta. The reality is that while this minister likes to claim that the jobsHere program has been a success, the numbers say different.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism is, when does the minister plan to rename the jobsHere program and, instead, call it the jobsAlberta program? At least that way, when he calls the program a success, he'll be able to claim this with truth in his voice.

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that a member of the Third Party, the previous government that left this province in such a mess, a total mess - and do you know what? Despite that mess that we inherited from that bunch over there, we've created 7,600 jobs in this province.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious to me, and I'm sure to other members of the House, that this government has been in power for three years, they can't fix the problems that they say were created by others. It shows that they don't deserve to be in government. When you talk about 7,600 part-time jobs, that's not good enough for the people of the Province of Nova Scotia. Southern Nova Scotia has lost 7,500 full-time jobs. On the South Shore the workforce has decreased by 3,800 people. In Cape Breton 300 full-time jobs have vanished under this NDP Government, yet despite this, the Premier told the members of this House of Assembly that job growth is growing in the right direction, and I want to table that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is entitled to his own office and he is entitled to his own staff, but he is not entitled to his own facts. The fact of the matter that more than 13,000 Nova Scotians are working in Alberta, proves that this Premier is wrong. Could the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism offer some clarification on behalf of his boss? With over 13,000 Nova Scotians working in Alberta, when the Premier says job growth is going in the right direction, does he mean westward?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, when we came into government, there was a problem in Nova Scotia. We know on this side of this House that people on the outside of the House know what the problem was and it is right over there. It was that bunch over there . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. It is getting a little loud in here so I would remind that it's getting a little bit heated in here. I ask all the members to take a deep breath so we can continue the debate in this Chamber in a nice, parliamentary way.

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, when we came into government there was a trend of people of out-migration but we are changing that. We are turning the corner. We've got things on the horizon that are game-changers that no other government before has ever realized. These are things that are going to - once in a lifetime, these things happen. Do you know what? One would say that luck has a little bit to do with it and they may be right to a degree, but I would also say good, hard, honest work has a lot more to do with it.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it surprises me that DSTN doesn't have any orders for their wind turbines when you consider the wind that is coming from that side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, here is an interesting fact - 13,019 is the number of Nova Scotians who are working in Alberta; it also falls within the 25 per cent variance for Nova Scotia's new electoral boundaries. Now since the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism will not take the right steps to ensure that those 13,000 men and women are able to find good paying jobs in Nova Scotia, maybe he, at least, could do them a favour by letting them play a role in firing the NDP Government here in Nova Scotia.

Now my question to the minister is this, when will the minister urge his would-be gerrymandering colleagues to establish the new constituency of Nova Scotia Gone West, so that the . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Slow down, slow down.

MR. MACLEOD: I have no problem slowing down. When will the minister urge his would-be gerrymandering colleagues to establish the new constituency of Nova Scotia Gone West, so that the more than 13,000 Nova Scotians working in Alberta will at least be able to properly voice their displeasure with this NDP Government?

MR. SPEAKER: I would remind the honourable member for Cape Breton West that imputing motives during Question Period is unparliamentary so I would ask the honourable member if he would retract that please, "gerrymandering."

MR. MACLEOD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd be glad to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. MACLEOD: And I'd like to repeat my question now.

MR. SPEAKER: No.

The honourable Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, we recognize on this side of the House that we are doing a lot of the right things. We are doing things under the PIP initiative, where we are investing in companies, we are investing in people, we are becoming more innovative, we are becoming more productive, and we are becoming more competitive on a global basis.

Mr. Speaker, if I may and I'll try not to be too long, I want to read something from the ChronicleHerald today: "The Region of Queens is seeing phenomenal growth, despite the closure of the community's main employer. Not one business has closed as a result of Bowater's shutdown. Just the opposite has happened."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know that there are some members who don't like to hear this, but I can tell you this is what Nova Scotians want to read.

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

ERDT - C.B.: DEV. - MIN. RESPONSE

HON. MANNING MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

While this NDP Government is giving away hundreds of millions of dollars in corporate handouts - something I might add they were vehemently against in Opposition - the unemployment rate in Cape Breton is well over 16 per cent. If it weren't for the Cape Bretoners who are working out West, the unemployment rate would be double that number. The 16 per cent unemployment rate is a 6.5 per cent increase from last year and 20 per cent higher than it was in 2009.

Why is this minister (Interruptions) You know it's a strange thing, Mr. Speaker, every time I mention the shortcomings of this government I get the attention of the Premier - are you finished, Mr. Premier?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order.

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, why is the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Your microphone is out.

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: He's the one that should be out of here.

MR. SPEAKER: There is nobody getting out of there, but once I say order all the microphones are turned off.

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: I didn't hear you, sorry.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, well now I'm going to recognize the honourable member for Cape Breton South to continue.

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, why is the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism handing out hundreds of millions of dollars to large corporations who lay off workers, while he ignores economic development in Cape Breton?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, we've made huge investments in Cape Breton and I think one just has to remember what happened very recently with NewPage. Now I know that the Liberal Party may not want to recognize the investments that we made in NewPage, because they didn't want us to make that investment. We invested in those families and those individuals and that community because it was the right thing to do.

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, it's amazing, with all the things the minister says he's done in Cape Breton, that the unemployment rate is still 16 per cent and climbing. There must be something wrong with that logic.

In Opposition, the NDP called the large corporate donations - that they were going to corporate welfare bums in Nova Scotia. Those are the words that came from the present Minister of Health and Wellness; those are the words that came from the former Minister of Finance, now the member for Halifax Fairview. They railed against corporate give-outs when they were in Opposition, and now they're cozy in the pockets of big business in Nova Scotia. How times have changed.

Since October 2009, shortly after this government took office, the number of unemployed workers in Cape Breton has jumped by 21 per cent. This minister has been ignoring economic diversification and instead is signing over hundreds of millions of dollars to corporations who end up laying off Nova Scotians and cutting wages and benefits. Because of this failed approach, we have the worst GDP growth and the second-lowest wage growth, and Nova Scotians are losing full-time work and being forced to take on part-time jobs to try to keep up with the rising costs of electricity, heating oil, gas, and food.

The NDP minister's record in Cape Breton is a 20 per cent spike in unemployment since taking office, and he's going to have to answer for that. Why has this minister ignored the need to diversify the economy in Cape Breton and get people back to work?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I can remember since we've been in government, small companies as well as large companies - I've already talked about NewPage. What about Billdidit? What about Stream? There's TechLink now, a company that we've invested heavily in to give them an opportunity to go out and make money. We've made investments in Cape Breton, unlike other governments of the past. We've made good

investments in Cape Breton. We believe in Cape Breton. We believe in the hard-working Cape Bretoners, and the recent investment in NewPage is a testimony to that.

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the last I heard, NewPage has only half the employment that they used to have in that particular industry because of this government.

I want to remind Cape Bretoners that this minister keeps talking about his role in Stream. I'll tell you how little this minister knows about his own department. Stream was in Glace Bay long before this government ever came to office in Nova Scotia. It was brought to Nova Scotia - it was brought to Cape Breton - by a payroll rebate system that the previous Liberal Government of this province set up in Cape Breton, in Glace Bay. Time after time this minister talks about a success story in Stream. He had nothing to do with that. Nova Scotians should know that. As well, he's had nothing to do with some of the other supposed success stories that he's told in this House.

In the last three years Cape Breton has seen employment drop and unemployment rise. Young people are finding it harder and harder to live and work in their communities. Many of those who do find work end up finding it out West, and we all know and have relatives who are employed out West because of the lack of opportunities in Cape Breton. Young people need jobs to be able to choose to stay in their communities, but instead the minister has given away \$590 million - excuse me, another \$10 million today - \$600 million to seven corporations, six of which in turn have laid off more than 1,300 workers and slashed wages and benefits.

Mr. Speaker, \$600 million in corporate handouts, and Cape Breton has still seen unemployment jump by over 20 per cent in the last three years. I think I've struck a chord with the Premier - he seems very animated over there, listening to my comments.

What more proof does the minister need for him to realize that his multi-million dollar handouts to large corporations aren't working for the people of Cape Breton?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, the member commented about Stream and I just want to read you something from Hansard. It's from another member from Cape Breton and it goes like this: "That's it? Well, Mr. Speaker, the Stream \$2.1 million was a payroll rebase . . ." - well, it says "rebase" here but I think he meant rebate - ". . . through NSBI, with job targets." - and this is coming from the member for Glace Bay - "So I'm glad the minister took my advice on that file . . .". I will table that.

You can't have it every way and one other thing I want to add, Mr. Speaker, is I remember when that member over there was Minister of Economic and Rural Development and I'll tell you right now, the unemployment was less when we were in government than what it was under your watch.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

JUSTICE: ANKLE BRACELETS (GPS) - USE

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. The family of Raymond Taavel said this government failed to give adequate consideration to public safety in the report it commissioned in response to his death, "It is unacceptable to reason that we should not pursue GPS tracking in Nova Scotia because it has yet to be adopted in any other forensic facility in Canada."

Mr. Speaker, it does not matter whether or not people have been found criminally responsible; if they are dangerous, Nova Scotians deserve to be protected from them. Will the minister start using ankle bracelets with GPS tracking for people who are a danger to themselves and to others?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for that question. First, I want to acknowledge the loss to the Taavel family and the impact that the passing had. Putting that to one side, I want to point out the difference between this government's approach to the issue of bracelets and the Third Party. The Third Party believes in building jails and filling them. They believe that people who have a mental illness should be treated like criminals. This government believes and this minister believes - this government believes - that if somebody has a mental illness, they should be treated by the health care professionals.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative Party believes people with mental illness deserve treatment as well, but we also believe that that needs to be balanced with protection for those people and for the people who are on the street with him. Now Raymond Taavel's family is trying hard to have some good come from his tragic death. They believe that providing patients who have a history of violence with ankle bracelets should be common sense. Instead, this government wishes to provide patients with cellphones. This is not common sense.

The Taavel family argues, "There must be an appropriate and nuanced balance between the joint goals of public protection and reasonable treatment and rights of offenders who have been found not criminally responsible for what could otherwise be criminal conduct."

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister. This government does need balance; will the minister take immediate steps to ensure there will be electronic, monitoring ankle bracelets available for people who, though not found criminally responsible for their crime, nevertheless are a danger to themselves and to the public?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, once again on the issue of bracelets and to place a bracelet on someone, it is best left to the court to make a decision if someone has that issue.

On the issue of somebody in a forensic institution, public safety is an issue and it is always an issue. For this minister, who has spent a lifetime serving the public, from a safety perspective, I believe in that firmly. But to try to hold a tragedy to a family, the Taavels, and to a community, and try to make the political hay that you are trying to make on the issue of bracelets, that's just totally inappropriate and offensive.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, this minister has a problem. He has a report that contained no representation from experts in protecting the public, a report with no balance. Balance is exactly what the Taavel family wants, they want the public and the patients protected by considering electronic monitoring, yet this government will go forward with any idea that gives them peace of mind. Appointing a bureaucrat to give patients a call to see where they are will not make a difference for those who are a risk to public safety.

So my final question to the minister is, if he won't provide more ankle bracelets immediately, will he stand here and tell the Taavel family that he will get a report that does give proper consideration to public safety?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, the recommendations that came out of the review are 18, and this government and this department are taking steps to accomplish all of those 18 recommendations. I want to assure the Taavel family, since the Progressive Conservatives are trying to use them and play them in a political sense, that we take their loss and the impact on their family seriously. I have trust and faith in the people who work in the Forensic Institution (Interruptions) I have trust and faith in our corrections officers who do their jobs, unlike the Progressive Conservative Party, who do not care or respect the staff that we have working, who do a great job day in and day out.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**ENVIRONMENT - MERCURY EMISSIONS:
REDUCTION - POWER RATE EFFECTS**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment. In 2010, just two years ago, this government, the NDP, lowered mercury emission standards of Nova Scotia Power, and that was among the first signs Nova Scotians had that they have elected Nova Scotia Power rather than the NDP to government. At the time the NDP said the reason behind the decision to lower emission targets, despite every other province - every other province meeting their targets and having lower power bills - they said it would save money. I will table the press release where the government said it would lower the bills.

Does the minister still stand by the government's statement that reducing mercury emission targets would help with power rates?

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, again, we have a Nova Scotia approach and something that we see that we're going to meet these goals and actually surpass them. We have a made-in-Nova-Scotia approach and, unlike the Opposition, we do things right.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, that's a funny response, because two years ago this minister was standing up and saying that by reducing the mercury standards and by putting the health of Nova Scotians at risk that Nova Scotia Power bills would be lower, yet the Liberty audit looked at that and it turns out that as a result of lowering the mercury emission standards, Nova Scotia Power spent \$3.65 million more on fuel than they would have otherwise with the original targets - and I will table that. That has been passed on to ratepayers.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister now admit that decreasing the mercury emission requirements actually cost ratepayers?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the member opposite for the question.

Something that we have laid out - our goals - will be achieved and we will achieve them by reducing mercury. I also want to point out our history as three short years as Environment, and something that the member opposite needs to appreciate. I think we have a track record that can really be appreciated. In Environment we have been recognized in the three years as an A-minus with drinking water standards; we also received two awards in Copenhagen in 2009; we are world leaders when it comes to house waste management; and we have signed an equivalency agreement with the federal government, saving over \$1 billion. To the member opposite, we know about the environment, we protect it - welcome to paradise.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, apparently the minister has no way to answer this question. He did two years ago. And maybe he should spend some time down at the board hearing - it's one of the few things that even Nova Scotia Power isn't arguing with Liberty about the reason that this was caused.

The fact is, he can talk about the equivalency agreement, yet even the Premier couldn't put the numbers on and couldn't promise that that can be met now because of the problems with Muskrat Falls and the delays on that, so we don't know what's going to happen there. Much of that equipment had already been installed so we're still paying the amortization on the costs. Ratepayers are paying the amortization costs for the mercury equipment, and the baghouse in Trenton is an example where it was exceeding expectations on mercury capture. The fact is that \$3.65 million extra was spent on fuel because they purchased lower quality fuel, because they didn't feel they had to buy the better one; it burned less efficiently, and as a result they had to burn more total coal, which cost ratepayers more.

So, Mr. Speaker, will the minister now apologize to Nova Scotians for this mistake, which cost ratepayers more than it needed to?

MR. BELLIEVEAU: Thank you very much and, again, I welcome the question. Again, I want to point out that we have a made-in-Nova-Scotia approach to address this issue, unlike the Opposition. They had many years to deal with this issue and like the fossil fuel itself, they are a fossil because they did not deal with the issue when they had the opportunity. Thank you for the question. We have a path forward. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

EDUC. - TUITION INCREASES: PREM. - PREVENT

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, young Nova Scotians are facing higher debt, higher costs of their higher education and fewer job prospects in the Province of Nova Scotia. There is currently a tuition policy review underway, which can see tuitions increase as a direct result of the NDP's deep cuts to universities. Students want to know where their Premier stands. So will the Premier stand up for students and prevent further tuition increases in the Province of Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I just want to start by saying - and I know that the member for Yarmouth knows - that not a single word of what he said was true. In fact, this government brought in a debt cap that actually capped the amount of debt and it was a great benefit to students by lowering the amount of debt that they have. We have invested more in student aid than any government in this province, with the exception of the advent of the student aid program.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, the Premier might be in denial but students and their families, who are paying high tuitions, aren't. The question was about tuition. Yesterday, students marched to protest the rising costs of a post-secondary education and the crushing debt load that they carry. A report released by Sun Life Financial concluded that economic uncertainty and financial strain is having a detrimental effect on mental health of young people, and I'll table that. This is a real problem which is only made worse by the dismal track record of this Premier when it comes to employment opportunities for young people. Young Nova Scotians, faced with crushing debt loads and higher unemployment rates in this province, are being forced to leave their communities to take jobs elsewhere - primarily out West.

Mr. Speaker, why is this Premier giving Nova Scotia Power a free ride and doling out hundreds of millions of dollars in corporate handouts to companies who lay off Nova Scotians, instead of investing in the future of our young people?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, so far this government has invested \$90-some million in student aid and, like I said, more than has been invested at any time in the past,

reducing the amount of debt that students have in this province. In addition, we are investing in good jobs for young people, for new graduates. A perfect example happened today when a co-op student from engineering stood with me at the announcement of PROJEX - 440 engineering jobs that will come to Nova Scotia that will attract exactly those kinds of students, and yet the Liberals speak out against these kinds of investments. Why? Because they are job killers.

MR. CHURCHILL: It's just ridiculous that the Premier would even say that. It doesn't even make any sense. (Interruptions) Yeah, yeah, one of the Parties in here are job killers, we all want to kill jobs. (Interruptions) The fact is, Mr. Speaker. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. It's very difficult to hear in the Chair if I'm listening for the debate to find out if the debate is parliamentary. It's very difficult to hear when everybody is chattering all the time and I can't hear some things that are being said, sitting in this chair. Now, I would ask that everybody realize that the honourable member for Yarmouth has the floor. So I would ask for a little bit of quiet from here on in, please.

MR. CHURCHILL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier stands and boasts often about all the great opportunities he's creating for young Nova Scotians in this province, but under his leadership, over 4,800 young people have left this province to look for work elsewhere. That's the record of this Premier.

Since the Premier took office, young people have lost full-time jobs at a rate of 18.3 per cent. Over that same period, unemployment has spiked by over 50 per cent for young women. It is these same young people who are saddled with tens of thousands of dollars in debt when they finish school. Quite clearly, corporations are more important to this NDP Premier than the students he once courted while in Opposition, and I'll table that data as well.

My question to the Premier is, will he finally stand up for students and commit to this House today that he will not allow any more tuition increases in the Province of Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as they would know, under our government the average tuition fees in this province are actually falling below the national average. When we came into government, the first thing that happened was that the money that was set aside by the federal government for the purposes of reducing tuition came to an end. The trust fund that was in place came to an end. So the first thing that we had to do - if we'd done nothing, the tuitions in the province would have gone up 15 to 20 per cent because that money was no longer available. So the first thing that we did was we backfilled \$30 million in order to ensure that tuitions did not rise 15 to 30 per cent. Here is the ironic thing: in order to do that, we had to bring in a budget that the Liberals voted against.

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

NSP - EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS: COSTS - PAY

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians are finding it harder to pay their power bills, and they feel let down by a Premier who continues to stand up for Nova Scotia Power's shareholders instead of standing up for our province's most vulnerable citizens. The Premier could have stood up against a power rate increase, but he didn't. The Premier could legislate that shareholders pay for efficiency programs, but he won't. The Premier could take action to make power bills lower for low-income Nova Scotians, but he refuses. People are wondering what happened to the NDP principles.

Will the Premier stand up today for low-income Nova Scotians and make Nova Scotia Power pay for its efficiency programs, instead of making it yet another NDP burden on Nova Scotians living in poverty?

THE PREMIER: One of the very first things this government did was put in place the removal of the HST from energy. We took the HST off of children's clothing. We put in place the Affordability Tax Credit - actually put more money in the pockets of those people who are most affected by economic uncertainty. Mr. Speaker, no one has done more to ensure that those who are the most vulnerable in this province are properly taken care of than this government.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, that is certainly not what we heard at the Community Services Committee the other day from the Face Of Poverty. In fact, I believe the word was "negligible."

This Premier is handing out big cheques to corporations and promising them breaks on power rates. How is it that the Premier had no issues giving Stern a break on their power but does nothing to give low-income Nova Scotians a break on their power bills?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we took the tax off home energy, something the Liberals voted against. This year we will spend \$70 million on the Affordability Tax Credit. We will spend another \$25 million on the children's tax credit. All of this money goes right into the pockets of low-income families. The last time the Liberals were in power, they clawed back that money from poor families and they are proposing to put in place a scheme of deregulation that will increase power rates for those same people by 30 to 50 per cent.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal caucus, as the Premier well knows, has stated repeatedly that we will not put the provincial portion of the HST back on power bills and we will demand that it's the shareholders of Nova Scotia Power who will pay for efficiency programs instead of Nova Scotian families.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, I can't hear the debate.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove, on her final supplementary.

MS. REGAN: Philip Barkhouse of Chester Basin contacted Efficiency Nova Scotia to participate in its Low Income Homeowner Service. Instead of service, Mr. Barkhouse got a letter saying he's on the wait list due to the program's limited budget. I will table that letter. In fact, Mr. Barkhouse was told he should expect a call from Clean Nova Scotia in 2013. So this NDP Government continues to impose what is, in essence, a flat tax on Nova Scotians including our poorest citizens. These are the very families who cannot even access these programs that they're forced to pay for.

My question to the Premier is, why did this Premier and his NDP Government continue to make low income Nova Scotians pay for efficiency programs they can't even access?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, let me see, 2013, so that's in six weeks. (Interruption) I mean, really, and they're laughing about it. The demand-side management charge was put in place after the board had hearings and heard from a whole collection of groups across the province who said what they wanted . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. The honourable Premier has the floor, please.

THE PREMIER: The consumer groups, ecology groups right across the province said what they wanted was an independent efficiency organization that would be free of government, paid for so that they could deliver services that would benefit the entire population of Nova Scotia.

They collected \$42 million; ratepayers, as a result of this, saved \$100 million. In fact the savings are actually greater for the poorer Nova Scotians because it makes up a bigger part of their bill. What the Liberal Party has said, they keep trying to weasel around it but the reality is - is that okay? That's dodgy.

MR. SPEAKER: That isn't parliamentary.

THE PREMIER: I'll withdraw "weasel", Mr. Speaker. What they tried to do is manoeuvre around what they said. The Leader of the Official Opposition voted against the HST coming off of home electricity then he voted in favour of the Progressive Conservatives putting it back on. He campaigned against it twice. In the leadership debate - he would remember, I certainly do - he said taking the HST off was bad, bad public policy. Does he believe it or doesn't he? (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: I would remind honourable members (Interruptions) I'd like to remind the honourable Premier that the word, weasel, is unparliamentary and to retract that. Thank you.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove on her new question.

PREM.: CORPORATIONS/POOR PEOPLE - IMPORTANCE

MS. KELLY REGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to the most recent HungerCount report, food bank usage is up 39.3 per cent in Nova Scotia, since 2008, and I'm tabling that. As well, food banks are seeing a marked increase in users who are employed. This should be no surprise as our province is witnessing a displacement from full-time work to part-time jobs. At the same time, the Premier has handed out over \$500 million - I guess \$600 million now - to corporations that have laid off workers, cut wages and slashed benefits. Meanwhile, more Nova Scotians have had to rely on part-time jobs and food banks, so my question is, why are large corporations more important to the Premier than poor people?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I think it's sad that these kinds of questions get asked, really. The reality is they vote against and they criticize the actual efforts that keep people working. The investments in Port Hawkesbury mean that there are 1,000 people working. If they had their way, they would have not supported Port Hawkesbury and 1,000 or 1,400 people would be out of jobs. That's because what they are doing is engaging either disingenuously in just political posturing, but you know something? I don't think so. I think the truth is the Liberals are simply job-killers.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, low income is the key factor in determining the need for food banks. Families are facing rising costs related to food, housing and energy. There are currently over 1,800 families waiting for public housing in this province. This doesn't even include the number of homeless people, nor does it reflect the number of poor families and seniors living in inadequate shelters or who have to choose between heating their homes and feeding their families.

Nova Scotia needs a plan for affordable housing and not just Band-Aid programs and more talk. My question to the Premier, when will this government act to eliminate poverty and make a real investment in affordable housing?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, for years we watched while the Liberals continued to claw back income from the poorest Nova Scotians. That is just a reality. This is the same group of people who vote against increases in the minimum wage; they vote against taking the HST off children's clothing; they vote against taking the HST off children's shoes; they vote against taking the HST off necessities like home electricity. They want to see what is wrong with the programming in Nova Scotia. They only have to look back to when they were in government. The fact of the matter is we are still suffering from Liberal Governments both in this province and federally.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the Premier should mention clawback. I recently had a case where a woman couldn't access the emergency home repair

program because her child tax credit pushed her over the limit, so there's enough blame to go around there.

Mr. Speaker, food banks are seeing an increase in numbers, soup kitchens are seeing an increase in need and more children are relying on school breakfast programs. More and more people are in need and they are looking to their government to help. While this government announced the special medical needs would no longer be covered for our poorest citizens, this Premier was negotiating \$500 million deals with corporations. While this government was negotiating deals on power rates for big corporations, families were having their power cut off because they can't pay their bills.

How does the Premier have an endless supply of cash to dole out to corporations, while more and more Nova Scotians are faced with the question, heat or eat?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the simple fact of the matter is that we are investing in good jobs in the province so the very people that she's talking about actually have the best form of support, which is a decent job.

But I would just remind the member for Bedford-Birch Cove that she should think back to the mid-1990s when the federal Liberals were gutting things like the child benefits, they were ending universality for allowances, and cancelling the grants to universities. Mr. Speaker, you know, she might remember - she might actually know somebody who was part of that government.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

ERDT - SOUTH SHORE: JOB PROTECTION - MIN. EXPLAIN

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

The NDP mismanagement of the economy has taken the worst toll on the people of South Shore. The South Shore has lost 7,500 full-time jobs - that means 7,500 people who are worried about their future in rural Nova Scotia.

Last week the minister said: "This government has protected jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia." So why didn't the people in jobs on the South Shore benefit from this minister's protection?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I think it's on Monday, next week, I think there's a grand opening at White Point. I think it's Monday, somebody might want to - so that's an investment by this government in the South Shore. So, you know, we (Interruptions) The South Shore, we've been working collaboratively with the people of the South Shore region and White Point is only one example.

Earlier today, Mr. Speaker, I tabled a report that was in The ChronicleHerald today, talking about the South Shore, and talking about all the good things and the positive attitude that was going on in the South Shore, and certainly highlighted by the collaboration with this government.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: The people of the South Shore suffered another blow yesterday when Twin Cities Air Service announced that it would be ending the Yarmouth to Portland flights. This announcement means yet another transportation link from the Yarmouth area has been severed and likely will lead to more job losses, Mr. Speaker.

The unemployment rate has risen to 13.1 per cent. This rate of unemployment is closer to the near bankrupt countries of Greece and Spain than it is to the Canadian average. So my question to the minister is, will the minister finally admit that the NDP management of the economy has failed people of southern Nova Scotia and is making life harder for the entire region?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I know many people, myself included, would like to see a successful air service in Yarmouth. I think if there was a successful air service in Yarmouth, that would be a clear indication that things have turned around.

Mr. Speaker, unlike previous governments, under the jobsHere strategy we are planning for the future. What we don't want to do, like past governments, is we don't want to do things on a daily basis. We want to make sure that we make sound investments to promote not only southwestern Nova Scotia but the entire province and, again, I reiterate, things are going reasonably well in southwestern Nova Scotia. I tabled The ChronicleHerald report and I would encourage the honourable member to look at that report.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I guess it's that the standard has changed, that doing "reasonably well" now means an unemployment rate of 13.1 per cent.

The numbers speak for themselves. The South Shore workforce has decreased by 3,800 people. That means 3,800 people have given up on even finding a job. Population in the area has decreased by 2,700 people. That means 2,700 people have given up on the area and moved somewhere else.

My question to the minister is, in an NDP Nova Scotia, the government picks winners and losers, so why does this minister continue to punish the people of southwest Nova Scotia and offer them no relief?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I know one thing is that there are many people who live in the southwest region (Interruptions) In the article that I tabled today, one of the things that is said by a very well-known individual in the southwest region, who has been very, very involved, is that we are better off today than what we were three years ago.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - ANNAPOLIS:
HEALTH CARE - ADEQUACY ENSURE**

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the Annapolis collaborative health centre will officially open on Friday. I must note for the record that it has already experienced its first daytime closure due to the lack of nurses.

Overnight, the facility will be staffed by one RN in primary care and a paramedic, which essentially means primary health care 24/7 - not necessarily emergency care - is being offered through what used to be an emergency department. When a patient arrives and requires emergency care beyond the capacity of the collaborative team, emergency care needs to be provided.

My question to the minister is, could the Minister of Health and Wellness please tell the residents of Annapolis what he is doing to ensure there is adequate emergency care, should a patient arrive at the Annapolis collaborative health centre requiring it?

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Leader for that question. No question, we're very glad to see another Collaborative Emergency Centre open in Nova Scotia to provide care for Nova Scotians. I can assure the member for Annapolis and the residents who live in the area who will be served by the Collaborative Emergency Centre that emergency care will be delivered to those residents. The last time I checked, Mr. Speaker, paramedics provide emergency care.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the Annapolis Community Health Centre could take Level I and II emergency patients; the new Collaborative Emergency Centre cannot. We have heard from health professionals in the area that there is no ambulance coverage in the Bridgetown area about 40 per cent of the time. They can only provide care if they are there. The ability of the patients to access emergency care 24/7 is nonexistent for the residents being served by the new collaborative emergency team, which, ironically, was developed to keep emergency rooms open 24/7.

My question to the minister is, how can the emergency care be relied upon at the Annapolis Collaborative Emergency Centre when 40 per cent of the time Bridgetown has no ambulance coverage, which results in a domino effect in all emergency vehicles in the area?

MR. WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No question, we have one of the most state-of-the-art ambulance services - ground and air ambulance service - in North America. It's well recognized that we have a system that can react to calls throughout the province. We have a system status plan that oversees the ambulance services in Nova Scotia, so that when there are a number of calls in certain regions, those ambulances in other regions start

moving around the province. It's a great system that ensures that the closest ambulance responds to the emergency closest to them. It's a long way from where we were a number of years ago. Collaborative Emergency Centres are the key to ensuring that not only nurses, but paramedics, and physicians work to their full scope of practice. I have full confidence that Collaborative Emergency Centres will meet the needs of Nova Scotians and the emergency needs of Nova Scotians.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for congratulating the former Liberal Government on its foresight to be able to create the emergency services that we have in the Province of Nova Scotia. What's happening, under the present situation closing two Collaborative Emergency Centres, without those facility emergency rooms being opened, we rely on the ambulance service and the ambulance bases having ambulances there. The minister knows it's a domino effect. When something happens, the rigs move continually up the Valley. All the citizens of the Annapolis area are asking, has the minister taken this into account when he's now closing the emergency room and telling them to call 911? Where is the ambulance going to be? Has he taken that into account to make sure that we have the proper care when we need it?

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I would agree, the only good decision from the former Liberal Government was from Dr. Ron Stewart and it dealt with paramedics in this province. I can tell you on a number of occasions, and being a health care provider in the 1990s, it wasn't a good time for health care providers under a former Liberal Government. We're going to ensure that we have a system in place that meets the needs of Nova Scotians and Collaborative Emergency Centres will do that. Those nurses, those paramedics who are working in the Collaborative Emergency Centres are in contact with medical control and oversight, so they have access to a medical doctor so that they can work as a team.

The problem in the past is that we continued to do things the same old way and they weren't meeting the needs of Nova Scotians. That's why we have to change the model of care; that's why we're ensuring that nurses, paramedics, physicians work to their full scope of practice and that they work in a collaborative approach to address the issues. I know that the residents in the communities that are served by Collaborative Emergency Centres currently appreciate it and they welcome that. Even the Leader of the Liberal Party . . .

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

HON. MANNING MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism should get an Academy Award for fiction in this place. The Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism during Question Period stated that his government put the call centre Stream operation in Glace Bay, which at best is a misleading statement. The facts in this case are that Stream has been in Glace Bay for close to 15 years, brought there with a payroll rebate system set up by the Liberal Government in the late 1990s. I would ask the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism whether he should set this House straight and apologize

to the House for misleading the House on the fact that he did not create these jobs in Cape Breton? I see as soon as I started my remarks he left the House, so he's not going to respond to it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. It is unparliamentary to say whether a member is in the House or outside the House. Again, this is not a point of order; it is a disagreement over facts between two members.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, in my capacity as House Leader for the Official Opposition, would you please call the order of business, Private Members' Public Bills for Second Reading.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 97.

Bill No. 95 - Reliability and Accountability in Electricity Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise in my place and speak to Bill No. 95. The Official Opposition House Leader has read out the bill, Bill No. 95, and it's to deal with reliability, responsiveness, and accountability in distribution of electricity in our province.

First of all I think it's important to provide a background and a backdrop as to why this bill is necessary and why it's coming forth. It has a great deal of detail that I think those who are following the debate during the Official Opposition Day, I think perhaps we can put some of this into context for them, because it does outline very, very well as to why it's necessary and the steps that can be taken to improve reliability.

I want in this current context to talk first of all about the scenario that exists in our province. You know, we have had a 25 per cent rate increase in the electrical rates here in Nova Scotia and when you're paying the second highest rates in the country, it is important that we have a top-notch system. So, therefore, reliability and responsiveness are part of what Nova Scotians would expect from Nova Scotia Power, their service provider - a monopoly service provider. Therefore, I think when you are at that kind of a current rate of electricity, then the expectations are very, very high.

We also have a company that also has among the management team some of the highest salaries, if not the highest salaries in the country. When we look at a company like Hydro-Québec which has over ten million customers in Quebec alone and providing power all the way along the Eastern Seaboard into New York State, we wonder what really is a little utility. Nova Scotia Power you know by the measure of Canada - when we take a look at Hydro-Québec, Ontario Hydro, B.C. Hydro - we know that Nova Scotia Power is, indeed, a very, very small entity. Yet, we should have the most efficient and, in fact, a better rate for Nova Scotia customers than what we currently have.

We also have a bonus scheme that's extremely generous and I know when the last bonuses were announced, in fact Nova Scotians were outraged. But they were actually even more outraged by the fact that the Premier, who promised a better deal for families, in fact defended Nova Scotia Power. That was perhaps even more surprising and more of an outrage than the actual bonuses that the Nova Scotia Power management team actually received.

Also, again just to reiterate, a company that guarantees a rate of return - a rate of return perhaps is higher on the agenda than reliability and responsiveness, because we know that Nova Scotia Power guarantees a rate of return somewhere from 9.1 to 9.5. We know that for the past 10 years \$100 million from Nova Scotia power rates - the rate collected here in the province from over 400,000 customers - goes off to Emera. We're seeing a great deal actually invested, in fact most of it, outside of Nova Scotia. So this is why over the past 10 years, with \$1 billion collected through Nova Scotia Power going to Emera for investments elsewhere, there comes a time when we need to have legislation that does put some guarantee, some teeth, in terms of what would be a good standard of reliability and responsiveness and accountability of the distribution of electricity in the province.

I did want to draw attention to the bill in some of its detail because one of the requirements would be:

- “ . . . The minister shall set performance standards respecting the Corporation's
- (a) electricity-service reliability;
 - (b) electricity-service disruption preparedness;
 - (c) electricity-service restoration; and
 - (d) communication to the public relating to electricity-service disruption.”

We know, living in Nova Scotia, that we have a very challenging climate. We know that there are going to be power interruptions. We all hope that we get through Fall with the heavy foliage on the trees, and we have a lot of tree-lined streets in our communities, and we know that they can be the culprit with bringing down power lines, so we always are hoping to get by that season. We will have, perhaps, another White Juan or Hurricane Juan. Those events will take place. They are exceptional events, and I think most of us are understanding during those times when they do occur. We know that we have outstanding

linemen in the province and Nova Scotia Power employees who work their utmost to restore power.

However, there are occasions when the reliability factor gets questioned, especially when old power lines that have been in service for a lot of years do have multiple outages. We had before us recently, from one of the committees - we had a fish processing plant that had an outage in July. They lost tens of thousands of dollars of product, because, again, the line was not kept up to the standard that should be there to guarantee no interruption of service.

We also need to talk about electricity-service disruption preparedness. We know that one of the areas - and we keep hearing in this House, many times when we talk about Nova Scotia Power as the service provider, and the fact of is it investing enough money in vegetation control along the power lines? That is always a question that, again, some degree of expertise, some degree of monitoring, that perhaps we're not always given a full analysis of the system. Again, from what people have to tell us - their stories do count for something in this area, and we know that year in, year out, there is not enough vegetation control along the system. Even when the foliage is off, we know that tree branches are one of the major causes when we have wind storms. In fact, what will tomorrow morning bring? We're probably going to get winds of 50, 60, or 70 kilometres an hour tonight, and the potential is there for power outage. So we asked the question during this summer season: did Nova Scotia Power invest enough in terms of preparedness for service disruption?

This brings us also to service restoration, and this is the area, whether it's in your home and you're counting on getting the electricity back in a certain number of hours so that there is no spoilage of food, or the heat is on, some of the basic necessities are looked after. People do call their MLA when the power seems to be out for too long a period of time. We know we get those calls.

One of the areas that I've often thought about, in terms of Nova Scotia Power showing itself as a good corporate citizen, would be to support our fire departments who, during times of storms when power lines go down, go out to assist them and be vigilant so that when there are live wires, the electricity is on until the power company arrives, that they become the guardian, if you wish. It's an area that I've often thought that perhaps when it comes to being a good corporate citizen, making some kind of a donation to those volunteer fire departments, may be one of the areas that they could acknowledge the support that our volunteer fire departments often give.

But I think service restoration, the identification, the communications have improved. If there's anything on the positive side that came out of Hurricane Juan and White Juan was to do an overview of the system.

In terms of reliability, one of the requirements that this bill asks for would be, “The Corporation shall file with the Board no later than March 1st of each year a service reliability plan for review and approval by the Board . . . The service reliability plan filed pursuant . . . must include information respecting . . . the provision of a reliable and safe electricity service; and the adequacy of anticipated time frames for restoring electricity service in the event of a service outage.” - and - “Where the Board finds, following a hearing, that due to the Corporation’s failure to implement its service-reliability plan . . .” there would be penalties appropriate to not providing that reliability to Nova Scotia customers. With that, I conclude my remarks.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak on Bill No. 95 and really I rise in my place here today to debate an important issue for all Nova Scotians, to ensure we have greater reliability and responsiveness and accountability in the distribution of electricity here in Nova Scotia, here within our province.

This government has a plan to address these same issues, a plan that has demonstrated real progress. Our plan is focused on making sure that Nova Scotia does not repeat the mistakes of the past, does not repeat the mistakes of past governments in relying too long on a single source of energy. Instead, our government is focused on protecting the interests of future generations while protecting our environment and it is also focused on helping Nova Scotians in the short term as we move to more stable, more diverse, to a cleaner electricity system here in this province.

I believe we’re truly standing up for Nova Scotians to ensure they have the lowest and the fairest rates over both the short term and the long term. To do this we must change the way we power our province. The status quo can no longer remain; it’s no longer acceptable. Actually the cost of coal has increased by 75 per cent in the past seven years and that, truly, is hurting Nova Scotians. That is the real reason why power rates have continued to go up. I have a chart I want to table that shows that, that coal has gone up 75 per cent in six years, from 2004 to 2011, and I’d like to table that.

For too long, previous governments ignored this issue and clung to an electrical system from the past. I believe we need to take action, and we need to take that action now to address this, and that’s why we’re developing more local, more renewable sources of energy, to get us off expensive imported coal. It’s why our government has rolled back the Progressive Conservative tax on energy and are now saving Nova Scotians 10 per cent on their power bill by cutting the provincial portion of the HST from electricity. That’s something the Leader of the Official Opposition called bad public policy in a debate back in 2009. I fully disagree with that - it is good policy to help relieve the cost to Nova Scotians on their electricity rates.

Madam Speaker, we know that removing the HST from home heating has saved the average Nova Scotian family more than \$700 on their electricity bill; in fact, I think the exact figure is around \$719, but unfortunately the Liberals have a plan - they want to put the HST back on home heating and that would ensure that rates increase considerably. Not only that, they want to deregulate the electricity in this province, and from previous experience in other provinces that would put rates up by more than 30 to 50 per cent through their deregulation scheme.

Madam Speaker, our government is also proposing several legislative amendments that will result in the permanent removal of Nova Scotia Power's executive bonuses. I had the opportunity to attend the URB hearing in September and first announced that our Premier had pushed for that last year, but now we're going to make it permanent - it's not fair that ordinary Nova Scotians have to pay for executive incentives or executive bonuses.

That was a practice that was started, incidentally, by the Liberal Government and was carried on by successive Progressive Conservative Governments - it took an NDP Government to finally take action, to finally stand up for Nova Scotia families.

Our proposed changes will also cap salaries that are charged to ratepayers, it will limit the number of costly rate hearings, and ensure that board-ordered savings reviews are held by Nova Scotia Power in years when there's not a rate hearing.

Madam Speaker, I'm going to ask you, what have the Liberals done here? Well, the Liberals introduced a bill here today that would force Nova Scotia Power to set performance standards around reliability, and then would impose significant fines on Nova Scotia Power when they aren't met. The fact is that that's already in place; it's already there to protect Nova Scotians. The URB already mandates Nova Scotia Power to maintain a reliable and high-performing electricity system, and I'm really surprised that the Opposition Party perhaps isn't aware of that.

Madam Speaker, a reliable electricity system is important in our daily lives and our economy, and regulators have set standards of reliability for all utilities across North America. Nova Scotia Power is obligated to meet all those mandatory North American industry, operational, and planning standards and it is already subject to an independent, third-party audit by the regulatory authorities, including the Utility and Review Board here in this province. It must meet rigorous industry standards as set out by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation and also the Northeast Power Coordinating Council.

Nova Scotia Power is also required to remain in good standing with the Maritime Reliability Coordinator - of course that's the New Brunswick system operator. Third-party audits are carried out by each of these organizations to ensure compliance, and Nova Scotia Power has been found to be consistently compliant through those audits.

Furthermore, Madam Speaker, the URB can also conduct independent audits and benchmark Nova Scotia's Power electricity service reliability, and the URB can initiate, and have done so in the past, third-party audits and Nova Scotia Power's electricity service reliability benchmarking of both their system and their performance.

Madam Speaker, the Opposition is also touting deregulation. I've heard them mention that a lot here in the last number of days as a way to reduce electricity prices, but Nova Scotia families cannot afford deregulation. It has failed in provinces like Alberta; it has failed in provinces like Ontario; it has been tried in New Brunswick; it has been tried in California - it hasn't worked there; and it has been tried in Maryland - it hasn't worked there either. All it has done is cause huge rate spikes in those provinces and states.

Madam Speaker, I'm going to table a report from RBC Dominion Securities that speaks about Alberta's failed attempt to deregulate, and it states, "In unnerving similarity to California's experience, this process has resulted in Alberta's power prices increasing from amongst the lowest in the world to among the highest prices in North America." We don't need that in Nova Scotia. The report goes on to say that wholesale electricity prices increased by more than 650 per cent in just four years - 650 per cent. We don't need that in Nova Scotia. So I'll table that for the House. Is that a road that Nova Scotia wants to go down? Well, I think not.

Nova Scotia Power is obligated by law to serve all Nova Scotian loads at the lowest possible price while meeting its system reliability and environmental obligations. The Utility and Review Board, an independent body, will ensure that that happens, and in point of fact, parts of Nova Scotia Power purchase large amounts of renewable energy from independent power producers.

I want to remind the Opposition of how we got to where we are today. Nova Scotia has a history of using imported coal as the main source of fuel to generate electricity. We all know that coal is dirty. It's a polluting fuel. It's a very expensive fuel. We understand that the path to the future is through renewable local and regional sources of clean energy. We're blessed in Nova Scotia with many clean energy sources right here in our province.

In 2010 our government released its Renewable Electricity Plan to promote and develop both large- and small-scale renewable electricity projects, but we didn't stop there, Madam Speaker. We also put into place our renewable targets that would see a goal of 25 per cent of our electricity from renewable sources by the year 2015 and 40 per cent by 2020. We've also placed hard caps on greenhouse gas emissions in our electricity to help meet both environmental and energy objectives.

Our goal is working. We're also bringing in measures to help Nova Scotians save energy on their own homes while adding green jobs to our economy. It's a win-win all the way around, because through Efficiency Nova Scotia, Nova Scotians across the province have saved more than \$200 million in energy saving - more than \$200 million. So it

boggles the mind why the Leader of the Opposition would state that he wants to cut this important program.

Nova Scotians all over this province are benefiting from the efficiency program. I want to give one example of a lady - her name is Lou LeBlanc. She's a senior who lives in Wellington. She has saved \$780 a year in energy savings while participating in the Efficiency Nova Scotia program. She's a senior living on a fixed income, and despite what the Liberal Opposition says, that they're going to cut this program, I believe and our government believes that these programs are vital to Nova Scotians like Ms. LeBlanc in one of the thousands of Nova Scotian households that have been helped by this efficiency program.

I will table her story, if I could, Madam Speaker, so that the Liberals perhaps can see that this is having an impact on low-income Nova Scotians - a program that they want to cancel for some reason - and it's really a benefit to many Nova Scotians.

As I mentioned, our electricity plan takes us out to the year 2020. We are very confident that we're on track to meet both the renewable targets and the greenhouse gas emissions that we have in place. It's a good thing that we are on track, because the federal government now has put in some coal regulations and set emission targets for 2030 that would have us reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by a further three megatons from the 2020 target out to the year 2030. This means that Nova Scotia must tap into more sustainable sources of energy in order to meet that target. If not, the federal government will have us do it anyway, and they'll do it their way. I know that would carry a substantial price tag - somewhere in the area of about \$1.3 billion. So we have an equivalency agreement that will allow us to find another way to meet those same greenhouse gas targets but not have to pay that excessive amount because that is what it would cost to close down those coal generation plants right away. It's a way of saving money but still meeting our environmental targets.

Getting off coal is no longer simply the choice, it is now a federal requirement that we have to meet, and that is where hydroelectricity from the Lower Churchill comes in. The Lower Churchill project will ensure the lowest and fairest rates over the long term. It will provide Nova Scotia with access to renewable power at a fixed rate for 35 years. The rate, once it is set, will stay at the same level for that length of time. The Lower Churchill project will also put us in an energy loop so that we're no longer at the end of the extension cord, instead we'll have the opportunity to bring in power from both directions at market rates. Certainly, that will mean that we'll have more choices. We'll be able to take power from multiple directions, from east or west, or wherever the best buy may be.

Madam Speaker, the hydroelectricity from the Lower Churchill will also be a reliable energy source to back up our increasing use of intermittent energy sources such as wind and tidal. I think this project will create many good jobs in Nova Scotia as certainly it will also in Newfoundland and Labrador where there will also be opportunities for Nova

Scotians to be working. It's a win/win project and it will be up to about 10 per cent of our power needs, as well as giving us the opportunity to buy at market rates over and above that.

I think it's a wonderful example of regional co-operation that will benefit not only Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador, as I mentioned, but also our neighbouring provinces of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. It's part of the Atlantic Gateway Initiative that will provide co-operation.

Madam Speaker, we know the impact of the cost of the imported coal on our electricity bill right across this province and we're doing something about it. We're not following the path of the Liberal and Progressive Conservative Governments that have gone on before us; we are taking action and we are standing up for Nova Scotians to ensure that they get lowest, and the fairest, electricity rates that are possible. While we pursue this lowest-cost option, we are stabilizing rates over the longer term.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity here tonight to give our information and opinion on Bill No. 95 and finally that we have a plan and we are going to stand by it, thank you very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Madam Speaker, thank you and I'm pleased to have a few minutes today to speak to Bill No. 95. It was interesting while listening to the minister talk about getting off of coal and other resources, he talks like that is going to happen tomorrow. I don't know if he wants to instill in Nova Scotians that we are just going to shut her down tomorrow, or whatever day that might come to fruition, that we see something else - which he might refer to as the Newfoundland and Labrador deal or Muskrat Falls, which may never come to fruition, as we know - we see the cost continually rising.

We've seen a huge jump of nearly 20 per cent taking us to well over \$7 billion and that was just on the capital piece in Newfoundland and Labrador. What does that mean for the link itself? What we do know, Madam Speaker, for the link itself, is that Nova Scotian ratepayers are going to be on the hook for 20 per cent of the cost of that, well we don't even know what that 20 per cent equates to. We've asked the Premier and he says, I don't know; we've asked the minister, and I don't even know if he said, I don't know, he has not even answered the question, I don't think.

So it's interesting to hear him talk about how we're going to get off of fossil fuels, and yes we need to get off of fossil fuels, I don't think that anybody in this House has disagreed with him on that. I think that we know that we're going there. I think that clean energy is the way to go, but we can't do that tomorrow and we can't do it without doing it the right way. It costs money; we know that too, ratepayers know it all too well. We're paying high rates based on the plan that we have today and that is a plan that is just not

working and Nova Scotians are saying we need a break on our power rates. Nova Scotians are not saying we need a deal for 35 years with a price that - oh, by the way, we don't know what the price is. They need to know what the price is. We need a lot more information before the deal with Newfoundland and Labrador is ever compete and one of the things that is obviously concerning, Madam Speaker, is that we are not looking at other opportunities.

Now I just heard him talking about Newfoundland and Labrador, or I heard him talking about New Brunswick and other provinces and a regional plan. Maybe he has listened to what the Progressive Conservatives have been talking about by way of creating a regional energy market, that is, of course, one of our pieces, rewriting the deal that they've put into place that is not affordable and guaranteeing Nova Scotia Power's profit. That's all done, we're going to remove that. We'd do that today, we wouldn't be waiting and allowing another increase to come on the backs of Nova Scotia ratepayers in 2013 and in 2014, which this government is willing to stand by and just let happen and do nothing about it.

If they really wanted to do something about it and they really wanted to do something more than like make a future election pitch, and that's what this is all about, Madam Speaker, oh, we'll freeze the rates after, or you can't do this, you can't do that, but not until 2015.

That's not going to work, people aren't buying into that, they need help today. I'm sure, Madam Speaker, that you have people coming into your offices, I know that every member probably does, talking about their power bills and struggling to pay them. We all have families that are not well off in our areas, who are single moms and dads and raising their families and working and actually there's people that are working families with two people working and are struggling to get by and they're finding that they just can't meet the needs of paying that high power bill. They're worrying about what's going to happen in January 2013, they're certainly worrying about where that's going to happen and what that's going to be in 2014 as well, and everything else that goes on, with the highest costs, taxes are up, other things are up. They see no breaks, no breaks whatsoever.

We count on the URB to step in here and review something. All they are reviewing is one project. Where are the other opportunities? What are the other alternatives for Nova Scotia ratepayers? Why isn't the government seeking out many options? Why are they focused solely on a plan that they don't know what it is going cost and one that we don't have any guarantee that will ever happen?

They talk about getting off of fossil fuels, they talk about cleaner energies and, more importantly, they talk about - and we all stand here and talk about - long-term, sustainable energy opportunities and best rates for Nova Scotians now and well into the future. There's no plan that we can see that guarantees that that is going to take place with where we're heading right now, with the Muskrat Falls deal. It doesn't say that. All it says

is that we're going into a long-term deal. It doesn't say anything about being affordable at all, Madam Speaker, it doesn't talk about that.

How could it possibly talk about that when asked and we don't know what the price is? Now we've talked about this a lot, we're probably going to talk about it a lot more in this session and in future sessions in this House, until we can get it right. People want us to get it right. We just cannot continue to go the way we're going. Nova Scotians need a break on their energy.

You want us to go on and you want us to move on, the government says we need to move to clean energy and we need to do it in a hurry, as far as a lot of people are concerned. People are in agreement that they want to move to green energy sources. They want to see affordable green energy sources, not necessarily just the hydro deal that exists.

You know, right now, as I started this off a few minutes ago, the minister talked about getting off fossil fuels and making it sound like that was going to happen right away, Madam Speaker. We know that we are going to be on coal for some years to come. We know that there are dates that whereby things will be decommissioned in this province, the plants will come off-line in Trenton and other places, in Cape Breton and wherever else. There'll be dates and I know that they're all listed and I don't have them in front of me, so I can't quote them exactly but I've seen them many times and we all know that that's going to take place.

We know that we're going to burn coal in this province for many years to come yet. This project hasn't even begun and we're burning coal today and we know that the price of coal has dropped. I know the government will stand over there, and the minister, and talk about how the price of coal is expensive but we know that the price of coal has been high in the past but it is actually down considerably right now, somewhere around \$58 a ton, I believe.

You know, why aren't we looking at our own resources, our other natural resources, and saying what exists here in the Province of Nova Scotia, what opportunities are there? What about the regional market? What about New Brunswick and Quebec and Maine and whomever else there might be to buy from? The plan that we should be looking at is every opportunity that exists for Nova Scotia ratepayers to have and to be able to purchase the very best deal that exists. This deal that the NDP have put forward is not it.

The Liberal bill, Reliability and Accountability in Electricity Act, Bill No. 95, Madam Speaker, it doesn't address that either. We're talking about rewarding the power company, to some degree, but what it does is it rewards the government for failings of the power company. If we're going to reward anybody, we should be thinking about rewarding the ratepayers. If there's money that comes back, and we've already seen what the power company will do, and we know there's money owed back, there's \$22 million right now,

outstanding, and we'll soon find out whether that's going to come back. We know that that's going to come back.

It doesn't do anything to guarantee money back in the ratepayers' pockets. We need to ensure that rates are stabilized. It would be great if we could all stand here and say the rates are going to go down. We're not sure where rates are going to go under the current plan, but, as I said a few minutes ago, we've got a plan, we believe, that will work. We believe that removing the guarantee in Nova Scotia Power's profits saves Nova Scotia ratepayers money. We know that it will. We believe in rewriting the plan that the NDP have put forward, which is not affordable. It has to be done. It will save ratepayers money. We believe creating a regional energy market and creating more opportunities to buy the cheapest energy available to us, at the same time wanting to buy clean energy, green energy, at the best rates that are available to the Nova Scotia ratepayers.

I know I don't have a lot of time but I do want to touch on that. Right now, in the Province of Nova Scotia, every day people hear about the issue of power. All they see is the power company. I'm trying to think of the right word to use here, Madam Speaker, and I see you looking at me and I need to be careful because it needs to be parliamentary. I'll just say this much, when people are talking about Nova Scotia Power and what's going on in this province, they're not using parliamentary language, I can guarantee you that, because they're upset, and I don't blame them for being upset. They hear this and they hear that and they don't know what to believe anymore, but what they do believe is looking at their power bill at the end of the month and saying, I can't believe that - how high it has become.

Here we are moving into winter. What about the people who are on electric heat? I know they're worrying about January 1st. We're going to be coming in, we're already out in a bit of the season now, coming into winter and it's getting cool. We know people have their power and their heat on. We want people to go to that clean energy, that greener energy and electricity is one way to do that. People bought into that a couple of years ago and they installed electric heat in their homes. They looked at the prices of oil and all of those things and they thought the future is probably better off with electricity; it's probably something that should be stable. Well, today they're learning maybe that's not the way to go.

So they're out there looking at other alternatives but the thing is, we can put forward all kinds of grants - you want to talk about this and that - but there's nothing out there that will cover, maybe - what's geothermal run you around? Around ten grand, easy, to put in if you were going to do it. Solar is very expensive. If you want to talk about putting programs and investing in Nova Scotians and creating jobs, what about some of those ideas - instilling and putting programs in place and helping people in that way. (Interruption)

Individual windmills, my colleague says, yes. Well, Madam Speaker, those people, as I was saying, are going to be worried in January. Their bill - 2 per cent might not sound

like a lot, or 3 per cent might not sound like a lot - that's \$20, \$30 on every \$100, as we know. Most of the people who are using electric heat do not have \$100 a month power bills; they're considerably higher than that. It's a big jump for these folks. These are everyday people who are working, as I was saying a few minutes ago, single parents who are working part time or three-quarter time or permanent part-time or whatever we call it these days.

We know that there's a big drop in full-time employment in this province. We know that. The numbers show us that. People stand here and argue that. We know that's the case. Government will claim that they've done this. Oh, we know, yeah, they've created a few part-time jobs. We know that. Part-time jobs don't cut it. Part-time jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia won't pay the power bill, especially for those folks living on electric heat. Whether they have an apartment and they're paying their own bill or whether they have a home, you know, big enough to increase their bill. Longer dark hours mean more power being used.

We know that there are peaks in our power but what are we doing about it? We're not doing anything about it. The government refuses. All they're focused on is Newfoundland and Labrador. Well, maybe they should stop focusing on Newfoundland and Labrador and start focusing on the Province of Nova Scotia, the ratepayers of Nova Scotia. I'd be willing to bet that everyone in the government caucus has also heard from constituents that are having trouble paying power bills. I can't imagine they're walking in and saying, thank you very much, so and so. Thank you very much. Thank you too, thanking every member of the government caucus for bringing in the project in Newfoundland and Labrador, that is not, maybe, ever going to come to fruition.

We need to be looking today, we need to be looking at yesterday, as a matter of fact and beyond for long-term sustainable energy costs and we're not doing that. The government's focus is solely, solely, unfortunately, on Newfoundland and Labrador, when we don't know that that will ever happen. We don't even know what the costs will be, but yet they can stand here and talk about how this is a good project for Nova Scotia.

I can't imagine that the minister can sit down and sign agreements and come to Nova Scotia and tell Nova Scotians that this is a good deal for you. I just can't imagine a Minister of the Crown would sit down and do that and then stand up in his place in this very historic Chamber and tell people, this is a good deal for you. I would like that minister - maybe I'll refer my calls to that minister when I get them from now on. I know I'm going to get them coming into the winter with the power bills going through the roof here. Another 2 per cent or 3 per cent is going to be added on. Maybe I'll just refer them, 1-800-THEMINISTEROF ENERGY. We'll create a new number, a new e-mail address et cetera, so the people can get him and they can share their stories themselves about what the reality in Nova Scotia is.

There, I see he has his phone out, make sure it stays charged, minister, because I can tell you, the people who are going to be calling you are going to be charged. I know that for a fact. They feel that they're being more than charged, as a matter of fact, they would use the term ripped off. Maybe that's not parliamentary and if it isn't, I retract it. But that's how they feel and I know from talking to them, that's how they feel. Keep that phone charged up, minister, because they will be more than charged when they're calling. I think maybe we're going to need - maybe the minister's missing it, maybe he doesn't get those calls, maybe he thinks everything is wonderful and it's Utopia in the minister's office. It's a wonderful world - wasn't there a movie or something like that?

Madam Speaker, it's important that Nova Scotians focus, that the government, more importantly, focuses and works hard, on behalf of all Nova Scotians, to do the right thing. What they're doing today, with the plan that they have in place, trying to meet something that is not affordable, they are making life terrible, they are making life difficult, they are making life more than unaffordable for the ratepayers in the Province of Nova Scotia.

With those few words, I will take my seat. (Applause)

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Madam Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise today and speak to this bill, the Reliability and Accountability in Electricity Act. First I want to address a couple of things the minister had talked about. It's funny to hear the minister suggest that the URB already has this authority.

Let's not forget, this is the same minister that told us that the URB had the authority to review Muskrat Falls and he was wrong and they had to introduce legislation to do that and spent a year saying that the Utility and Review Board had the power to do spending reviews, which it turned out they did not. I'm not sure how much credibility I can put in the minister's statement when this had come up at the board and when we had actually raised this issue at the board a number of years ago, the board said they didn't have the authority to impose such fines.

It doesn't really surprise me because it's very clear that members of the Opposition actually don't read the Opposition bills. If they did, they would know that the bill that we tabled which they keep referring to as deregulation is exactly what the deputy Premier was advocating for. It's interesting, actually, that many of the NDP staffers have now backed off of calling it deregulation in the Twitterverse and all those on-line places and they're sort of leaving the Cabinet hanging out to dry on that issue. Even the staff doesn't believe it anymore for the most part. It is interesting.

If the minister needs a copy of that bill, if there's something wrong - maybe a coffee cup has been on his bill and so he can't read the bill that we've tabled over seven

times in this Legislature, which the deputy Premier and the member for Halifax Chebucto have both previously spoken in favour of that now suddenly, magically, deregulation – I'd be happy to get him a new copy, bound, the whole bit. It might make it a bit easier.

He might also want to check with his own Department of Energy, which had it recommended through the Electricity Marketplace Governance Committee, he may also want to check his predecessors' comments, the former Minister of Energy, this minister's critic who, in Question Period two years ago, also said it wasn't deregulation. You might want to check your own Party's statements on our bill before calling it that, and your own Party's statements on that bill, even in the past three years since they became government.

With that, there are many issues that face the electricity market and I think we've all heard complaints from residents when the power goes out. Listen, the power is going to go out sometimes. Madam Speaker, I think we all understand that sometimes there's going to be a storm which results in the power going out, there's going to be an incident, but I think we also remember that the Utility and Review Board, among others, conducted a number of reviews of this and found that Nova Scotia Power was wanting in this regard, found that their system reliability was in question.

We've seen that, we've heard the NDP caucus complain about that before; we've heard the Premier complain about that; and we've heard others complain about that. This bill is intended to address that with penalties that cannot be charged back to ratepayers for this, and which will benefit ratepayers. All of the things which these fines can be used for benefit ratepayers, and this is also based on legislation that is working in other places.

You know, Madam Speaker, for anybody to be able to stand up and say that they think Nova Scotia Power should not be held accountable when they ought to, or should have been able to deal with a reliability issue, I just can't understand how anybody would be able to stand here and say that. The fact is that it is up to Nova Scotia Power to ensure that their system is suitably reliable. At the moment, in many places they are going for the bare minimum, and I think many members of the Legislature, perhaps on all sides, would agree that there are places in this province where the system reliability is not what it should be. The fact is that we are at the mercy of Nova Scotia Power to put forward a capital plan, and if you read the capital plan that they put forward - I think it was tabled yesterday but it was reported on today - you know there's very little in there to address the issue of system reliability; there's very little to deal with that problem.

So, Madam Speaker, it is our responsibility to ensure that there is a penalty if the Nova Scotia Power system fails at a time that it should have addressed that reliability. It is our responsibility as legislators to put that power in place so the Utility and Review Board can address that. You know, the minister can stand up and say that they have that authority now - well, I point out again that he said that twice before and he turned out wrong. He has not yet correctly said once, in the time he has been minister, that the URB had power that

others on this side of the House claim that they didn't. In both cases he has turned out to be wrong and has had to introduce legislation to correct that.

So, you know, Madam Speaker, you have to go back and check with his department because his own department will tell you that they don't actually have that ability at the moment to do matters like this, and this ensures that these penalties cannot be passed on to ratepayers so it is an incentive for them to look at this. It creates this - you know at the moment they look at it and they say, well, do you know what? It's cheaper to go out and fix the wires. It's cheaper to go out and put them up and leave somebody without power. It's cheaper to say, well, you know, you didn't get the mast back up on your house, if you have overhead wires, and we're going to come back and do that. It's cheaper for them to do that than fix the problem up front.

You know, Madam Speaker, I think you may have actually been still on council with me at the time when Nova Scotia Power came to council and talked about, well, you know we could look at all the different options that they could look at for reliability. I think it might have been our first year on council because I remember we had got on there shortly after - Hurricane Juan had been the year before and there was White Juan and the whole bit, and they came and said, well, we could do all these things, but it's so expensive. Now, it's so, so expensive for us to do, you know, this Helix cable, or it's so, so expensive for us to strengthen the towers. Well, fine, they go there and they say that and they point out the fact that, well, I'm sorry, it's too expensive.

Well, do you know what? You have to create a situation where it is more expensive for them to do the wrong thing, and at the moment the wrong thing is not protecting ratepayers and ensuring that the system is reliable. People are paying a heck of a lot for power, the highest power rates in the country, or if you want to take Nova Scotia Power saying that they're not the highest - it's the second highest according to them.

So we sit here and we pay the highest rates, but we don't get anything for it. We don't get the reliability; we don't get the feedback we need from them. And they sit there and they don't have to answer for that. Even if the Utility and Review Board does what they did last time an issue like this came up, and calls and says, well, we're going to do a review, there are no penalties. The review was scathing at the time, Madam Speaker, scathing of the reliability and how they responded to those issues, but the fact of the matter was there was nothing the board could do to penalize them for it. So they went through another review, another review, and you know where the costs of that review got passed on to - to ratepayers.

The minister stood in his remarks and said that he has introduced a bill that will reduce the number of rate hearings that will occur. No, he hasn't. He should actually go back and read his bill. The bill excludes the FAM hearings; it excludes the DSM hearings; it excludes the extraordinary hearings - which are almost all of the hearings. He allows the GRA hearing, or rate hearing, every two years.

Well, Madam Speaker, with the exception of the past two years, they've generally only happened every three years or further, so he's actually suggesting they have them more frequently than they were having them on average as it was. So to stand up and suggest that it's reducing the number of hearings, I don't even understand where he comes up with that, because his own bill excludes the vast majority of them. His own bill excludes the hearings which the interveners are complaining about most, which are costing ratepayers the most, and they exclude the ones - the minister stood up, and actually the Premier stood up in Question Period today and said that the primary reason for the increases was fuel. Obviously a significant portion of it is fuel, that's the main reason, but do you know what? The main reason for it was - and they would be just going through the fuel adjustment mechanism hearing - they would not open themselves to a general rate application hearing, because they get the increases for fuel, for wind turbines, for biomass, for all those sorts of things without ever having to go to a general rate application.

For the Premier to stand up and say that, knowing that they're in the middle of a general rate application at the moment, shows that the Premier doesn't even understand that hearing process and what his own bill does, and that's a shame. That's honestly a shame that that situation exists, because you have to know what's being asked for. It's no different than the minister standing at the board and giving everybody the impression that they were going to do something about this rate increase when, in fact, they were not.

You know, there are a number of issues and there are a number of bills - I'm not sure how many we have, as a caucus, on the order paper at the moment - which outline many of the things we've done. This is part of an overall plan, and this addresses the issue which - if we had been hit by Sandy, rest assured that almost every member here probably would have gotten calls at some point, but we didn't, and that's good. I know our hearts are with our neighbours to the south, but we didn't get hit with that. If we had, rest assured, we would have heard from people, and some of it would have been understandable. But if it was anything like the last major storms we've had, we would have learned afterward that some of it was preventable.

Madam Speaker, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed with respect to Nova Scotia Power and how power is dealt with in this province. I would encourage the minister to actually sit down and look at this bill, because this is something that I know I've heard members of the NDP caucus talk about before, when they were in Opposition. I know I've heard them talk about it. In fact, I've stood with them when I was on council and they were in Opposition and talked about it.

This is a way that we can address it. It's a way that we can ensure that there's an incentive there, to ensure that the infrastructure that we have for power delivery is strong, is reliable, and serves people whether they are in the most remote place in this province or in the most dense place. It's our responsibility to make sure that happens.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the time of the House to speak to that, and with that, I will recess my remarks.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn debate on Bill No. 95. 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: Madam Speaker, that concludes the business of the Official Opposition for today. I now turn the floor over to the Government House Leader to give us the hours and the business for tomorrow.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, thank you to the Liberal House Leader. After the daily routine tomorrow we will be calling Public Bills for Second Reading, Bill Nos. 97, 102, 105, 104, 109, 111, 112, 114, 115, 119 (Interruption) 107, yes, thank you. That's what we will call.

I move that the House do now rise and meet again tomorrow from the hours of 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again tomorrow at 12:00 noon.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We have reached the moment of interruption. The adjournment motion was submitted by the honourable member for Queens:

“Therefore be it resolved that the expected sale of the Bowater Mersey timber lands provide the single greatest opportunity for Nova Scotians to gain greater control of a major renewable resource, and the province should ensure that those lands become an asset of maximum value for the people Nova Scotia.”

ADJOURNMENT**MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)**

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens.

NAT. RES. - BOWATER LAND SALES: PROV. ASSET - ENSURE

MS. VICKI CONRAD: Madam Speaker, I am really pleased and appreciative of the fact that I'm standing in my place this evening to talk about this very important issue, an important issue to so many in our province. The opportunity to talk about our forests and the future of the forest industry, and what we, as Nova Scotians, value.

The people of Nova Scotia have relied on our forests for hundreds of years and our forests have provided much economic benefit and opportunity for thousands of Nova Scotians. Our forests have allowed many Nova Scotians to put food on their tables and to heat our homes and the jobs in our forests have kept a lot of our young people here at home.

Our forests, it's true to be said, have helped build this province. The closing of the Bowater mill was a huge blow to the families in Queens County and its impact was felt far and wide all along the southwestern shore to Lunenburg, down to Yarmouth and beyond. I am very proud that my government acted so quickly in the face of that news. They established a transition committee, on the ground, in Queens, to listen to communities as they move forward, to a different economic destiny.

Now the future of the Bowater lands and other assets has been the primary focus for my government since the mill's closure. Over the past several months, there has been a lot of discussion about the future of the Bowater lands and the Bowater assets. In addition to the many conversations that I have had with people across the province and the presentations made by many individuals to the Bowater Transition Committee, the Minister of Natural Resources has met with many groups and many individuals in southwest Nova Scotia earlier this Fall. Among them are municipalities, chambers of commerce, sawmill operators, members of the Buy Back Mersey.

Some of the individuals and groups that the Minister of Natural Resources heard from are people like Geoff LeBoutillier of the St. Margarets Bay Stewardship Association, Mike Marriott of the Safety Minded ATV Association, Dr. Steve Mockford, chair of the Mersey-Tobeatic Research Institute, Beth McGee of Nova Scotia Woodlot Owners and Operators Association, Stephen MacDonald of Milford House, Louis Wamboldt of Queens County Fish and Game Association, Matt Miller of the Ecology Action Centre, Andrew Fedora and Jim Crocker of the Federation of Nova Scotia Woodlot Owners, Royce Ford, Tom Berry, Peter Van Dyk, Jane Barker and Amanda Levers of the North Queens Community Forest Working Group and Will Martin of Windhorse Farms.

They are just some of the many people who have talked, not only with the Minister of Natural Resources, but with myself and with the folks working on the Bowater Transition Committee. The Minister of Natural Resources and the Bowater Transition team have heard loud and clear some important messages and I would like to share some of those thoughts with you.

Citizens have been telling us that the province needs to buy the land to prevent it from being bought by a company without ties to the province and the real risk that a company without ties to this province could potentially strip all of the forest lands with no value to the province. They have told us that this could be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to diversify our forest economy. Buy Back the Mersey, for example, tells us, and we agree, that this land is so important because of the many environmentally sensitive and endangered species.

Madam Speaker, we can all agree that this land is also important to so many Nova Scotians for so many other reasons such as eco-tourism, canoeing, hiking, manufacturing, and isn't an end as an ongoing income for many private woodlot owners. Also, we can agree that the land has so much potential and so much more to encourage sustainable forest practices, and it has true economic and environmental opportunities.

Madam Speaker, I think we can agree, as well, that preserving such a legacy for Nova Scotians will certainly be something that can be used for generations to come. As a government we do need to strike the right balance between working lands and those reserved for community use, and also to meet our protection goals. In June, Resolute Forest Products announced it would permanently close the Bowater-Mersey mill, Lunenburg County-based Oakhill, and associated woodland operations throughout southwest Nova Scotia.

This closure has had a huge impact on up to 2,000 working people, Madam Speaker, and it has put communities in serious economic hardship - from Barrington to Annapolis, to Liverpool, to New Ross, to Lunenburg. The company further said that it was considering a private company's bid to buy the assets, including the 555,000 acres of woodland; the largest private landholding in this province. This was from a company outside of the country and a real risk that this company would take our wood and ship it out, likely unprocessed, and with no value-added, for use somewhere else. Large portions of these lands, as I said earlier, have been used for generations. Some of those lands are used by hunters, anglers, hikers, campers, and many Nova Scotians have made their living off our forest lands.

Now the province faces a real tough choice, Madam Speaker, a choice between shrugging our shoulders and giving into world market forces, or giving into a company that has no connections to Nova Scotia, that doesn't have the best interests of Nova Scotians at heart, or we can reinvent our forest sector, a sector we can be proud of and a sector we can work towards becoming world leaders in forestry management and sustainability.

We can reinvent our forest industry and expand on its uses. We can stand up for Nova Scotia jobs or we can sit on our hands and watch the jobs and our resources go offshore. The choice we are making is to stand up. The province is working and negotiating with Resolute to keep the resources in Nova Scotia so we can create jobs here, support communities here, and help communities thrive here.

Now, I want to be clear, Madam Speaker, my government is not getting into the pulp and paper business, the sawmilling industry, or the tree harvesting sector. We have world-class sawmills and contractors. They just need an integrated, competitive, viable forestry supply chain to thrive. To create jobs, income, wealth, opportunity, the vast majority of these lands have to remain.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Madam Speaker, it's interesting to hear the previous speaker say what the province is not getting into, but hasn't said what the province is getting into or what the province is announcing. So here we have - and the previous speaker talked about jobs going away, and I'm sure the member remembers the postcard the Premier sent to the people on the South Shore that proclaimed "Bowater's survival produces hope" and "Five-year deal brightens prospects along South Shore." I heard from a lot of people on the South Shore. I met with a lot of people who are extremely insulted by that postcard after the closure, especially when they went back and looked at what Opposition Parties talked about and pointed out the very risks and the very real possibility that that could happen with the deal the government signed.

The late debate topic that was brought forward is asking members of the House to say what we think about the expected sale - quote, "expected sale" - of the Bowater-Mersey timberlands, and yet we haven't been told who the sale is to or what the price is. We haven't been told what the government's plans are. We're being asked to debate something without being given any information, so quite frankly, and out of respect for Nova Scotians, who would rather have a debate over something with some substance behind it, I will wait until the government announces the deal, and we'll make our comments then. Thank you very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I don't intend to speak long as well, but I guess when I hear what the member opposite from the NDP Government had to say about the Bowater lands, it is true that it is a very valuable resource, a resource that is important to our province, and indeed, to the people of the community.

My question would be, where we already gave Resolute \$54 million, wouldn't that help pay for some of that? Wouldn't that be the right thing to do, to expect that that property be given to the residents of Nova Scotia whose hard-earned dollars were given to them, and that money was taken out of the province? When we are talking about our forestry, when we are talking about managing our forestry - and what has been said is going to happen on the South Shore - should that not be extended to other parts of the province? Should not the people on Cape Breton Island, who this government has invested huge amounts of money in, and yet the private woodlot owners there are not being treated fairly, because this government overlooked them? Should not the resources that are indeed treated fairly across the province and not gerrymandered or picked in different areas to suit the area of the time - gerrymandering is not the word I wanted to use, and I apologize for that.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. MACLEOD: It seems like one end of the province has one set of values and rules, but when you go to a different area of the province where we have 16 per cent unemployment, well, there's another set of rules there. Then when you have private value-added contractors who are looking to get into our forests in Cape Breton so that they can produce and build products - value-added products to the wood fibre that's there - indeed, they're told, well, you have to deal with the new pulp company.

There seems to me to be varying degrees of how people are treated depending on where they live and how they are represented. I guess what really bothers me about this is that we have no details, and as members of the House of Assembly, we are asked to support it. We didn't get real details when they were giving money to Bowater-Mersey and Resolute, and there's \$50 million more disappeared. The people in Cape Breton have seen \$124 million invested into their pulp mill, and yet people who had worked there and paid into pension plans couldn't get the time of day from this government. They couldn't even be given a little bit of consultation. They couldn't be talked to, but they - that government - could take the hard-earned dollars of those individuals and invest it in companies from outside the province.

They can take the hard-earned dollars of people all across Nova Scotia and not take into account that people - small-business people - are being hurt by the money not being invested in the proper ways. So to say we should be here and support this, we should be supporting every small business in Nova Scotia, every person in Nova Scotia, and they should come first and foremost before outside companies who come in here to rape our land and take value of our land and move it outside the Province of Nova Scotia.

So, Madam Speaker, with those few words I will take my place.

MADAM SPEAKER: Before adjourning this evening, I would ask the member to retract the use of the word "rape", as it is unparliamentary.

MR. MACLEOD: Madam Speaker, I will retract that word and in its place I would desperately not like to see these companies come from outside and clear-cut - if we knew what the definition of clear-cut really was - the woods and the forests in the Province of Nova Scotia. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you, and I'd like to thank all members for participating in this evening's debate.

The House stands adjourned until 12:00 noon tomorrow.

[The House rose at 6:18 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1842**

By: Hon. David Wilson (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas World Wide Knit in Public Day is recognized from the second Saturday to the third Sunday of June each year to celebrate knitting and other fibre arts; and

Whereas Rachel Hooper is the owner of Sackville's From Ewe to You Yarn & Gifts and has recognized the annual event with events such as a knitting flash mob at a shopping mall; and

Whereas From Ewe to You Yarn & Gifts recognized World Wide Knit in Public Day on June 14 this year by partnering with Yuk Yuk's comedy club in Halifax to raise awareness for the Canadian Liver Foundation;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House recognize World Wide Knit in Public Day, commend Rachel Hooper on her dedication to raising awareness for the Canadian Liver Foundation, and wish her continued success with her local business From Ewe to You Yarn & Gifts.

RESOLUTION NO. 1843

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia Music Week is an annual event that gathers the music community together to participate in a range of educational and networking opportunities while celebrating our artists and industry professionals; and

Whereas Nova Scotia Music Week will be held in Liverpool, and will culminate in the presentation of awards to honour and publicly recognize our music industry; and

Whereas Kimberly Sinclair of Milton, Queens County, has been nominated for Nova Scotia Music Week's Industry Professional of the Year Award and Publicist of the Year, and her business, SpinCount, a nomination for the Company of the Year Award;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates Kimberly Sinclair and her business, SpinCount, on having been nominated for Nova Scotia Music Week's Company of the Year Award, Industry Professional of the Year Award and Publicist of the Year Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1844

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia Music Week is an annual event that gathers the music community together to participate in a range of educational and networking opportunities while celebrating our artists and industry professionals; and

Whereas Nova Scotia Music Week will be held in Liverpool, and will culminate in the presentation of awards to honour and publicly recognize our music industry; and

Whereas Tim Feswick and Feswick Productions, of Summerville, Queens County, has been nominated for Nova Scotia Music Week's Producer of the Year Award, Recording Studio of the Year Award, and Studio Engineer of the Year Award;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates Tim Feswick and his business, Feswick Productions, on having been nominated for Nova Scotia Music Week's Producer of the Year Award, Recording Studio of the Year Award and Studio Engineer of the Year Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1845

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia Music Week is an annual event that gathers the music community together to participate in a range of educational and networking opportunities while celebrating our artists and industry professionals; and

Whereas Nova Scotia Music Week will be held in Liverpool, and will culminate in the presentation of awards to honour and publicly recognize our music industry; and

Whereas Pam and Alan Samson of Queens County have been nominated for Nova Scotia Music Week's Volunteer of the Year Award;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates Pam and Alan Samson on having been nominated for Nova Scotia Music Week's Volunteer of the Year Award.