



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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Fourth Session

TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2013

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Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2013

Sixty-first General Assembly

Fourth Session

11:00 A.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Gordon Gosse

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

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

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, is without.

MR. SPEAKER: Let His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, be admitted.

[The Speaker and the Clerks left the Chamber.]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Honourable members, please rise.

[The Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable J.J. Grant, preceded by his Private Secretary and by Mr. Ken Greenham, Sergeant-at-Arms, bearing the Mace, entered the House of Assembly Chamber. The Lieutenant Governor then took his seat on the Throne.]

The Sergeant-at-Arms then departed and re-entered the Chamber, followed by the Speaker, Hon. Gordon Gosse; the Chief Clerk of the House, Neil Ferguson; and the Assistant Clerk, Annette Boucher.

The Speaker, preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms on his right and the Clerks on either side, took up his position at the foot of the Table of the House.]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor.

It is the wish of His Honour that the ladies and gentlemen be seated.

THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR: Mr. Speaker and members of the House of Assembly, in closing this, the Fourth Session of the Sixty-first General Assembly, I thank you for the attention, consideration and care you have given to the legislation and measures that have come before you.

The last session focused on jobs and preparing for future opportunities. As well as adding jobs, the Commission on Building Our New Economy was appointed to seize opportunities and ensure that benefits are shared by communities across the province.

Providing better care sooner also continued to be a priority as the province's fifth Collaborative Emergency Centre was established. The centres keep emergency rooms open and reduce wait times, with 24/7 access to emergency services and same-day or next-day medical appointments.

Government is also ensuring lower, fairer power rates for Nova Scotians, with legislation passed last session. The Act capped the amount ratepayers cover for executive salaries at Nova Scotia Power. It eliminates executive bonuses from the rate base and makes multi-year rate hearings mandatory so families can better plan the household budget.

This was in addition to the federal loan guarantees secured by Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador recently for the Lower Churchill project which will save Nova Scotia ratepayers about \$100 million over the life of the project. That means Nova Scotians are that much closer to the good jobs, lower, more stable power rates and 35 years of clean energy that will come with development of the Lower Churchill project.

Other highlights from the session included:

Legislation that allows domestic violence victims to get out of their lease early, without worrying about the financial implications;

Approving legislation to better support Nova Scotia's creative economy with a one-stop shop for creative businesses;

Imposing strict rules for debt collectors to better protect Nova Scotians and to ensure they are treated with dignity and respect;

Making life a bit more affordable for Nova Scotians with a spouse or a partner in long-term care by ensuring they keep more of their shared income;

Passing legislation that gives police another tool to help bring missing persons home to their families and loved ones;

Amending the Human Rights Act to include gender identity and gender expression, to protect the rights of transgender people.

In total, 33 bills received the approval of the House, including Private and Local Bills.

I thank you for the ample provision you have made for the Public Service and I assure you that care and prudence will be exercised to ensure that the amounts voted are expended in the best interests of Nova Scotia.

I'll bid you farewell.

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): Mr. Speaker and members of the House of Assembly, it is the will and pleasure of His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, that this, the Fourth Session of the Sixty-first General Assembly, be prorogued and this session is accordingly prorogued and that the Fifth Session of the General Assembly meet at two o'clock in the afternoon of this day for the dispatch of business.

[The Speaker and the Clerks left the Chamber.]

[The Lieutenant Governor left the Chamber.]

[The House rose at 11:10 a.m.]