



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordie Gosse

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Fifth Session

TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2013

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2013

Sixty-first General Assembly

Fifth Session

12:00 NOON

SPEAKER

Hon. Gordie Gosse

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The subject matter for this evening's debate has been chosen by the honourable member for Cape Breton North:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly condemn the NDP for telling Nova Scotians the budget was balanced despite extensive evidence to the contrary.

The honourable Deputy Premier.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, in your gallery we have a very lovely young lady and a not-so-lovely older man, two very strong supporters of ours both politically and personally. I would like to introduce Kevin Young and his daughter Kori. Please rise and receive the appreciation of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all our guests to the gallery.

The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: May I make a quick introduction as well?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Sitting in the gallery opposite is a number of concerned citizens who are looking for this petition that I will be introducing. I'll ask them to stand as I introduce them - I've missed a few names, so I apologize before I even get started.

I'll start from the left-hand side: Joey Wagner, the rescuer of Mojo the dog; Rhonda Boudreau, who helped out with the petition, and her two sons, Josh and Connor; and a few friends who have come along for the ride as well. Again, I apologize for not getting their names written down. I will ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

We will begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition. The operative clause is:

“To reduce the suffering of companion animals, to effectively prosecute offenders, and to outline conditions for convicted animal abusers;

We, the undersigned, call on the Government of Nova Scotia to immediately commit to the following;”

Mr. Speaker, there are over 4,300 signatures and I have affixed mine as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, our province's connection to the New England States, particularly Massachusetts, has been forged through history and remains strong. When we see the people of Massachusetts, the people of Boston, in pain, we share that pain.

Nova Scotians were recipients of the generosity of the people of Boston after the Halifax Explosion in 1917. When we were in need, Bostonians were there. Today the people of Boston find themselves in need, so to Governor Deval Patrick and to all the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I want you to know that Nova Scotians stand with you, as neighbours and friends, today and always. If there is anything that this province can do to help, we will be there for you.

To show our support, the Province of Nova Scotia is making a donation of \$50,000 to the Massachusetts General Hospital for Children. (Applause) I would encourage Nova Scotians and other provinces to do the same. Information will be up on the Government Web site later today on how to donate to organizations in the Boston area.

Nova Scotians were shocked at the event that unfolded yesterday in Boston. What should have been a joyous occasion for thousands of runners, many of whom had trained a lifetime to cross the finish line, turned to tragedy.

I want to thank and commend Nova Scotians for their show of support for our sister city. I want to thank the local media for helping confirm safe runners. Thank you to those who shared their support on-line and thank you to the many individuals and groups who are organizing runs for this weekend, because that's how runners deal with sadness and grief: they run.

Since yesterday we have heard stories of marathoners who, after 42 kilometres, ran directly to hospitals to give blood. We heard of spectators giving the shirts and jackets off their backs to runners, of Bostonians offering their homes and couches to strangers. It is tragedies like this that help us realize that the good really do outnumber the bad.

Yesterday, at a ceremony at the Westin, Nova Scotia honoured some of our finest volunteers. Let's think for a moment about those volunteers in Boston who woke up yesterday morning, put on their volunteer gear, and headed out with a smile ready to help those runners have the experience of a lifetime. It's safe to say that yesterday many of them ended up doing a very different job and today, those are the people who we salute: the volunteers, the first responders, the spectators, and the good people, like those who ran toward the smoke to help.

Let's pray for answers so that the people of Boston can have some peace of mind in the days and years to come. Whomever, or whatever group, is responsible for this, in my opinion they messed with the wrong city. Boston's resilience and fighting spirit will persevere.

The Boston Marathon should be about hope. Yes, an elite few strive to actually win it, but most are in it for something else. They are in it to get past a hurdle in life; they are in it to raise money for disease; they are in it to surpass a personal goal. The Boston Marathon should be about hope and it will be again.

On behalf of Nova Scotians and all members of this House I am grateful that our runners are safe, and our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Boston. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Applause)

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

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Premier for giving us an advance copy of his notes. I want to offer him our support, and want to join with him and all Nova Scotians as we reach out to Governor Patrick to offer our support.

I want to congratulate the Premier and the government on the gift that they have presented to the children's hospital on behalf of all Nova Scotians. It is the beginning of a gesture that I think, as the Premier said, all Nova Scotians can participate in by finding our way to contribute and send money of support.

The State of Massachusetts and the Province of Nova Scotia have a deep history, as the Premier alluded to. In 1917 it was the citizens of that great state who came to our aid, and we have annually recognized that by sending one of our Christmas trees. Many of our families over the decades, from 1917 to the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, had members who went off in search of work, and who are now raising a generation of our own connected families in the State of Massachusetts and in and around the Eastern Seaboard.

A few weeks ago I had the privilege of listening to the member for Kings West, who ran in the Boston Marathon, carry on a conversation with some of the participants who were there yesterday. I don't think they were talking about winning the Boston Marathon, but what they were talking about was the connection that they will have. They were talking about different stages of the race, who they might see and what might happen, with the excitement that the new participants were showing and running in. The excitement that the member for Kings West still had for his times of running in the Boston Marathon is a connection that he has with those participants.

We as communities have a great connection to Boston, in particular when it comes to sports. Red Sox Nation is here, and I know there are a few members of this House who cheer for the Boston Bruins. It's a real competitive way for us, but when it comes to each of

us needing support, that state and this province have always answered the call to one another.

Like many Nova Scotians, as I watched the news that came out of there yesterday, I can't tell you how saddened you are when you see the human side of this tragedy. When you hear of an 8-year-old waiting to greet his father, who has been participating in this race, and the entire family being devastated - there are no words that we as a province, and we as a community, can say to that family, other than to be there, to offer support as a way of healing, acknowledgement, whatever it takes, that we as a province, and as a country - this is determined to be some outside force that has impacted that state - that we would be there to ensure that it is not tolerated, the kind of behaviour that was demonstrated to interfere, and really to rain destruction on that state and on our ways, views, and values of life.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of our caucus, I want to support the Premier's initiative of sending that money to the United States. I also want to send our prayers to the citizens of Massachusetts. Our thoughts are with them, and in the days ahead we will still be with them to do whatever is possible to find a way through this darkness to what should be light, and make sure that our connection to that state is not severed because of this, but that it's actually grown because of it. Thank you.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: It is indeed a sad time. I know that every member of this House, along with every Nova Scotian, when they first heard the news last night, immediately turned to the nearly 100 runners from Nova Scotia and their families and supporters who were in Boston, to reach out to those friends and families of ours that we may know who were in Boston at that tragic and horrible time.

Mr. Speaker, we're all comforted by the fact that having reached out, as Nova Scotians do in a very family way, none of our fellow citizens of this province were among the injured. That is very fortunate. But beyond just family and friends, what happened in Boston is a reminder that nations are also families and friends, and that the history of Canada and the United States is that we reach out to each other in times of need, even beyond nations. Whatever stresses and strains go on at the international level, there are also important connections at the provincial and state level, at the sub-national level, and there is no greater example of that than the history that we share, the people of Nova Scotia, with the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Boston States.

Throughout our shared time together, there are many examples of where each has helped the other. And so the Premier's initiative, the \$50,000 donation, of course, we are as one as Nova Scotians in sending that gift along to the Massachusetts General Hospital, because it is the latest in a string of examples that all Nova Scotians know: where in times of trouble, like two families who live side by side, we have reached out to each other.

The Halifax Explosion, of course, Mr. Speaker, is the greatest example. And all Nova Scotians are taught in school, and know, that in the time of need of this City of Halifax, almost 100 years ago now, that the State Legislature in Massachusetts met in emergency session, the night of the explosion, and voted to send doctors and nurses and supplies by train, overnight to Halifax, to help the injured and wounded here in our city. And in thanks we have sent one of our greatest Christmas trees that we can find, every year, to Boston. To this day we do that.

And 9/11 is another example where, for many Nova Scotians, in that horrible time of tragedy in the City of New York, against all the United States, a terrorist attack against the free world, we saw our chance to repay the favour in kind, as thousands of Nova Scotians took stranded Americans, and other citizens of the world, into their homes. And Mr. Speaker, sometimes these shows of kindness come even at the community level.

I want to share with the House just for a moment that in Massachusetts there is a town called Mansfield and in the town square is the famous Mansfield pole, a 90-foot-high flagpole donated to the people of the Town of Mansfield by the Province of Nova Scotia over 100 years ago. A few years ago that pole was hit by lightning and it was destroyed. So the people of Nova Scotia, through their government, got together and sent them another one, and 90-foot lengths are very hard to find, as I know anyone who works in forestry can attest.

Mr. Speaker, this is what communities do, this is what states and provinces do, this is what nations do, in times like this. So I am very proud as a Nova Scotian that we can stand together with the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with the City of Boston, at this very difficult time.

One last lesson, Mr. Speaker, in times of evil we see countless examples of how there are far more good people in the world than there are those who do evil. I heard a Nova Scotian on the radio today, who was in Boston yesterday, recounting the volunteer efforts, and the efforts of everyday citizens, to comfort those who were affected. And that Nova Scotian on the radio concluded that what they learned is there are always far more good people in the world than there are those who will do evil acts. So as we send our condolences and our best wishes and our support to the people of Boston, let us also resolve together with them as neighbours that good will always triumph over evil, and that those who commit such heinous acts will pay the price and together we will stand to make that true. Thank you.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 334

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

Whereas for more than a century, Nova Scotia and Boston have shared a close bond that grew from the people of Boston lending a helping hand when Halifax was rocked by the devastating explosion of 1917; and

Whereas yesterday Boston experienced a terrible tragedy that left at least three people dead and dozens more wounded; and

Whereas Nova Scotians across the province were quick to offer their thoughts and prayers to those individuals affected, and to the city as a whole;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly offer their deepest sympathies to the people of Boston and work together to offer any support we can to help them recover and heal - and I would also request that the Speaker convey this resolution to the Governor of Massachusetts, the Speakers of the House, and the Senate of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, may I do an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. WILSON: I'd like to draw the members' attention to the east gallery where we have with us Colleen Cash. Colleen is the executive director of the Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association and co-chair of the Quality End of Life Care Coalition of Nova Scotia. I ask all members to show Colleen a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

RESOLUTION NO. 335

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

Whereas all Canadians are entitled to quality end-of-life care, and the Colchester East Hants Hospice Society delivers care and support to families facing this difficult time; and

Whereas today, April 16th, marks the third annual National Advance Care Planning Day, which promotes the importance of thinking about and of communicating one's wishes for end-of-life care; and

Whereas one aspect of the work that the Colchester East Hants Hospice Society and its partner organizations strive to achieve is helping the public understand the options and values that guide end-of-life care decisions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize April 16th as National Advance Care Planning Day and the dedicated work of the Colchester East Hants Hospice Society.

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. 336

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

Whereas Fred Popowich is retiring this summer after 40 years of service with the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library Board; and

Whereas during his tenure Mr. Popowich was the deputy chief librarian and technical services librarian and oversaw the transition from a card-based catalogue to microfiche, then to a fully automated, integrated library system - he also helped make New Glasgow one of the first libraries to have the Internet publicly available; and

Whereas Fred served on many local boards and committees, including the Pictou County Continuous Learning Association, and was the recipient of the Provincial Community Literacy Volunteer Award in 2002;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly join me in recognizing Fred Popowich's dedication to making the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library a leader in public library service and wish him well in his retirement.

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. 44 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 380 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Public Utilities Act, Respecting Ratepayer Fairness. (Mr. Chuck Porter)

Bill No. 45 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 380 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Public Utilities Act, Respecting Transparency in Power Rates. (Mr. Chuck Porter)

Bill No. 46 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 380 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Public Utilities Act, to Eliminate the Guarantee on Nova Scotia Power's Profit. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

Bill No. 47 - Entitled an Act to Provide for the Independent Review of Certain Capital Projects. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

Bill No. 48 - Entitled an Act Respecting the Review and Reduction of Power Rates. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

Bill No. 49 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 17 of the Acts of 1995-96. The Revenue Act. (Mr. Alfie MacLeod)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 337

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 Viola Hiltz of Chester, Nova Scotia, has been involved in the Red Cross Swim Program for more years than she cares to remember; and

Whereas in February of this year, Viola was once again recognized for her contribution to this program by being invited to Government House where she received the Bar to the Service Medal Award for her years of service to the Life Saving Society from Brigadier General The Honourable J.J. Grant, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Life Saving Society is a national organization and recognized charity dedicated to prevent drowning and water-related incidents for all Canadians by life-saving, life-guarding and leadership education;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate and thank Viola Hiltz as she receives yet another award for her dedicated service to the youth of Chester Municipality and the swimming 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 Kings West.

RESOLUTION NO. 338

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

Whereas yesterday people from around the world were both shocked and saddened by the senseless tragedy that occurred at the Boston Marathon; and

Whereas the Boston Marathon represents a long-standing history of dedication, hope, and the very best of citizens from the U.S., Canada, and around the world; and

Whereas the incredible efforts of participants, bystanders, event officials, and emergency responders in offering support to those injured and their families is a shining example of those same qualities;

Therefore be it resolved that all Members of the Legislative Assembly send our thoughts and our prayers to our neighbours in Boston, and offer our support and condolences during this devastating time.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 339

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

Whereas our thoughts and prayers are with the thousands of people who were impacted by the terrible tragedy at the Boston Marathon yesterday; and

Whereas Nova Scotians showed an outpouring of support and compassion to the people of Boston after learning of the horrific events; and

Whereas our province has a special connection with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, after receiving significant support from that great state in the aftermath of our own Halifax Explosion;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House send condolences, prayers, and thoughts of support to the people of Boston and around the world whose lives have been forever changed at the hands of this senseless violence.

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 Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

RESOLUTION NO. 340

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

Whereas many worthwhile community and neighbourhood programs and services would not exist without the efforts of volunteers; and

Whereas on April 5, 2013, volunteers from across the Province of Nova Scotia were honoured for their selfless works; and

Whereas Michael Cawthra of East Hants was nominated for a Provincial Volunteer Award;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Michael Cawthra on being chosen for a Provincial Volunteer Award for East Hants, and thank him for his generosity with his time and talents.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 341

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

Whereas on March 8, 2013, Halifax lost an inspirational individual in the sudden passing of Edward William “Billy” Downey; and

Whereas Billy will always be remembered as a great baseball player who continued his commitment to the game by managing the Vaughan Furriers, a team that drew over 4,000 fans to games played at the Halifax Common; and

Whereas Billy’s passion and love of music led him in the mid-1960s to open the Arrows Club, originally on Creighton Street, then Agricola Street, and finally onto large premises on Brunswick Street, where it remained until it closed years later when Billy opened a new establishment on Gottingen Street, called the Open Circle;

Therefore be it resolved that all Members of the Legislative Assembly extend our sympathies to Billy’s family and many friends, and reflect upon and remember the immense contributions Billy Downey made not only to his community, but to our entire 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 Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 342

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: A Labhraiche Urramaich, tha mi a' lèigeil fhaicinn gum bi mi, san àm ri tighinn, a' cur air adhart an rùin a leanas airson gabhail ris:

Seach gun do chuireadh Blàr Chuil Fhodair air an t-siathamh là diag dhe'n Ghiblean, anns a' bhliadhna seachd ciad diag dà fhichead 's a sia (1746), agus chuir sinn crìoch air Bliadhna Theàrlaich; agus

Le call a' chath seo agus leis a' bhrùidealachd a lean e a rinn an t-arm Breatunnach fo stiùireadh an Fheòileadair, Cumberland, chaidh am poball Gàidhealach a bhriseadh agus cha do shlànaich e riamh bho'n uair sin; agus

Seach gun do dh'abhraich seo gu'n d'rinn mìltean dhe na Gàidheil imrich gu Albainn Nuaidh anns an ochdamh agus anns an naoitheamh linn diag;

Mar sin, biodh e na rùn aig gach ball de'n Phàrlamaid seo, gun aithnich sinn gum bu chòir dhuinn cuimhneachadh air air na gaisgich Seumasach a thuit anns a' bhlàr seo, ar sinnsearan, agus ar dìcheall a dhèanadh gus gach cobhair a dhèanadh air ath-bheòthachadh an cànan agus an dualchais anns a' mhór-roinn seo.

A Labhraiche Urramaich, tha mi a' guidhe gun tèid brath-gluasad an darna taobh agus gun tèid a' chùis air adhart as aonais deasbaid.

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

Whereas the Battle of Culloden was fought on April 16, 1746, and this ended the Jacobite Rising of 1745; and

Whereas with the loss of this battle and the brutality that followed it, perpetrated on the Gaels by the British Army under the command of Cumberland, who became known as The Butcher, Gaelic society was broken and hasn't recovered since; and

Whereas this is a major reason why thousands of Gaels came to Nova Scotia in the 18th and 19th Centuries;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly remember the Jacobite heroes who fell in this battle, ancestors of many Nova Scotians, and pledge to do all that we can to support the revival of their language and culture in 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 member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

RESOLUTION NO. 343

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

Whereas on December 15, 2012, the Stan Rogers Folk Festival held an evening of appreciation for its board, staff and volunteers; and

Whereas each year the festival recruits over 700 volunteers to assist with the many facets of organizing such an event; and

Whereas in recognition of his 17 years of commitment to the Stan Rogers Folk Festival, as both chairman of the board and as a festival crew head, Barry Richards was honoured and presented with a painting by a local artist as a token of thanks from the board, staff, and fellow volunteers;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Barry Richards on his dedication and commitment to the Stan Rogers Folk Festival, and wish him well on his retirement.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 344

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

Whereas Janet Mattatall graduated from the Halifax Infirmary School of Nursing on January 1, 1973, and went to work at the Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital in Tatamagouche, Colchester North; and

Whereas Janet has provided strong leadership, promoted the image of nursing by acting as the positive role model for colleagues, those receiving care, and all members of the health care team, and has been an advocate for quality health care and her fellow nursing staff; and

Whereas Janet retired on January 1, 2013, from the Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital, completing a 40-year career of dedicated service to patient care in Colchester North;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Janet Mattatall on her retirement, and thank her for her many contributions to improving the lives of patients, faculty, staff, and physicians.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 345

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

Whereas National Volunteer Week is set for the week of April 21-27, 2013, with the Provincial Volunteer Recognition Awards ceremony to be held on April 15th in Halifax; and

Whereas the Municipality of Argyle's representative volunteer for 2013, Melvin Landry from Amirault's Hill, will be recognized at the municipality's volunteer banquet to be held on April 26th in Ste. Anne du Ruisseau; and

Whereas Melvin Landry worked tirelessly for many organizations throughout the community, particularly Amirault's Hill/Hubbard's Point Fire Department as chief for 26 years, Holy Family Church parish council, Knights of Columbus Council 8988, and Amirault's Hill Haystack Festival just to name a few;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Melvin Landry on receiving this award, and thank him and all volunteers for their time and effort in helping their communities remain vibrant.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 346

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

Whereas 16-year-old Brynn Knickle is an aspiring actor and musician who writes her own material, but is too young as yet to perform in bars; and

Whereas this Grade 11 student at Charles P. Allen High School has created a venue for herself and others by organizing a youth coffee hour in Bedford which welcomes all performers from age 14 to 19; and

Whereas the coffee houses are scheduled on the first Friday evening of every month at the Maritime Dance Academy on Duke Street in Bedford;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brynn Knickle on the creation of a local venue where she and others can showcase their work, and encourage her in her ambition to study performing arts.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 347

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

Whereas each year communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help others; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas Darrell Stoddard, of the Municipality of the District of Barrington, was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony for the many contributions he has made to his community and to the province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Darrell Stoddard for all the work he does for others, and congratulate him for receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

RESOLUTION NO. 348

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

Whereas Yarmouth's Zoe LeBlanc, a first-year student at Mount Allison University, was 8 years old when she started swimming competitively; and

Whereas Zoe LeBlanc, who has had much success as a member of the Yarmouth Y Whitecaps, broke a 24-year-old university record in the 50-metre breaststroke last Fall during a meet at Dalhousie; and

Whereas Zoe LeBlanc was recently named Mount Allison University's Swim Rookie of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Yarmouth's Zoe LeBlanc on her many impressive achievements in the pool, including being honoured as Mount Allison University's Swim Rookie of the Year, and wish her continued 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 member for Cape Breton North.

RESOLUTION NO. 349

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

Whereas Hugh MacDonald, an accomplished writer, songwriter, and filmmaker from Sydney Mines, released a young adult novel entitled *Trapper Boy* from Cape Breton University Press in the Fall of 2012; and

Whereas the CBU Press recently announced that *Trapper Boy* has been selected for Best Books Kids and Teens, a national guide for the best new Canadian books, magazines, audio and video for children and teens; and

Whereas Hugh is hoping this novel about the early history of coal mining will be exposed to a wider audience;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Hugh MacDonald for the success of his first novel, and send hope that he will produce many more pieces of literature.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 350

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

Whereas the 4th Annual Family Literacy Day, organized by the Colchester Adult Learning Association and the Great Village Community Association, was held at the school gymnasium in Great Village, Colchester North; and

Whereas the day began with a magic show followed by stations with demonstrations by Ocean Sonics, Colchester East Hants Library, Rug Hooking, Super Nova Science Centre, Future Shop, CALA and more; and

Whereas other features included a presentation by the Dynamic Motion Dance Studio, a talk on herbal medicine, a book reading, and art lessons;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Great Village Community Association and the Colchester Adult Learning Association for once again organizing and orchestrating a highly successful Family Literacy 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 member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 351

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

Whereas the Northside Vikings Atom A team, with a 3- 2 shootout win, took home a silver medal at the Nova Scotia Atom Hockey Championship, held at the Emera Centre Northside; and

Whereas the Vikings team - Travis Gillis, Ryan Williams, Nick Targett, Dovi Walker, Max Street, Kent Keagan, Evan Fraser, Bryson Bonnar, Ethan Long, Kody Groves, Noah Forrest, Jacob Fraser, Ian Jenkins, Jacob Jessome, Eric LeBlanc, Rylan MacLean, and Scotty MacInnis - showcased quality teamwork throughout the year, and their win attests to their hard work, dedication, and love of the sport; and

Whereas Ryan Williams won first All-Star team goaltender and top goaltender, Dovi Walker was awarded first All-Star team forward, tournament top scorer, and tournament MVP, and players Jacob Jessome and Noah Forrest were named to the second All-Star team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate coaches Curtis Fraser, Troy Jessome, and Sam MacLean, trainer Peter Keagan, and all team players on their silver win, and wish them the best of luck 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 Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 352

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

Whereas Maedi Bartolacci of Bedford graduated cum laude from the Southern California College of Optometry on May 29, 2012, where she received the Dr. Homer and Marie Hendrickson Memorial Award for Outstanding Performance in Pediatric Optometry and Vision Therapy; and

Whereas Dr. Bartolacci is currently completing a pediatric residency at SUNY State College of Optometry in Manhattan; and

Whereas Dr. Bartolacci is a graduate of Dalhousie University, where she received a Bachelor of Science in 2002 and a Diploma in Orthopedics in 2004;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dr. Maedi Bartolacci on her academic prowess, and wish her continued 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 Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 353

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

Whereas each year, communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help others; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas Hailie Harrison of Oxford was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony and received the 2013 Specialty Award for Youth for the many contributions she has made in her young life;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House thank Hailie Harrison for all the work she does for others, and congratulate her for receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 354

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

Whereas outstanding Nova Scotian volunteers gathered in Halifax for the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony on April 15, 2013; and

Whereas Lena Metledge Diab of Halifax was honoured at the ceremony for her inspiring commitment to her community, as demonstrated by the wide variety of local groups and professional associations that have benefited from her generous sharing of her time and talents; and

Whereas Lena, a proud mother of four and daughter of successful Lebanese immigrants, has placed a priority on being involved in her children's schools, sporting and Scout groups, as well as supporting the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society and being President of the Canadian Lebanon Society;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Lena Metledge Diab on receiving this provincial honour in recognition of the outstanding contribution she has made to her community and province, and wish her continued success in all her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

RESOLUTION NO. 355

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

Whereas a former Sydney Mines resident has turned her sense of adventure and her passion for travel into a blog that people the world over now read about each month; and

Whereas Lesley Carter, formerly Stubbart-Samways, has travelled to 35 countries and spent 12 weeks backpacking through Europe and her adventures have included skydiving, piloting aircraft, river rafting, and operating a jet pack; and

Whereas Lesley began to blog about her adventures and travels, and now usually close to two million monthly visitors from over 200 countries read her blogs;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly salute Lesley Carter for following her passion for travel and adventure, and sharing it with 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 Richmond.

RESOLUTION NO. 356

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

Whereas on Sunday, April 7th local band Highway 206, which is comprised of Gerry Samson, Leon LeBlanc and Rex Barnes, played host for a variety show to raise money for St. Anne's Centre Ladies Auxiliary; and

Whereas local talent was on display with performances by Dawson LeBlanc, Father Angus MacDougall, Jessica Samson, Leah Boudreau, Brett Pierce, Audrey Boudreau, Nick Boudreau, Becky Bourinot, Marcel (Stretch) Marchand, Rocky Boudreau, along with the young band Island Pride, comprised of Drake Boudreau, Dobson Boudreau, and Josh Martell; and

Whereas the variety show included a unique version of *Dancing with the Stars*, hosted by Donna Babin, which featured contestants David Landry and Linda Samson, Councillor Rod Samson and Sally LeBlanc, Rodney LeBlanc and Nancy LeBlanc, along with judges Laurie Ann Samson, Annette Kehoe, and Donnie Martell;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating all the entertainers and volunteers who helped make the variety show a wonderful night of entertainment and successful fundraiser for St. Anne's Centre Ladies Auxiliary.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 357

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

Whereas Jenn Power started her career with L'Arche in 1994 and has recently been made the new director of L'Arche Atlantic; and

Whereas Jenn recognizes that people with intellectual disabilities are teachers, that we must stop looking for perfection and start sharing the gifts each person does have; and

Whereas Jenn has expanded her community service to the community of Whycomagh, serving on boards, facilitating ideas and assisting in projects for local improvement;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge Jenn Power for her contributions to our province and her tireless volunteer efforts.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 358

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

Whereas Bernie Doucette, a native of Ingonish, has released three albums after recovering from a debilitating injury; and

Whereas Bernie has had a passion for music since he was a young boy growing up in Ingonish, played gigs at the Keltic Lodge and moved to P.E.I. to further his education in music; and

Whereas after a terrible accident in Halifax left him with little feeling in his left hand and arm for 10 years, and determined not to give up on his music since 2007, Bernie's three albums are *The Best of Times*, *Please Give Me Peace* and his latest album, *Alberta Dust*, released in January 2013;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the courage and determination of Bernie Doucette, congratulate him on his most recent CD release, *Alberta Dust*, and wish him the best in all his future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The time is now 1:00 p.m.; we will finish at 2:00 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM. - SEXUAL ASSAULT SERV.: ADVICE - ACCEPTANCE

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, in 2008 the first-ever comprehensive needs assessment regarding sexual assault services was submitted to government. Five years later we are still waiting for a response. In the past few years conviction rates have gone down while assaults have gone up. What is most troubling about the last five years is we haven't heard from those on the ground and on the front line about specific action that needs to happen and have failed to act.

My question to the Premier is, will the Premier explain why his government has failed to act on the advice of those on the front lines?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we did. We came into government, and we received a lot of advice with respect to this. We have been dealing with the issue. We have made a number of positive changes over the last number of years.

I'd like to have the minister give a more detailed answer to the Leader of the Official Opposition.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, it is true that a lot of our front-line workers have been dealing with these very serious issues on a daily basis. We have certainly benefited from *Suffering in Silence*, the report that the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre produced in 2008. It is one of the critical resource documents that the sexual assault strategic framework committee are using within government. I'm very pleased to say that I'll be meeting with representatives from the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre tomorrow to have a dialogue about where we're going with that framework. We certainly value that important research document.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre says they are frustrated and angry with this government's inaction. Based on population alone, Nova Scotia should have 38 sexual assault counsellors. We have three. Three full-time employees at the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre are working 90 per cent positions in order to resource and fund a one-term counsellor position. The centre cannot keep up with the requests for school visits to do critical outreach work. People have to wait six months to access services because the centre is understaffed.

My question to the Premier is, will the Premier explain why he has failed to provide proper resources to ensure that the outreach work can be done so that victims can access the supports they need?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if the program he's referring to is a federal program or not, but what I can tell him is that this has been an area of focus for our government. We have been working with community-based organizations for years now - not just the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre, but women's community organizations that have been focusing on the needs of women in communities from one end of the province to the other.

We put in place, for example, the first increase in funding to women's centres, to transition houses, in more than a decade. We continue to work with those community-based organizations, and we are well aware that part of what is contained in the Avalon submission is that these responses should continue to be community-based. Therefore, we are working with those community-based organizations to make sure that the needs are met.

Is it a long process? Yes, it is, but we are making progress, and we are dedicated to making additional progress.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, while they may be community-based, five years is a long time for a community to wait. The need is not going away. It's increasing in the Province of Nova Scotia.

In 2011-12, the Avalon Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program attended to 119 immediate sexual assaults; 63 per cent of them were females between the ages of 13 and 25. This government knows the need. They have known since 2008. The longer this government fails to take action, the worse the problem is going to get.

My question to the Premier is, when will the Premier provide appropriate resources and take action as outlined by the front-line workers five years ago?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, it is exactly the front-line workers who we are working with. This government put more money into teen health centres across the province to address, particularly with younger people, some of the issues that have been mentioned but I will ask the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women to inform the Leader of the Opposition further.

MS. MORE: I want to take this opportunity to remind members that three departments of government over the last couple of years have provided additional funding to the Avalon Sexual Assault Resource Centre in order for them to both document the model that they are using in the HRM area as a possible model for other areas of this province, and also to do an evaluation of that model in terms of its efficiency and its effectiveness. These were essential interim steps to take before any possible expansion or use by other communities.

Certainly the effort of the action team on sexual violence and bullying that the Premier announced last week is going to look at ways of fast-tracking work that is currently underway across a number of different departments in our government. We are determined that we are going to help turn a tragedy into a better coordinated resource system for the youth and women, in particular, in this province.

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

FIN.: ECONOMIC GROWTH - GOV'T. CONTRIBUTION

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: In a report released last Friday, April 10th, by the Department of Finance the report concluded, "In the past two years, however, government expenditures and investments have contributed little to economic growth." I'll table that report for the benefit of the Premier and his government.

After spending \$590 million on corporate giveaways and \$200 million more on the jobsHere PR campaign, does the Premier agree with his own Finance Department that his government has contributed little to economic growth?

THE PREMIER: Hardly, Mr. Speaker, I think the evidence is all around us; we have a growing economy, we have invested in the largest single contract in the history of our province, some 11,500 jobs. We have solidified the foundation for economic growth; almost every rating agency in the country says that Nova Scotia now is moving up in terms

of overall economic growth. This has been a government of success with respect to economic development and growth.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish the Premier did base his answers on the evidence because the evidence is that the unemployment rate in Nova Scotia today is 9.5 per cent, that 47,600 Nova Scotians are without a job today. In some parts of the province, like Cape Breton, it is 18.5 per cent or higher. This is after spending \$590 million on forgivable loans and other corporate giveaways, \$200 million on jobsHere, and the Premier has actually lost jobs for all of that effort. So I will ask the Premier, since he disagrees with his own Finance Department's report which says his government has had little to contribute to jobs and the economy, who is right, his own Department of Finance or the Premier?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as is often the case, this is a distortion of what the document actually says. I know that comes as a great surprise; in fact, the document actually says that government expenditure is often a great contributor to economic growth. But that's beside the point because it's not just about government expenditure, it's not just about government spending money, it's about government investing money that makes a return for the province - returns in two ways: one, a return in tax revenue that comes back to the province; and secondly, an investment that yields new jobs for the Province of Nova Scotia.

That's what this government is doing and whether it is with the Irving Shipbuilding contract or whether it's saving 1,000 jobs in the Strait area, we're seeing 440 new engineering jobs come in, we're the global delivery centre for IBM, and we're making sure that RIM continues to operate in Nova Scotia. These are investments with teeth and are investments in the economic success of our province.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, let me tell you something about a return on investment. That very same report says that in 2008 the economic growth of the province was 2.5 per cent, the third highest in all of Canada. What do Nova Scotia taxpayers have for this massive investment of borrowed money that the Premier brags about? They now have no economic growth and were among the lowest in all of Canada. That is some return on investment for all of that borrowed money.

I will ask the Premier, Mr. Speaker, will he accept the conclusion of his own Department of Finance's report that his strategy for jobs has failed the people of Nova Scotia, despite all that money?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, failure would have been not investing in the Irving contract and allowing 11,500 jobs to go to Quebec or British Columbia. Failure would have been the failure to save one of the most modern mills in the world, in Port Hawkesbury, and throwing another 1,000 people onto the unemployment rolls. Failure would be to follow the advice of the Leader of the Opposition and do nothing, which is what he always advocates.

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

PREM.: YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES - ADEQUACY

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: There is not a day that goes by without someone contacting our office with regard to youth mental health services. We hear of inordinate wait times to access community-based programs. We hear of waits to access the ACT program, we hear of youth who arrive at the IWK, who have already been diagnosed and need help, only to be told that since they have not gotten any worse, they should go home.

This is simply not good enough. Would the Premier please tell us how the system and government continue to fail the youth of our province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I think it's very regrettable that the Leader of the Opposition would participate in telling people that there are no options for them. In fact, this is a critical time in our province and there are many health care resources that people can access, the Department of Health and Wellness, the district health authorities are reaching out to young people, ensuring that they get the supports and resources that they need. It is this government that has supported the mobile mental health crisis team. It is this government that has been investing in more resources, to ensure that young people get the help they need.

You know it's a funny thing, Mr. Speaker, this is a problem that has been in place in this province through the administration of the Liberal Government, through the 10 years - a decade - of the administration of the Progressive Conservative Government. Do you know when they discovered it? When we got elected.

MR. MCNEIL: Not at all, Mr. Speaker. (Interruptions) I don't know what they find amusing about the fact (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker, we will accept any responsibility that we may have played in the lack of services that are provided to young Nova Scotians. The fact of the matter is this government has been in power for four years and Nova Scotian families are looking for support.

Mr. Speaker, we have mental health standards in this province, we have a mental health strategy. The IWK has their own mental health strategic plan for youth in the province, yet we hear from families of the youth calling our offices every day looking for support.

My question to the Premier is, could the Premier tell us how so many families are left without hope or supports?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, it was this government, two years into its mandate, that brought in the first real mental health strategy that this province has ever had. It is this

government that is funding that and that strategy actually has become a model across the country that other provinces are looking to, to emulate. Not only did we put in place a strategy, we put in place the funding to make sure that the strategy would be implemented.

Mr. Speaker, it was this government that established the youth outreach workers throughout the province. That was this government. We understand very well what the mental health needs of the province are, we're looking to address them and we're doing that as we are also addressing the many other things that we had to fix, messes that we had to clean up after decades of government by the other two Parties.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, on the government Web site, the very mental health strategy that the Premier speaks about indicates that in 2012-13 there was \$5.2 million for year one. Yet, on February 2013, an article written by John Roswell, a staff member from the Department of Health and Wellness, indicates that government actually only gave \$3.8 million and, in turn, only spent \$3 million of that \$3.8 million.

Yet we hear them announcing another \$2.5 million this coming year - that is really cold comfort to those Nova Scotia families who are seeking support, to understand that this government has actually underspent its own mental health strategy. My question to the Premier is, with so many families looking for support, how can he stand in this House and justify under-spending his own mental health strategy?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, when we invest in services for citizens, particularly for young citizens, we want to make sure this is an effective use of the money. We have not just given the money over to the district health authorities, we have told them that where this money is coming out it is to go into implementing the mental health strategy. The fact of the matter is that wait times at the IWK are now down; reality is that we have funded a forensic centre for youth at Waterville; we have given \$146,000 in consumer-led grants; given \$1 million in new community grants; expanded the Strongest Families program - we are actually implementing a mental health strategy, something that when the Liberals were in power they never gave a thought to.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

JUSTICE - SEXUAL ASSAULTS: CHARGES - RESOURCES

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, in Nova Scotia the proportion of sexual assaults that resulted in charges being laid declined from 56 per cent to 30 per cent. At 30 per cent, Nova Scotia had the lowest proportion of sexual assaults that resulted in the laying of a charge in all of Canada. Since that time the stats have not improved enough and another variable for sexual assault has entered the picture - the expansion of social media and mobile phones. With the lowest proportion of sexual assaults resulting in charges in the country and with the challenges posed by the Internet and mobile phones, what resources has the Minister of Justice provided police in Nova Scotia to address this pressing issue?

HON ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that question. The issue of violence in our society is something that we can't accept or tolerate in any form. The Department of Justice takes this matter very seriously and we're working very diligently with a variety of partners and interests to address this issue which is a very complex matter and affects the province on many different levels. We have a number of initiatives going forward across the province.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I asked the minister for specific initiatives provided to police and, obviously, from that answer we haven't heard of any. Young women and girls are at the highest risk for sexual assault. Young people are also highly active on social media, Internet and mobile applications - 44 per cent of those who experience sexual assault are between the ages of 15 and 24, and 24 per cent between the ages of 25 and 34. This is the same group which is the most active on the Internet, so, again, my question is, what training specific to Internet crime is the Minister of Justice ensuring our police have in Nova Scotia?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, police services across Nova Scotia are adequately funded and they have their budgets and they set their priorities on training. I know from my previous life that that's an issue that's continual in the training and bringing the young officers into the current investigative standards. There are mentoring processes within the policing universe, and any time the police come forward with any request to look at how to improve those services, our office is always open to listen and to support and to provide that collaboration.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, every year the Justice Minister under-spends funds budgeted for a contribution to municipal policing. Every year the Justice Minister substantially under-spends the funds budgeted for municipal police training.

Mr. Speaker, we have the highest rates of sexual assaults combined with the lowest conviction rates. Often the damage done by sexual assault continues through harassment through the Internet and well after the initial crime. Police need the proper resources to have an on-line presence to combat Internet crime.

Mr. Speaker, instead of viewing these funds as a line item to cut, will the Minister of Justice ensure that our police forces receive proper funding and training this year, when it comes to Internet crime?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, thank you for that question. I want to assure the member that the police management has adequate budgets and funding to do their training. They set their priorities, they usually set it a year or so in advance and then lay that out. There's also continued education within the policing community for officers to take additional academic training, which we support in many different forms.

I'm very confident that there is sufficient funding there, but should there be an identity where there's a gap or a deficiency, I'd be more than glad to look at that.

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

PREM.: MUSKRAT FALLS PROJ. - STATUS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, in a recent Cape Breton Post editorial board meeting about Muskrat Falls, the Premier said, "People, I think, may think that it has to do with a UARB hearing. But that project is going ahead and the only question is how that's going to happen," - and I'll table that quote for the Premier's benefit.

The problem is, Mr. Speaker, the Premier doesn't know how much the project will cost when it gets to our homes and businesses. All Nova Scotians have said they can't afford to pay more and more for power.

I will ask the question, in light of his comments to the Cape Breton Post, will he now admit that he made up his mind long ago that that project was going ahead, regardless of how much it cost Nova Scotians?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that this project is going ahead. It has been committed to by the partners. It is one that is not only - and this is one of the major problems for the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party - it is not just about electricity rates, it is going to deliver. Every report on it has said the same thing. Stable, long-term rates, in fact, account for a very minor increase in the first few years and then actually a decline in the cost that is going to be beneficial to the people of Nova Scotia.

It is also about building a regional energy network. It is about ensuring that we, for generations, have access to a competitive market outside of Nova Scotia. It is about ensuring that the hundreds and thousands of jobs that will come along as a result of the Muskrat Falls accrue to the benefit of the Province of Nova Scotia. That is what it's about.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier says that that project has been committed to by its partners but what he forgets is that he too, as the Leader of the government, is a partner, not there to represent the shareholders of Emera, not there to represent all the corporate interests, he is supposed to be there as a partner to represent all the people of Nova Scotia who ultimately pay the bills. He made up his mind a long time ago that that project would go ahead. He just said it again here this afternoon, regardless of how much it costs when it gets to our homes.

Mr. Speaker, he took away the URB's ability to set their own timeline for the review. He refuses to allow it to be compared to every other option that could be explored to the benefit of the people of Nova Scotia. He even allowed Emera to begin work on the project by commissioning it before the review has even happened. So I will ask the Premier, why does he continue to stand as a partner with Emera instead of standing up for the people of Nova Scotia who ultimately have to pay the bill?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party is right about, I guess, 1 per cent of that, which is that I'm here to represent the people of Nova Scotia and that is exactly what I am doing.

There is no credible evidence to the contrary of the Dalton report, which sets out what the obvious advantages are, to the people of Nova Scotia, of the Muskrat Falls project. What it will mean to Nova Scotia is the fairest, lowest rates for the ratepayers. It means that thousands of jobs will be created that will benefit Nova Scotians. It means that people in Cape Breton will have access to low-cost power, which will be able to support industry.

What it will mean, Mr. Speaker, is that we will have access to a competitive market throughout the region. This is about the economic activity for the province, something we are proud of. I have to say, that is what standing up for the citizens of Nova Scotia really looks like.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, as long as our power rates go up and up, there is plenty of credible evidence that the Premier is not standing up for the people of Nova Scotia, who pay those bills. His policy for three years has forced power rates up by over 30 per cent. Muskrat Falls, by his own government's admission, will continue to add to the price of power in this province.

Families and seniors, people on fixed incomes, people with no other means - they are the ones who are paying the bill, so I'll ask the Premier, how does he suggest to all of those people that they pay for the ever-increasing cost of electricity?

THE PREMIER: Well, the first positive thing that the people of Nova Scotia did was get rid of the former government, because they were the ones who put in place the policies that led to the increase in power rates. We inherited all of that public policy from the Progressive Conservative Party. The people of Nova Scotia gave us a mandate to fix it, and we are. We're the ones who took the tax off home energy, to the benefit of all Nova Scotians. That was this government, after the Progressive Conservatives and their co-conspirators in the Liberal Party decided to vote to put it back on.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

EECD - CYBERBULLYING TASK FORCE: RECOMMENDATIONS - RESPONSE

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, the cyberbullying task force appointed by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development presented the report to the minister in February 2012, after nine months of deliberation and hard work. The task force had recommendations that allow for both immediate and long-term planning.

One of those recommendations spoke directly to the Criminal Code, so my question to the minister is, why did the minister not address and respond positively to that recommendation when she received the report last February?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to ask the lead of the committee on our response to the cyberbullying task force, the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, as members in this Chamber may be aware, a certain number of the recommendations from the task force were adopted. Others are in development and under review.

I had the pleasure of meeting with the former chairman of that task force just yesterday, and had an opportunity to get further information on some of the priority areas. I certainly value Professor MacKay's input.

You may be aware that the Minister of Justice is travelling next week to Ottawa to meet with his federal colleagues, and this issue will be on the agenda. Many of the laws and regulations regarding the Internet and cyberbullying rest with the federal government, and we want to work in partnership. There's strong interest on both sides in moving forward on any improvements that there need to be in legislation. Thank you.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I guess what most of us assumed, we now know: that that file has been taken from the minister due to her incompetence.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Recommendation 44 states, "It is recommended that the provincial Minister of Justice make representations to the federal Minister of Justice about evaluating the effectiveness of current Criminal Code provisions in responding to bullying and cyberbullying and exploring the pros and cons of a distinct crime of bullying and cyberbullying."

The minister has missed many opportunities to respond. This would be the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development who had that file. The minister had an opportunity with Bill No. 30, which she introduced in April 2012. She had another opportunity with Bill No. 102, which she introduced in October 2012, and both bills were silent on Recommendation 44.

The Law Amendments Committee had a third and a fourth opportunity, in May 2012 and again in November 2012, to adopt changes that spoke directly to Recommendation 44 and those changes were supported by Dr. Wayne MacKay, chairman of the task force, and he was present at Law Amendments Committee. Government members of Law Amendments Committee defeated those amendments so my question to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is, why has the minister

allowed 14 months to pass by without acting on a recommendation that was brought to her task force, supported by the members, including the chairman?

MS. JENNEX: Before I would ask the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, I would like to say that it seems to me that there is some misunderstanding on how process works because we did bring forward many amendments and many foundational pieces related to the cyberbullying task force, but we are also working with ministers from across Canada, and I know that the Minister of Justice is working with his ministers. There is a lot of ongoing work that has been undertaken by this government, working with other ministers and I would just, with your permission, ask the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women to elaborate if needed.

HON. MARILYN MORE: I want to reaffirm what the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development has said. This area is one where the lead has been taken by the Department of Justice and, certainly, I know my colleague has been in ongoing discussions with his federal colleagues on this and so he will be continuing those discussions, and hopefully leading to action when he goes to Ottawa next week. But you have to be aware that some of the recommendations in the task force report actually applied to other departments of government besides Education and so this has been a cross-departmental initiative in terms of following up and doing the necessary research and preparation to move forward on more of the recommendations.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, 14 months, two NDP bills, and after being under extreme public pressure, the Minister of Justice now has contacted his federal counterpart to schedule a meeting and this is to discuss Recommendation 44, which could have been part of Bill No. 30, could have been part of Bill No. 102, it could have been part of the amendments, but the current Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development turned a blind eye to what she should have been doing.

My question to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is, will the minister now acknowledge that she has failed her own task force, she has failed its members, she has failed the students of this province, and she has failed to show leadership on a file that has now been taken away?

MS. JENNEX: Bullying and cyberbullying are very complex and heartbreaking situations. This is the government that stepped forward to meet this head-on by naming the task force on cyberbullying and we have put many things in place; we have an action plan. This is a very complex situation we are working through. You know, Mr. Speaker, this government is going to do everything it possibly can to stop this insidious situation of bullying and cyberbullying, unlike the member opposite when she was the minister who ignored it.

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

EECD - SCH. REVIEW SUSPENSION: SCH. BDS. - RESPONSE

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development told CBC that she has received positive reviews on her request for school boards across the province to put brakes on any plans to close school boards or debate their futures, and I'll table that. The minister couldn't have had it more wrong. We have spoken to the Nova Scotia School Boards Association and we know that for a fact not one single school board is in support of the minister's poorly-timed, poorly-planned request. So my question to the minister is, how could the minister be so far out of touch with every single school board in the province?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I have just had a meeting with every single school board in the province over the last number of weeks and I don't know how to respond to this comment that I'm out of touch with the school boards, because even as of noon today I was speaking with a school board chairman - and I've spoken with four of them over the last week. The chairmen that I'm speaking of are very positive about putting a halt to the review process, to find a better way forward.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is the minister made her politically charged announcement just two days after the schools were to have finalized decisions on closures. The school boards see through it. Many are worried that if they do not accept the minister's request because the budgets have been squeezed too far, then communities will put the blame on them. The minister knows full well her request was a stunt to shift the blame elsewhere.

My question to the minister is, what does the minister say to school boards who will simply be unable to meet her request?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I respect the work that the school boards do around the review process, and I heard back from every school board that the review process was problematic. We'll have continued dialogue with our school boards and I look forward to, when the House rises, meeting our school board members, every single one of them, again, because I know that they have suggestions on how we can move forward in a positive way so that school reviews are much more collaborative and holistic, instead of being adversarial as they are now.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, we know a redrafting of the school review process is needed and welcomed by school boards. This does not mean that they can support the untimely request to free future plans - they are two problems that are independent of one another. The minister told the reporters that schools could find money elsewhere to keep the schools open this year. She cited emergency repair money and the increases to per-student funding. My question to the minister is, does the minister expect the school boards to use funding for student classroom education to meet her impossible request?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, my request is I have asked for a suspension of the school review process, which other governments have asked in the past. This is a process that we've inherited over the last number of years from the 1990s, when a review process was put in place by the Liberals and has continued on through the Progressive Conservative Government. We are asking at this time to have another look at this using all of our government departments that have a vested interest in providing appropriate and strong education for our children. This process we're looking forward to is working with our school boards, with the UNSM, with Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, with Community Services, anyone who has a vested interest in our students. We want to have another model that is going to meet the needs of our rural communities, and making sure that the school does remain at the heart of the community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

ENVIRON. - SEWER SYSTEMS: FRACKING WASTE - PROCESSING

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment. With the results of the hydraulic fracking review still quite some time away Nova Scotians are increasingly concerned about the amount of fracking waste water that has been discharged into sewer systems in our province. The minister, as a former municipal politician, I am sure is aware the Municipal Government Act prohibits the discharge of harmful and radioactive substances into municipal sewer systems that exceed limits set by the municipality, or substances which require special treatment beyond dilution to make them less hazardous - and I will table that part of the Act.

It is widely known and acknowledged by his own department recently that sewer systems in Nova Scotia are now accepting fracking waste both from in Nova Scotia and from imported fracking waste, yet it is also widely acknowledged by engineers in the province that there is no system in the province that was actually ever designed to handle fracking waste.

My question for the minister is, why is the minister allowing fracking waste water, including imported waste, to be processed in Nova Scotia sewer systems?

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite I want to first of all point out that this present government is not allowing any fracking in Nova Scotia. What we're dealing with is a situation, the previous government creates a mess, the Opposition, the Liberals asked a question and we're left to clean it up and that's exactly what we're doing.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure there is any Nova Scotian who knows what that answer meant. The minister is fully aware that his government actually fought against the moratorium on fracking. This caucus actually introduced a bill to put a moratorium for review. They fought that for a year before finally agreeing to it. We're happy they agreed but this question is actually about the disposal of waste.

This minister is allowing fracking waste from New Brunswick to be imported into Nova Scotia and disposed of here. He's allowing fracking waste from fracking sites that were permitted by the previous Tory government to be disposed of here, without proper testing. Mr. Speaker, his department refuses to release the testing protocol or the results of those tests. Will the minister today table a comprehensive list of everything the fracking waste water is being tested for, before and after processing, and will he release the results of those tests of all the fracking waste processed in the province?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member opposite for raising the question. This is certainly a serious issue we are dealing with, and I want to point out again, this is a leftover situation from the previous government. We have introduced a study on fracking, which is going out in review in other jurisdictions, and that study will be complete in 2014. We take this issue very seriously and the situation that the member opposite is talking about is something that we're deeply concerned about. I can assure you that it poses a very low risk to Nova Scotians and the company I've been talking about has been reduced to the levels of the norms. It's below the federal regulations.

We are actually monitoring this particular situation. We have introduced a study regarding fracking and I have visited different communities that have taken this very seriously and we're doing the right thing, unlike the members opposite that can raise a question, the other Opposition Party introduced the situation, and we are here taking this very seriously and we are going to clean up the Opposition's mess.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the minister has one talking point, that's for sure, and it doesn't even apply to this situation. The fact is, we're talking about imported fracking waste, which has only ever been permitted in this province under this minister, only ever been permitted under this minister, in the disposal of sewer systems in Nova Scotia and all we're asking is for that minister to release the testing protocol, which his department refuses to do, and to release the results of those tests. If he has nothing to hide, he should agree now to release the testing protocol and the results of those tests.

Maybe the minister would like to answer why he won't halt the importation of fracking waste into this province?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I want to say thank you again to the member opposite. I want to assure you again, this particular situation has been sitting in ponds in Nova Scotia since 2008. We are dealing with an issue that the previous government had failed to recognize, that's why we introduced a review on fracking. We understand the concerns of the communities and residents across Nova Scotia, and in a very short 1,500 days this department, this government has - what we have done, we've been recognized in Copenhagen on the environment. We've been recognized by the David Suzuki Foundation. We have been recognized by the hunters and anglers across Nova Scotia for our environmental work - and guess what? The fishermen I represent recognize our environmental protection on Georges Bank, something the previous government over there failed to do in 30 years. Have a nice day.

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

EECD: CHILD CARE CTRS. - FUNDING MODEL

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, for a third time, if there are any plans to change the funding model for private and non-profit daycare centres in the province. The minister refused to answer my question, so I'll try once more in the simplest of forms. My question through you to the minister is, are there plans to change the funding model for child care centres in this province - yes or no?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I will answer the question, again, and I will be very clear - we are forming a partnership with the sector as we move forward through the issues of affordability, accessibility, wages, and working conditions.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, it was during the press conference the Minister of Community Services held with CUPE in December 2011, that kick-started the rumours and the flip-flopping of plans for funding child care centres. Today we see a letter to the editor in the Cape Breton Post, submitted by CUPE president Danny Cavanagh, applauding the minister and saying her future announcements on regulated child care and wages were encouraging - and I'll table that.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it looks like the cat is out of the bag, so my question through you to the minister is, what changes is her department planning to make with regard to funding regulated child care centres?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I will answer this again - we are forming a partnership to work together to work through the issues of accessibility, affordability, and wages.

MR. BAIN: You know, Mr. Speaker, the hints are impossible to ignore, this NDP Government has flip-flopped nine times on this issue of child care funding and they've shown an absolute disregard for the families and child care operators who have been left in the dark and patiently waiting an answer.

People can't wait any longer, Mr. Speaker, so will the minister please be upfront and table her department's plans for the future of regulated child care in this province?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, I have to say that all across Nova Scotia people are recognizing that we are going to be looking at our early years much differently - we are having a philosophical shift on how we take care of our youngest, from birth up to the time that they go to school. We have launched our approach, we are going to be integrating our programs and services within the department, it is now the Department of Early Childhood Development. We are establishing three Early Years Centres and we are developing a comprehensive 18-month and 36-month visit.

As I said, and I will repeat, we are going to be forming a partnership with the sector as we move forward through accessibility, affordability, and wages.

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

FIN. - U-VINT/U-BREW: LEGISLATION - TIME FRAME

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

When the NDP Government spent \$30,000 to try to shut down u-vints and u-brew operators back in January, the people of Nova Scotia spoke up. This was an attack on small business and an unnecessary encroachment on business which supports Nova Scotians who enjoy the hobby of brewing their own wine and beer.

After the public outcry, the Minister of Justice indicated that new regulations would be coming this Spring. My question for the minister, Mr. Speaker, we are now fully into the Spring session of the Legislature so I would ask the minister responsible, the Minister of Finance, when can Nova Scotians expect legislation which will allow u-vint and u-brew operations in Nova Scotia?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Yes, this government listened to the people of Nova Scotia who wanted a change in the liquor regulations. We are now looking at the various options, based on what exists in other provinces. Subsequent to the gathering of that information, there will be a consultation. The consultation will give the industry and the public an opportunity for input and, from that, we will see regulations brought forward.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, if the NDP is confused over the issue or can't find the time to draft the legislation, they need look no further than the order paper that has two Liberal bills which would address your problem.

After initially giving exceptional powers to the NSLC to crack down on the small businesses in Nova Scotia, the NDP have now put a hold on further injunctions. That's good news, but, Mr. Speaker, the people in this business don't have anything in writing that would show that, would support that, and so I would ask the minister, since she's already gone through some of the steps she intends to take, I would like to ask her why she is not keeping to the promise of bringing in legislation this Spring.

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: I made no commitment to bring legislation or regulations to this Legislature in the Spring. What I did make a commitment to is to gather information from other jurisdictions and do a consultation. The regulations that we will bring forward, Mr. Speaker, will be a made-in Nova Scotia solution for this issue and it requires a certain amount of background work. Staff are now undertaking that work. We do things in a proper way and we will follow through on this when the work is completed and not before.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, this particular piece of legislation is not rocket science. A lot of effort obviously went into coming up with the injunctions, a lot of effort went into the bill you brought here a year ago - that the NDP Government brought here a year ago - to give exceptional powers to the NSLC so that they could crack down on these little businesses, so it doesn't require extensive time now.

I would hazard a guess that the people in the Department of Finance have a lot of background and experience on this file and they don't need to go back and take an exorbitant amount of time to renew it, or review it again. Mr. Speaker, there is an urgency among the business community to see this resolved, to see legislation in place that makes it clear that they will not be further harassed by the government of Nova Scotia, and I would ask the minister if she will please look at this with some urgency and give us some sense, today, that she is committed to legislation this Spring or sooner than she is saying.

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: As I indicated, we will take our time to bring in regulation that is appropriate for this particular industry and for the consumer. I can assure the honourable member that when the consultation is ready, we will inform her and her Party so they can participate.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

ENVIRON. - BRIGADOON: LANDS - PROTECT

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, a couple of years ago I tried this question with the Minister of Natural Resources, but I'm going to go to the Minister of Environment with the question. I don't expect much, but I'm going to go there anyway. Brigadoon is a world-class facility and it provides a wonderful camping experience for chronically ill children. Protecting these lands will ensure the area remains pristine, allowing future generations of Brigadoon campers the opportunity to enjoy this natural landscape. The surrounding lands are owned by Wagner's and we know their practices in our province. My question to the Minister of the Environment is, in the upcoming protected areas consultations will the minister give serious consideration to protecting the lands next to Brigadoon?

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Thank you very much to the member opposite and thank you for the question. Regarding 12 per cent is something that I think a lot of Nova Scotians really appreciate but I can tell you this particular land is in private hands and there is a very elaborate consultation going on. We're always looking for the jewels across Nova Scotia where we can pass this legacy on to future generations. I know that a lot of people in this House - I believe all members have endorsed EGSPA and this is part of EGSPA that surpassed 12 per cent. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, through you to the member opposite we're going to surpass that goal and we're constantly reviewing this and I'm very privileged to talk about this question, thank you.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, there has never been a more timely opportunity for government to act and consider a buffer zone between Brigadoon and lands nearby that could be harvested. Fancy Cove, itself, has a number of natural features that give it high ranking for protection, and with the Brigadoon property nearby it would be a great candidate for protection. Will the minister commit today to making sure the land near Brigadoon is considered for protection?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the 12 per cent land. Again, all of these particular candidates have been considered. I want to emphasize that particular portion of land is in private hands and there are ongoing discussions and consultations across Nova Scotia as we speak. This is a really important process and again, this is a legacy that we can all pass on to our future generations and this is an important question, but again, I want to emphasize that this is private lands and there are ongoing discussions. Thank you.

MR. GLAVINE: I know using the 12 per cent is really, in this case, an easy out. This is a special area around Brigadoon, we want to keep it as a top, world-class facility, and the protection of those lands is inherent in keeping it in that state. My final question to the minister is, how soon will the people associated with Brigadoon and the neighbouring lands know whether the land is being at least considered for protection?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, this is a very important process and a lot of Nova Scotians, different interest groups are being consulted as we speak. Yes, all the Parties in this House agreed to EGSPA in this particular goal of reaching 12 per cent. Again, I want to emphasize that we do such a good job that we're going to surpass that goal. We take this very seriously and I want to point out that this is a legacy that we can pass on to future generations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

ENERGY: HOSPITALS - ENERGY POLICY

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy. Last week at Public Accounts Committee we learned that even the government's own hospitals are fleeing this government's energy-policy-driven, high power rates. Hospitals are now looking at converting to use natural gas which could be trucked in as an alternative to Nova Scotia Power because it is so much cheaper. Is this not proof enough for this government that it must change its policy to make power rates affordable for the rest of us who have no choice, but Nova Scotia Power?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Mr. Speaker, we're in a very fortunate position in Nova Scotia that we are diversifying our energy market, and certainly natural gas is an important part of that. As you may know from our estimates discussions yesterday, honourable member, we talked about the natural gas study that's being done, we're really

looking at the whole landscape of natural gas in Pictou County on both supply and demand, pipeline access, and the future potential for natural gas in this province.

You mentioned hospitals. Just last week we announced, of course, natural gas is being expanded into Pictou County, and the Aberdeen Hospital will be one of the beneficiaries of that project, as well as local businesses, community colleges, and the residents in time. It's a real benefit to Nova Scotia to have natural gas. Thank you.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the minister agrees with that, but we want to make sure that he recognizes the energy policy he's advocating is actually increasing the power rates through Nova Scotia Power. I want to mention something: this government came to power with the promise that it would make life more affordable for Nova Scotians. I say, what good is taking 15 per cent HST off energy rates when power rates have actually gone up 15 per cent above the national average. In fact, power rates have gone up over 40 per cent since this government has taken power. Companies like Michelin, who I might add don't get rewarded for fancy political statements but get rewarded for saving money on power bills, they are moving to natural gas because they don't want to pay the power rates of this government either. My question to this minister is, when will this government change its mandate to include energy affordability?

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: This has been a very eventful session of the Legislature, and there has been a lot of discussion about a lot of different things. What I've found to be particularly interesting about this session, Mr. Speaker, unlike previous sessions, is the focus that the government, and in some cases the Third Party, is putting on

the Nova Scotia Liberal caucus. I think that has been something that a lot of people are curious about.

We have members of the government standing up on a daily basis and railing against the Nova Scotia Liberal Party, reminding us of all the terrible governments in the past and how any government that didn't have an NDP stripe was clearly terrible. They focused their attacks on this caucus and on previous Liberal and Progressive Conservative Governments that have sat in this Legislature.

I think the reason why that's happening is pretty clear, Mr. Speaker. It is because the government knows where their competition is coming from right now, as does the Third Party, and they do fear what is taking place in the minds of Nova Scotians. Nova Scotians are, and have been over the course of the last year, looking for an alternative to this government - who seems to have lost favour with them for now. Things can change, but that is particularly why I think this government is focusing its guns on us.

The approach has been a peculiar one. It has first been to attack every single Liberal and Progressive Conservative Government that ever sat in this Chamber and governed the province, and that's 250 years' worth of governments. It has been curious to see this NDP world view expressed so forcefully in the Legislature, whereby the history of Nova Scotia has just been leading up to this moment where the NDP has finally gotten rid of the other two terrible Parties of the past and can now set the stage right for the future and turn this big, wonderful corner.

It is disingenuous at best to have that view and, at worst, it is delusional. If the members opposite actually believe that story, we have bigger problems in this Chamber than just the decisions that this government is making.

This government has resorted to mud-slinging, which is probably unparalleled in the majority of governments that have been sitting in recent years, since I've been paying attention to politics. I really do think that this current NDP Government has brought the level of debate and criticism to a new low - not just in this Legislature but in the advertisements that their Party is paying for outside this Legislature, in letters to the editor that they are sending out all over the province, when the media doesn't pick up on some of the stuff that they're saying.

I think it has been a tactic of throwing as much mud as you can and seeing what sticks. At first they called the Opposition Party job killers - ridiculous. You have a caucus of 13 people in a 52-person House of Assembly with a majority NDP Government. We're losing jobs, and the only excuse that the government can come up with is oh, well, it's the Opposition Party, because they're job killers and they're driving jobs out of the Province of Nova Scotia. It makes sense, eh? Every Nova Scotian listening to that ridiculousness, if they think they're going to believe it, I mean, they're living in a different world.

You have the Premier standing up and saying, oh, the Opposition are job killers, and that's why we're in such a bad economic state right now, when everybody who is paying attention to politics and is paying attention to what happens in this Chamber knows that the NDP has a majority government, and an Opposition Party in a majority situation cannot have any impact, tangibly, on the outcomes of the province, unless allowed by a majority government.

It has been absolutely ridiculous to sit here in this Chamber and listen to a lot of the accusations and misrepresentations that have been levelled at the Liberal caucus in particular. I was especially surprised when I saw the member for Timberlea-Prospect's name on a letter to the editor. It wasn't a good letter, and the member knows how disingenuous that letter was. I'm sorry, but I think for someone of that member's reputation and the respect that he has commanded in this Chamber, to put his name on such a letter is shameful. (Interruptions)

The fact of the matter is - and we have a response to that letter as well. I'll table that response to that letter to the president of the provincial Party who has taken it upon himself to respond.

Here's the situation around this. The NDP is so fearful and worried because Liberals have been fundraising more money than them that we've been able to pay for communications that they start trying to attack the Party because we have that money. And in so doing, they don't realize that they're attacking all the Nova Scotians who have contributed to our Party and who are investing in an alternative to this government. I think it's a shameful display and it's pitiful - what isn't pitiful about what this government has been attacking us on? It's absolutely ridiculous.

You have a Minister of Finance who stands up - and this level of dishonesty permeates this Party, Mr. Speaker, and it's true - you have a Minister of Finance who stands in front of a chamber of commerce and says we are supporting small businesses by lowering the small business tax by half a percentage point. Yay, the NDP loves small business. What that minister didn't tell the chamber is that the NDP also lowered the tax threshold so that more small businesses will be paying higher taxes because they are now in a different tax bracket.

I wonder why the Minister of Finance didn't mention that to the chamber. If this is a government that prides itself on honesty and fair representation of the facts, why didn't the Minister of Finance tell the chamber what she was doing to the tax threshold which would impact hundreds of small businesses, if not more, across the province?

Why wouldn't she tell that if she were presenting an honest portrayal of what was happening? There hasn't been an honest portrayal from this government. Let's look at the power issue, which is on the minds of every single Nova Scotian who gets a power bill. Under the NDP, power has gone up over 30 per cent . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Over 40.

MR. CHURCHILL: Over 40 per cent now, I'm told. We'll say 30 to 40 per cent. I would challenge if any member opposite doesn't think power has gone up that much they can stand in their place and explain that to Nova Scotians who have seen a 30 to 40 per cent increase in their power bills. On top of that, this government has put a DSM surcharge on everybody's power bill - that's another \$46 million-plus coming out of the pockets of Nova Scotians to fund Efficiency Nova Scotia.

Let's look at what has happened. The HST, the Minister of Health and Wellness brought up the HST. We all know what happened with the HST. This government promised and got elected on a commitment that they wouldn't raise the HST. I know the Premier was in Yarmouth in Tim Hortons talking to some folks who voted NDP - who are now supporters of mine - telling them we won't raise taxes, the NDP will not raise taxes - and the first thing they do when they get in, they raise taxes.

There has been a consistent effort to mislead Nova Scotians on the facts. Let's look at the attacks that the Premier and his colleagues have levelled against us around power. (Interruption) And the Premier still says it's all true. I'm telling you, if he believes that, we have a bigger problem in One Government Place.

The first platform plank that we released is that we would go after Nova Scotia Power's monopoly, break the monopoly and bring some competition to the marketplace which, surprisingly enough, the Progressive Conservatives don't support that and I don't understand why you think out of any Party, other than the Liberals, it would be the Progressive Conservatives that would support competition in the marketplace. But that's a story for another day.

But because this government doesn't have a record or a leg to stand on when it comes to what they've done for power rates in the country in addressing the problem that we have, and that's Nova Scotia Power's monopoly, they have made up this narrative that the Liberals are in bed with Hydro-Québec.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. CHURCHILL: Hear, hear - they are.

What the Premier doesn't tell the public is that we currently buy, in the Province of Nova Scotia, power from Hydro-Québec. We've never attacked them on that. What he doesn't tell you is what our position has actually been when it comes to Muskrat Falls - we might support this project if we just had answers to some of the questions that Nova Scotians are asking - concerned Nova Scotians. This Premier and this caucus are putting us into a 35-year-plus contract, or deal, with Emera. We're not going to own the assets once it's completed; we'll get maybe 20 per cent of the energy that's produced from it; we don't know how much it's going to cost; and we don't know how it's going to impact power bills,

other than it's going to go up in the first number of years, and all we're saying is - ask. Ask what other sources of energy are out there and see if there's a cheaper one. So they spent money on a Dalton report, a report that has been laughed at in the public because it's so pro-Emera it's ridiculous, and didn't even look at the costs of getting power from Quebec, or looking at natural gas.

Now, how can you say you've looked at all the facts, Mr. Speaker, when you didn't answer those two critical questions when it comes to power generation in the Province of Nova Scotia? Another thing we don't know is if we actually even need all the power that is being generated from Muskrat Falls. We have some people in the sector who are saying we don't need all that power. It's more power than we actually consume.

It's simply the fact that these questions haven't been answered, which is why we're hesitant about signing off on this deal. And it's normal. Signing ourselves onto a 35-year deal without knowing the answers to any of these questions that are relevant to Nova Scotians, including the impact on their power rates, I think is absolutely short-sighted, for the time being. At least give the URB time to look at this situation and help answer some of these questions, and they haven't done that.

You know, the mudslinging has gotten so bad on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker, that we even have the NDP attacking our Leader, because he was a small-business owner and a repairman. And we've had other people in the Third Party attack him as well. I think that is one of the most shameful attacks that have been levelled against this Party by those folks over there. And I think, after we have suffered through the arrogance of the last three years it's time we have a Nova Scotian lead this province with humble beginnings. If you look at what an actual repairman does, even though members opposite have laughed at his chosen profession before this, a repairman looks at a problem that needs to be fixed, and figures out how to do it. And I'll tell you, after the mess that this Party leaves this province of Nova Scotia, we're going to need someone who can repair things in One Government Place. We're going to get someone who can repair things.

This government - everything they have touched has turned to ash, and they still say that they are winning at every turn. Bowater, they mishandled that. We lost \$25 billion and the company left, a mere five months after this government said it was going to be there for five years. Daewoo, we were told there was going to be - how many jobs? - 500 jobs, 15 people working there now. They have told us - Bowater, back to Bowater, they said they were going to save 2,000 jobs on the South Shore. Five years later, the company is gone. (Interruption) Five months later, the company's gone - it was supposed to be - you know, it didn't even last for five years.

Let's look at jobs in general. You know, this government doesn't know how to create jobs or address the fundamentals to make our province competitive, like looking at how we tax, looking at power rates, looking at gas prices, the things that would actually help us recruit industry and encourage small business growth here. So they tried to buy jobs. That is their strategy, to buy jobs with big cheques to big companies. Six companies

received over, or close to, \$600 million from this government. (Interruption) That's not true, for God's sake. The Premier - that's all he can say is things aren't true when they are.

It's absolutely absurd, \$600 million going to six different companies, and how many jobs did we get out of that? There were 1,300 layoffs - 1,300 layoffs - fewer jobs than before. You know, we've had one month where there was job growth in the last three years, or a few months, but if you look at the job growth, over the course of the last four years, since they've been in, it hasn't been here. And these guys have promised 2,000 jobs a year, Mr. Speaker, it's not happening. Instead of actually focusing and bearing down on the issues, trying to do a good job, and being honest about what's taking place, they decide to mudsling, mislead Nova Scotians on what the positions of this Party are, and attack every other single government that has ever been in this Legislature in history. It's absolutely ridiculous, but I know at the end of the day, the only people it is going to hurt are them. So thank you very much and I'll look forward to the next time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton North on an introduction.

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce a few young lads from North Sydney who came to Halifax today with my beautiful wife, Jane Orrell, to see a concert this evening. If they would stand as I introduce them: Eddie Power, my son Bryden Orrell, Bryce Kehoe, Sam Maxwell, Brennan Herridge and Jordan MacDougall. They are all up to see a concert in Halifax tonight and I'd like to welcome them to the Legislature and have all the members welcome them as well. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk on a topic that is very important and interesting to me and to the people I represent. I think before I do that, I want to talk a little bit about yesterday and the honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

It is interesting that she offers no specific defence of her own Leader's judgment on many financial issues. I'm sure she would not have addressed those issues that way if she were in the leadership position. Instead, she likes to talk about what others earned, what they have earned over several years, but she likes to lump it into one lump.

With respect, that doesn't address what she was called upon to defend, and she didn't. It was a distraction. As well, the honourable member forgets that many public servants, including herself and her Leader, have been paid and reimbursed over several years for expenses that they incurred. I doubt that she really wants that debate to be around here for a long time.

The real point is that Nova Scotians will scrutinize their choices carefully. They will look for real experience and skilled judgment. Flaws in that judgment over a major decision, as was faced by her Party's leadership, are relevant, so it's whether someone brings relevant experience to the table, experience that can lead this province out of the serious mess that shows up in these estimates and shows up in the economic pain felt by Nova Scotian families.

In Cape Breton, there are 4,300 people who aren't employed, 4,300 more unemployed. There are 4,700 fewer full-time jobs and 1,100 people have left Cape Breton to find work in another area. We have an unemployment rate of 18.6 per cent. It's hard to be excited about numbers like that.

We look at these young men who have been just introduced to us here in the gallery, coming from Cape Breton Island, and we ask the question, will they be able to stay there? Will they be able to have a life on Cape Breton Island and will they be able to find work and have a family? We really hope that will be the case because, Mr. Speaker, as you probably agree, there is no finer place to live than on Cape Breton Island.

This will be another very expensive year for Nova Scotian families because our economy is off balance. This government has taken \$1,000 out of every Nova Scotian pocket, by raising the HST. Then when we look at this new budget, this balanced budget, a budget that is going to be balanced, they say, because they are going to get higher amounts paid by personal income tax. Now when you have 1,100 fewer people living on an island, when you have 4,300 more people unemployed than were there before, and a large segment of our population who happen to be on fixed incomes, I would like that government to explain how those people are going to be able to pay more income tax and help balance this budget that they claimed is balanced.

I don't think that can be done, and I think that's a shame, that the smoke and mirrors that are being used (Interruption) We finally got the Premier willing to talk about what's going on. Never will he do it during Question Period. He always wants to take the opportunity to do it when he hasn't got the opportunity to speak.

You know, Mr. Speaker, this budget does not create one single job for anybody in Nova Scotia - not one job. The people here are struggling with unemployment. They're struggling right from one end of the province to the other, and why? Because of the policies that that government and that Premier have put in place for this island and this province.

There is no plan for future growth and prosperity for our province. As a matter of fact, this budget will take another \$300 out of everybody's pocket - another \$300. Mr. Speaker, do you know that since this government came into place they've received 26 per cent more in transfer payments than the Hamm Government, the former Progressive Conservative Government, did? They received 26 per cent more. They raised the HST by two per cent, and yet we have the highest power rates and the highest unemployment, and no real jobs being saved. It is no wonder that people who live in the rural parts of this

province and those who live in Cape Breton are concerned about where we're going and how we're going to get there.

Then we have an opportunity. We had leadership shown by the new mayor and council of the CBRM who came forward with a plan - a plan to help the second-largest economic growth centre in this province to grow. And what kind of a commitment did we see in the budget? None. There has not been any commitment.

Now, the chamber of commerce came out in favour of what's taking place. The CBCEDA - the economic development authority in the area - has come out in favour of what the mayor and the council have put forward. Many people in the community have said that they want this to come forward. As a matter of fact, the day after the budget, the Minister of Finance was there, and she told people what was going on, but a week later the mayor was there and he had twice as many people out to listen to his plan, because it was a real plan that meant real activity to take place in the area. What has this government done in the budget? They haven't supported it. They decided that they want to take more money out of our pocket, but they have not decided to support it.

Many times in this House we've asked questions of this government as to what they're going to do, what's the plan, and they always come back with, we have a plan, and jobs start here, we're going to move forward. But it hasn't happened, and then in the Speech from the Throne we hear that we've turned a corner, we actually turned the corner. You know, that was exciting, and I was getting to the point where I was hoping that that was true. I really believe that every member in this House is trying to do the best they can for the people that they represent, and that they do want to see the Province of Nova Scotia move forward. So they turned a corner, but when the people of Cape Breton turned the corner they ran into a brick wall - a brick wall that was led by the Premier of this province. A brick wall that has been put in place, and that he refuses to remove.

When you form a government in this province, it is supposed to be for all Nova Scotians, from one end to the other, but when we look at how they treated Yarmouth when it came to the ferry, and how they've treated other parts of the province - they stand in this House and they claim and they rave about all they've done for the mill in Port Hawkesbury. They have done a lot, but did you know, if you talk to the contractors who are supplying wood, who were wood suppliers, that that mill will not buy the wood from anybody in Cape Breton County. They take their wood in from other areas, and there are many of the contractors who are disillusioned by that, because if we're willing as a government and as a province to help big companies, we should be there to also help the small employers.

We could go on about issues that have been created - we can talk about how we've turned the corner, but the reality is when I'm home in my constituency travelling around, I have not found anyone who truly believes that this budget is balanced. They are concerned about the fact that their son, their daughter, their husband, or their wife, is getting on a plane to go out West to find work because there are fewer jobs to be found. They are concerned about the fact that it's 18.6 per cent unemployment and only seems to be

growing - it seems to be the only thing that's actually growing in Cape Breton, the unemployment rate. This government has failed the people of Cape Breton Island, they failed to do what is necessary to do - they failed to support people who have come forward with an idea and a plan to make the second-largest economic area of the province grow. There is a lot to be concerned about, and this government should be ashamed of the way they have treated the people of Cape Breton. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens.

MS. VICKI CONRAD: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in my place and address some of the issues here in the House today. I really want to pay some attention to the members of the Official Opposition. The members of the Third Party, I am not going to really pay much attention to what they have been addressing in the House because over the last four years they have pretty much remained silent on a lot of issues, and I think they're still trying to get a lot of their ducks lined up.

I do want to pay particular attention to some of the issues that the Official Opposition members have been addressing here in the House today, the Liberals. But first, before I do that, what I want to tell you is that in the last seven years I have been a proud member of this Chamber and I do know what the constituents of Queens really want in a governing Party. What they want is a government that focuses on efficient and affordable energy; they want a government that really, clearly understands our health care system and wanting to move that health care system forward; better rural emergency care; they want a government that is very clear on fiscal responsibility and accountability; they want a government that really understands the economy and understands job creation; and they want a government that really does look at providing affordable living for families.

I just want to let you know that I do understand, based on the constituents in Queens, what their needs are and, indeed, it reflects what the needs are of all Nova Scotians when they're looking for a government.

What I can tell you is we are government and we have been governing responsibly here in this province. I want to start first with our ERs and our Collaborative Emergency Centres.

The Liberals clearly have been flip-flopping on the issue of health care in this province. One of the things that they did many years back, I believe it was in the 1990s, they decided to expand the number of health boards across the province and they created four health boards. We all know that the health boards across this province have indeed expanded, I believe now there are seven health boards - nine health boards, excuse me - there are nine health boards, and the remainder of those health boards were created under previous Tory Governments.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when I say flip-flop, the Liberals are now currently saying, well, you know what? Those health boards are no longer working. They are not efficient;

they're not efficient at all in our communities. Indeed, what they are telling Nova Scotians is if they were the governing Party, they would ensure that those health boards were eliminated. They would bring in one health board, a super health board, here in Halifax.

What that tells me is that not only would the Liberals see the elimination of community volunteer-member health boards but it tells me that the good health board on the South Shore, the South Shore Regional Health Board, would no longer be in existence, if the Liberals had their way.

What I can tell you is that the South Shore regional health board has been instrumental in supporting the good work of the doctors and the nurses and all of the staff at the Queens General Hospital, the South Shore Regional Hospital and the Fishermen's Memorial Hospital, Mr. Speaker. The elimination of that health board and other health boards across the province would also probably see the dismantling of all of the great work from many volunteers in our community who sit on community health boards, and that would be a great shame.

The Liberals, on the one hand, said in the 1990s, well, we need to see more community-based health boards and now they are flip-flopping and saying, do you know what? They are not necessary. We want to see a centralized system, a health board that governs from the centre of the province, Mr. Speaker, and that's just not good enough. That is not good enough at all.

In the 1990s, Madam Speaker - I want to take you back - in the 1990s, when the Liberals were in power, they totally eliminated 1,500 hospital beds in this province and over 1,000 health care workers were left without jobs here in the province. That is shameful and that's not the way to look after a health care system here in the province.

Madam Speaker, I also want to bring your attention to the issue of fiscal responsibility. I am a very proud member, standing here today, to know that we are one of very few provinces across this country that has brought in a balanced budget. We have brought in one of the only balanced budgets here in Canada.

When I think of previous Liberal budgets, and when I hear members opposite today, they are clearly stuck in the past because the last time they were in government, which was many years ago, they failed to balance the budget once, in the six years that they were here in government, not even once. In fact, they haven't had a balanced budget since 1976. In the last election they brought forward a platform, in 2009, they campaigned on a platform that called for \$500 million in new spending, without saying if they would even balance the budget.

Madam Speaker, I just want to bring your attention to an article here, written in The ChronicleHerald during that time - I'm just looking for my notes, just bear with me here. The article, written in The ChronicleHerald, details the Liberal . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Queens has the floor.

MS. CONRAD: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So in 2009 the Liberals campaigned with a platform that was calling for \$500 million in new spending, but they were really unclear about how they were going to balance a budget with that \$5 million platform that they were looking to create.

I just want to quote from The Halifax ChronicleHerald of May 23, 2009. Here the author is saying, "The plan is missing a crucial page 34. This would be the page showing us where the revenue comes from to pay for all of the things on page 33." The article goes on to say, "That's how budgets work. Revenue on one page. Expenditure on another."

What I gather from this article, and I recall that platform in 2009, is that the Liberal Party clearly doesn't understand how the budget process works. They clearly don't understand what it takes to truly come forward with a balanced budget. I would like the honourable members across the way, and certainly . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. There's a lot of banter going around the Chamber today, and I heard a member, the honourable member for Yarmouth, use the terminology "chose not to be honest." It is unparliamentary, and I would ask him to retract the remark.

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: I'll retract those comments.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable member for Queens has the floor.

MS. CONRAD: Thank you, Madam Speaker. What I'd like to ask the honourable member for Yarmouth to explain to Nova Scotians is, going back to that platform of 2009, just what programs were they prepared to cut to try to come up with a balanced budget? Obviously they couldn't demonstrate to Nova Scotians in 2009 in that platform how they would come to a balanced budget, because they left it out of the platform. Page 34 was missing.

I'm interested to know what services and what programs were they prepared to cut in 2009. What didn't they tell Nova Scotians? I'm glad that we didn't have that chance to find out, Madam Speaker.

On the issue of fiscal responsibility, I also want to talk about the Liberal trust fund. If the Liberal Party were not clear in their 2009 platform - they were unwilling to demonstrate then how they would balance a budget. In fact, they didn't even indicate that they would balance a budget. That begs the question of their lack of accountability in regard to the Liberal trust fund.

Now, when our government brought in legislation - I believe it was in our first year of government, in 2009 - that would see that the Liberal trust fund money, that money brought into their Liberal Party coffers from liquor - illegal money brought in - our government recognized that it was very irresponsible for a Party to use money brought in under sketchy circumstances. So we brought in a piece of legislation ensuring that the Liberal Party could not use that money for political gain, for political advertising, to bolster their campaigning, or to bolster their platform through those means.

Even though the Liberals did support that piece of legislation, they did so in a very kind of flip-floppy way. What they did on one hand was, they supported the legislation, Madam Speaker. Some of the monies certainly were returned. However, what is really questionable is at least \$365,000 out of that slush fund, out of that tainted fund, was transferred to the Liberal Party's unrestricted account. So that leads me to think that they certainly have other plans on how they will use those unrestricted funds, which brings me back to fiscal responsibility. I would be interested in asking the member for Yarmouth what ways that perhaps the Party may be using that money that was transferred into that unrestricted account.

So it does bring me back to fiscal responsibility. If a Party, or if members are not, or don't have the ability to be fiscally accountable and responsible within their own Party and with the funds that their own Party had for many, many years - and shouldn't have had for many, many years - how can they possibly be accountable and fiscally responsible with the budget of the province, Madam Speaker? I would see that as a definite problem. Our government has truly demonstrated fiscal responsibility, we have committed and have demonstrated that we have kept to our commitment, we have brought in a balanced budget and I'm very pleased to sit on this side . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for debate on the Supply motion has elapsed.

The motion is carried.

[2:42 p.m. The House resolved itself into CWH on Supply with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

[6:00 p.m. CWH on Supply rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the Committee of the Whole House on Supply has met, has made progress, and begs leave to sit again.

MADAM SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The Adjournment motion was submitted by the honourable member for Cape Breton North:

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly condemn the NDP for telling Nova Scotians the budget was balanced despite extensive evidence to the contrary.”

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

NDP - BALANCED BUDGET: CLAIMS - CONDEMN

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Madam Speaker, it's my honour to rise this evening to debate what we think is a very important problem we have here in Nova Scotia, of a statement that the budget is balanced despite extensive evidence to the contrary.

We feel that if this budget is truly balanced, we will get an update before this government calls an election in this province. If we get that update, the people of the Province of Nova Scotia will truly see that this budget may or may not be balanced. If it is balanced, I'm sure we'll get the update. If we don't get the update, we can assume that it's not balanced.

We know that just before the budget was tabled here in the Legislature we heard a lot from a lot of people on the other side, that they were hearing from people in the Province of Nova Scotia that they didn't want to balance the budget by cutting programs. We heard all kinds of things coming out of the other side that this may not happen, this may not happen, and all of a sudden in the last week, poof, we hear some magic that yes, it will be balanced.

We know Deloitte, in a study, has said that things like prepaying universities and so on and so forth should not be done and the budget should be truly balanced. From my calculations that I've come up with, we're looking at about \$275 million that has been either prepaid or given out early or assumptions that say this budget won't be balanced. We know that the NDP prepaid \$35 million in grants to two universities on March 28th. That's the very last business day before the end of the 2012-13 fiscal year, and we were told in this Chamber that it was to help the university meet its payroll obligations.

I think the payroll obligations would have been met by the last day of the fiscal year, so putting that into that budget is just to take it out. These two universities asked for the prepayment, we were told. We think that's a strange thing, because they got their

money three days early. It's not a great benefit for the university, but it's a great way to balance the budget for this government.

They moved \$50 million from the 2013-14 expenses to last year's deficit by prepaying some government transfers before the end of March. New changes to the accounting rules for government transfers require them to account for the transfers on the day the cheque is written. Money was moved to Community Services due to an accounting change that created a one-time opportunity to transfer the expenses to the year ending.

The government was adamant that there was no accounting smoke. Obviously, this is another example of how trustworthy the NDP are in telling us this budget is balanced and trying to convince the province that this is the case.

AN HON. MEMBER: Ask the Auditor General. He's got opinions on it.

MR. ORRELL: The Auditor General's opinion, I believe, was no opinion on the validity of the accounts put forward. The NDP is already counting on \$18 million in savings from shared services and better purchasing before the savings actually occur. In my book, that's like spending money before it's actually made, telling somebody you'll give them the money before you actually have it in your hand, or telling the bank you're going to save this much money this year because you're going to do something different.

Wait until the realized account for them and acknowledge the accomplishment. We believe that's how the process works. Being a hockey player, I went into many different hockey tournaments with a team that was said was supposed to win. If you look at that, it's like accepting a medal in the tournament before you actually scored a goal. No one can guarantee that 100 per cent of these goals will even take place, not with the economic forecast we've been seeing. Last year's softening of the personal income tax revenues kept the NDP budget sinking more into a deficit and it was off by \$145 million.

They knowingly overstated these revenues by \$27 million in 2012-13 and it was not uncovered until almost a year later. We heard a lot in the Chamber about this \$27 million. Then we also heard that that really didn't make that much of a difference.

Madam Speaker, to the people in Nova Scotia \$27 or \$270 means a lot and to those people \$27 million is a great, great deal. You stand up and politely misinform Nova Scotians, parading around a false budget, claiming that they're on track, when that \$27 million wasn't accounted for. They backtracked when they realized we found out information that proves they had time to change the budget and change the budget documents.

They are banking on an aggressive \$145 million rebound in personal income taxes but jobs continue to disappear and wages remain flat. Job creation is negative or, at very best, it's flat.

Madam Speaker, we had a proposal from the CBRM on the capital plan that would put Cape Bretoners back to work. It would put taxes back in the coffers of Nova Scotia; it would increase revenue. We can't get a firm commitment from the government that they can even begin this capital plan.

The government's own Department of Finance claims the government's investing is doing nothing to help the economy. The projections in the government's own budget documents say that unemployment will rise, population will age, retail sales will fall, exported goods will fall, and net operating surpluses for corporations will decrease.

One thing that is projected to increase is union wages and power rates. This budget does not create a single job for families that are struggling, families that are struggling with high unemployment, and there is no plan for future growth or prosperity. Talk to the people in Cape Breton, talk to the people in Yarmouth, the budget does nothing for them.

The assumptions show the key indicator for labour force is expected to decrease by 0.1 per cent and remain flat in 2014. A budget that says there are no jobs ahead, in a province that desperately needs them - we don't think this is a truly balanced budget for that reason. Reaching deeper into our pockets is not a plan for the future. For every \$3 the NDP has taken from each person in higher taxes and fees, it is only saving \$1.

The NDP Government has its priorities backwards. We need to lower taxes and stop wasteful government spending to create jobs and to truly change the direction of our province. The PC bill, the Full Disclosure of Accounting Changes Act, would require the budget estimates be presented using the new accounting rules and the old accounting rules before an election, so Nova Scotians can decide for themselves whether the books are truly balanced or not.

The NDP said one thing to get elected and then promptly broke the promises they made to the taxpayers. Madam Speaker, we figure there are about six blunders in this budget: they broke the promise to balance the budget in the first year; they increased taxes and still can't do the same thing; they created an imaginary structural deficit to blame the previous governments but the Auditor General said there was no such thing in Nova Scotia; a \$27 million budget cover-up; a one-day surplus wonder; and the zero dollars for hospital equipment, \$20 million for health equipment and then allocating no dollars for it.

Madam Speaker, if this is a truly balanced budget, maybe we'll get to see it before an election is called, and then Nova Scotians can decide for themselves if the budget is truly balanced. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: Before recognizing the next member I would ask the member to retract the use of the word "cover-up" which has been ruled unparliamentary and I will rule it again today, so I'd ask that you retract that.

MR. ORRELL: I'll retract that.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JIM MORTON: I am actually pleased to rise this evening to say a few words in the few minutes I have about fiscal responsibility and balanced budgets. In the almost four years that we've been working towards a balanced budget we've done a lot of things - we've consulted with experts, Madam Speaker; we've consulted widely with Nova Scotians; we've developed a careful plan both for the economy for health and other government services, and for dealing with the fiscal mess that the Tory Party left behind. We followed that plan, one that lead us and led Nova Scotians to a balanced budget, the balanced budget that was introduced by the Finance Minister on April 4, 2013.

It wasn't easy to get back to balance - we did it by sticking to our plan, by carefully managing expenditures, by ending that practice, that long-standing practice of March madness, by having government departments come in under budget year after year, and we did it with the help and, I think, with the sacrifice of all Nova Scotians. I'm proud and I think Nova Scotians are proud of what we've accomplished.

Nova Scotia is only one of four Canadian provinces to prepare a balanced budget during this time, a budget which earned the Auditor General's unqualified opinion for its revenue projections, and this I need to remind you, Madam Speaker, is Nova Scotia's first balanced budget in a decade. (Interruptions)

It's amusing to have the member for Cape Breton North raise the question of fiscal prudence. His Party is the Party that left behind the fiscal mess that we were dealing with, and I would remind everyone in this House, left behind the structural situation that would have led to a deficit of \$1.3 billion. It's his Tory Party whose idea of health care policy was to invest millions in kiddy ATVs, it's his Tory Party whose recklessness included spending the \$68 million of the BFIT recreational program in three years, a program that was intended to be carefully spread over 10 years.

Maybe, Madam Speaker, the Tories still think they can buy the votes of Nova Scotians. I, for one, haven't forgotten the \$155 cheques that were delivered to many Nova Scotians during a couple of elections back. Tories and Liberals, when it comes to fiscal thinking, are content to bask in what I sometimes think of as the glow of magical thinking, that promise of lower taxes while combined with increased spending and increased services and more and better services. The problem is that neither the Liberals nor the Tories can show where that kind of thinking has actually worked.

That kind of thinking fuelled the Liberal's 2009 election campaign. In the 2009 election campaign the Liberal Party made \$227 million worth of promises and they outlined those promises in the 33-page booklet that led The ChronicleHerald to wonder in its editorial whose dog ate Page 34. I think what the Liberal campaign did was make some empty promises and had no plan. Perhaps the Liberals are content with, or comfortable

with, the fantasy of easy money, because for many years they had access to as what we all know as the Liberal trust fund. Millions of dollars, Madam Speaker, were poured into Liberal coffers, illegal money paid to the Liberal Party by alcohol distributors and producers for the simple right to put their product on government liquor store shelves. Stephen McNeil and the Liberals are still using these monies, these tainted funds, today.

Excuse me - my apologies, Madam Speaker, I think I used a member's name, and I shouldn't have - the Leader of the Liberal Party is still using these tainted funds today.

The Liberals have had a chance, Madam Speaker, to manage the province's finances. In the 1990s, they failed to balance budgets even once in the six years they were in office. The last time that the Liberals balanced a budget - maybe there are members of this House who can't remember it - was in 1976. And in that year - a momentous year, actually - the Montreal Canadiens won the Stanley Cup and repeated it for the next three years.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. The member for Kings North has just made an allegation against the Leader of our Party for using funds today which, under the legislation of this province, would be illegal; therefore, he has accused a member of this House of an illegal act. I would ask you to rule on that, and more importantly, I would invite the member to step outside this Chamber, where he does not have parliamentary immunity, to make the same allegation that he has just made here in this House.

Madam Speaker, accusing any member of this House of an illegal activity is a very serious offence. I would ask you to rule on that, and to take that under consideration.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you. I'll take that under consideration.

The honourable member for Kings North has the floor.

MR. MORTON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Perhaps, in light of that intervention, I will table an article from the Cape Breton Post entitled "An NDP look at a 'Liberal advantage'." I just want to move forward.

It's no surprise that Nova Scotians and those of us on this side of the House raise an eyebrow when we think of Liberal comments on fiscal responsibility. In the 1990s, the Liberals tried to hide numerous deficits accumulated by school boards, health boards, and other government entities. They seemed to hope by turning a blind eye that problems would just go away. So if we want to know what the Liberals would do in the future, Madam Speaker, maybe all we have to do is look at the past. In my experience, and I've got quite a bit of it, history is a very good prediction of the future.

More recently, speaking of recent history, the Leader of the Liberal Party opposed jobs in rural Nova Scotia, jobs in Shelburne in Aquaculture, and investments in Port

Hawkesbury families, and opposed moving government jobs to rural Nova Scotia from Halifax. The Liberals have also shown a readiness to put the HST back on home heat. They've attacked a made-in-Canada Maritime Link in favour of entrusting our energy future to Hydro-Québec. They've attacked Collaborative Emergency Centres despite the fact that they're recognized nationally as an innovative solution to pressing health care issues. They promised to centralize health care decision making in Halifax by abolishing health boards and shoving aside volunteers in favour of, perhaps, one "super board" that would probably be located in Halifax, and probably be run out of the minister's office.

The Liberals have repeatedly criticized any efforts made to create jobs in our province - shipbuilding jobs, high-tech jobs at IBM, engineering jobs, Madam Speaker. They vowed to get rid of Nova Scotia's promising energy efficiency program, and in the past, they've shown a willingness to solve the fiscal problems that they've experienced on the backs of citizens and others. I'm thinking of that shutdown, of that closure of 1,500 hospital beds in the 1990s, of laying off 1,000 health care workers, and of cutting children's dental care services to kids over 10 years of age - something that we've recently, in our balanced budget, increased again.

Just to conclude, what I would like to say is that - and I was speaking about fantasy earlier, Madam Speaker - if in someone's fantasy, we may entertain a Liberal . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for the honourable member has expired.

SPEAKER'S RULING: Accusing a member of an illegal activity (Pt. of order by Hon. M. Samson [Hansard p.839 04/16/13]) Out of order; requests Kings North MLA to retract comment

I will now take this opportunity to rule on the point of order around the reference to an illegal action and I will rule that out of order. I'd ask the member for Kings North to retract that comment.

The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JIM MORTON: Madam Speaker, I will retract that.

MADAM SPEAKER: For the benefit of all members, the reference by the member for Richmond, who put the point of order forward with the suggestion that repeating such a statement outside of this Chamber would infer that a different consequence perhaps could be the result, I would suggest that it is not a decorum that I will entertain here in this Chamber, so I would ask all members to be very mindful of that when they are putting their points of order on the floor.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

MS. DIANA WHALEN: It is a shame that we have only 10 minutes in late debate because it has been very enlightening for me to sit here and listen to some of the really uncalled-for, unparliamentary things that have been said here, some things that are muckraking, some things that are rude, and I think some things that are downright wrong. I think there have been no unparliamentary words there - I hope, Madam Speaker.

It's really rather galling to see that somebody in the NDP office has written a 10-minute speech that didn't quite run 10 minutes, and probably missed the zinger at the end, thanks to the interruption.

Madam Speaker, we are here to talk about this budget, this government's budget, whether or not it is balanced. The resolution says that it's not and I said so in my reply to the Budget Speech a couple of weeks ago, when it was first introduced. There are numerous reasons why, anybody could figure that out.

I think it is of interest that the member for Kings West recently visited a school and Grade 9 students were able to figure it out by looking at the small package we were all given in the Budget Highlights. They were asked to have a look and say whether or not this budget was balanced. I think if kids in Grade 9 can figure it out, we might have a show that says, are you smarter than a kid in Grade 9? And I think anybody in this province will be able to figure out this is not a balanced budget because very quickly, if you look at the budget summary, you'll see that last year, surprisingly, we were \$145 million short of the mark. We expected to be \$211 million in deficit but things happen and it went up to \$356 million.

One of those things was the government made a decision that said we're already \$270 million in the hole, let's put more stuff from this current year into last year because really, what's the difference? We're \$300 million, \$350 million in deficit, what's the difference? But we are going to have a better story for this year, we're going to plan this year to be balanced so all we have to do is load up some of this year's costs in last year and we are going to get there.

Right off the bat we have a prepayment to two universities, not the first time the NDP has done this I must say, Madam Speaker. My plan would be to be honest, my plan would be straightforward.

Madam Speaker, if some of the history, which is revisionist to begin with, that we have heard here today about the NDP spouting about the Liberals, are again wrong because what happened is you could say it wasn't balanced for six years. You could also say a lot of other things about 1993 and what was happening in the federal government and the cuts across the country. You could also say that we followed about 10 years of John Buchanan, who rang up half of our debt in this province. He rang up half the debt but the NDP rang up another 10 per cent of it - again, in just four years, over \$1.4 billion added to our debt. That figure is in the Budget Highlights. It hasn't been misconstrued. It is in there, we can see \$1.4 billion more in the debt.

You know you have to see things in the light of when they happen but I can tell you there was no monkey business in the time that the Liberals governed because if the situation was dire, we said so, and we dealt with it. We dealt with profligate spending from the years before we took over and we moved forward with plans as best we could.

I think that what Nova Scotians want is honesty. They want you to tell them the truth. That's what happened in that time. You know what, Madam Speaker? It is not always popular, we know that, but the NDP have gone forward to make a popular story, a pre-election story. That's exactly what it is. I think I used the word "muckraking," because that's all you could say, muckraking - dragging up things that are not true. Honestly, mudslinging, same thing as mudslinging.

That's what the NDP are doing consistently at this party and I think we know why, and I think in the debate going into Supply we heard clearly why that's happening. (Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park has the floor.

MS. WHALEN: As I said earlier today . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order. We'll try this again. The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park has the floor.

MS. WHALEN: Earlier today the member for Yarmouth spoke going into Supply and he said very clearly why the Liberal Party is in the target of the NDP right now, and it's because they are not popular right now and the governing Party, the NDP, are desperate and they're firing all kinds of salvos across the bow - they're hoping some of this muck will stick to the wall. Well, they're wrong because we are determined to bring forward good ideas, honest debate, straightforward numbers - no monkey business in any of our budgets, in discussion.

I started by saying, just so that everybody understands, this budget is not balanced. It's not balanced because a lot of debt that should have been on this year was shoved into last year, just to balloon that deficit for last year. It's not honest because the whole premise of the four years financially of the NDP Government is based on a fiction, a fiction that was created by false assumptions under the Deloitte study. The false assumptions were to go forth and forecast where we would be if we continued to spend . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order. Order, please. I will have to ask the member for Halifax Clayton Park to retract the use of the words "not honest." The word "dishonest" and the words "not honest" are the same thing and it has been ruled unparliamentary. I would ask that you retract that and refrain from using that.

MS. WHALEN: I retract that, Madam Speaker, I actually was not even aware I said it. I'm glad you're listening and I appreciate that.

There are very few minutes in late debate to talk about these issues, but I want to talk about the fact that two universities were prepaid for this year's amounts in last year; in fact on the last business day of the year they got their cheque, March 28th. That shoved \$35 million over into universities, and that \$35 million would right away mean that the razor-thin surplus that the government is showing of \$16 million would have been blown out of the water. It would have been \$16 million in deficit plus.

Right away, you know it, all of the members across the way know it - it was a gimmick and it's not proper accounting. And, in the great, famed Deloitte study, Deloitte accountants suggested that the government not do that; it was not a practice they condoned. So there's something you should remember about Deloitte in their study about where you were headed - the exact thing was not to do that.

The Auditor General's Report comes up occasionally - or their statement at the start of the budget. I'm going to read again what the Auditor General says and I want the members to understand that the Auditor General, in giving a revenue estimate letter of approval (Interruption) Yes, unqualified you say. Qualification in the past was that we didn't roll everything from the hospitals and school boards into the budget; in fact, that was done after 10 years. I think the member before made a mistake in saying that it was the first balanced budget in 10 years because we've seen balanced budgets in the last 10 years under John Hamm, possibly Rodney MacDonald - possibly, I can't remember. Anyway, it certainly was not 10 years.

The other thing is - when the Auditor General does it he does it with all kinds of stipulations. He says:

Since the 2013-14 revenue estimates are based on assumptions regarding future events, actual results will vary from the information presented and the variance may be material. Accordingly, I express no opinion as to whether the revenue estimates will be achieved.

So all that the accountants do, and the Auditor General and his team do, is look at whether you have some reasonable assumptions that he can live with, that might be backed up in some way enough to live with them - but he doesn't have any sense that it's going to actually happen. It falls a little bit short of the mark when we try to turn to the Auditor General for support.

The revenue estimates are extremely out of whack in this coming year. That's how the government has gone forward.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Acting Government House Leader.

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Madam Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House on Supply unto Her Majesty.

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

The motion is carried.

[6:30 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Supply with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

[7:38 p.m. CWH on Supply rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the Committee of the Whole House on Supply has met, has made considerable progress, and begs leave to sit again.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, as I look at the best-looking guy in the House across the way, from Glace Bay, that concludes the government's business for today and we will adjourn, to meet from the hour of 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. tomorrow.

Now I hand it over to the honourable House Leader of the Official Opposition to give business.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable House Leader of the Official Opposition.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, following the daily routine tomorrow, the Official Opposition will be calling Bill No. 1, Accountability in Economic Development Assistance Act, and Bill No. 17, Blueprint for the Future of Public Education in Nova Scotia Act. Following that, we will wrap up at 6:00 p.m.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is that the House do now rise to meet tomorrow at 2:00 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned.

[The House rose at 7:39 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 359**

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Stephen Lewis Foundation was founded in 2003 and works with grassroots organizations turning the tide on HIV and AIDS in Africa; and

Whereas Acts for AIDS is a variety show featuring many high school students' spectacular musical talents; and

Whereas Prince Andrew High School hosted the 4th Annual Acts for AIDS this past February, showcasing folk bands, rock bands, and dance recitals;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the organizers of Acts for AIDS, especially host school organizers Mitchell Thompson and Meagan Sabean from Prince Andrew High, and wish them success in their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 360

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada's volunteer mentors teach by example the importance of giving back, staying in school, and respecting family, peers, and community to today's youth; and

Whereas BBBSC provides mentoring services for more than 33,000 Canadian children and teenagers in over 1,000 communities - over 1,500 children in Nova Scotia alone; and

Whereas 2013 marks the 100th Anniversary of the founding of Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the immense contribution of the volunteers and directorship of the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program, and wish them another 100 years of success.

RESOLUTION NO. 361

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas each year communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help others; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas Rose Stevenson-Davidson, of the Town of Windsor, was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony for the many contributions she has made to her community and her province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Rose Stevenson-Davidson for all the work she does for others and congratulate her for receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 362

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas each year communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help others; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas David Blanchard, of the Municipality of the District of West Hants, was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony for the many contributions he has made to his community and his province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank David Blanchard for all the work he does for others and congratulate him for receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 363

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve, and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mary Leggett, a member of the Valley Kempton Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving her 15-year service pin.

RESOLUTION NO. 364

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve, and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kim Green, a member of the Valley Kempton Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving her 10-year service pin.

RESOLUTION NO. 365

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve, and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jay Leadbetter, a member of the Valley Kempton Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for being named Fire Person of the Year, and for receiving the John MacAuley Training Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 366

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve, and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jamie Green, a member of the Valley Kempton Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving his 10-year service pin.

RESOLUTION NO. 367

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve, and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Glen MacAulay, a member of the Valley Kemptown Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving his 15-year service pin.

RESOLUTION NO. 368

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve, and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bill MacLeod, a member of the Valley Kemptown Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for being named Officer of the Year.

RESOLUTION NO. 369

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas each year communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help other people; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas the Witherall Family from Hubbards was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony as the recipients of the Volunteer Family Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Witherall family, and thank them for their selfless work and for instilling such important values in their family and community.

RESOLUTION NO. 370

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas each year communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help other people; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas the LaHave River Credit Union was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony as the recipient of the specialty award for Cooperatives;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the hard-working Nova Scotians who made this award possible for the LaHave River Credit Union, and thank them for their incredible contributions to their community.

RESOLUTION NO. 371

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas each year communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help other people; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas Bob Powell, on behalf of the Town of Digby, was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony as the recipient of the Model Volunteer Community Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate those whose hard work made it possible for the Town of Digby to be recognized for such an esteemed award.

RESOLUTION NO. 372

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas each year communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help other people; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas John Langille, of the Municipality of the County of Cumberland, was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony for the many contributions he has made to his community and province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank John Langille for all the work he does for others and congratulate him for receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 373

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas each year communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help other people; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas Charles Thompson, of the Town of Oxford, was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony for the many contributions he has made to his community and province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Charles Thompson for all the work he does for others and congratulate him for receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 374

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas each year communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help other people; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas Gary Griffiths, of the Town of Springhill, was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony for the many contributions he has made to his community and province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Gary Griffiths for all the work he does for others and congratulate him for receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 375

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party)

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

Whereas each year communities across Canada mark National Volunteer Week to thank and honour the people who generously give their time and talents to help other people; and

Whereas dedicated volunteers are the backbone of Nova Scotia's tight-knit communities; and

Whereas Lewis Brown, of the Town of Parrsboro, was recognized at the 39th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony for the many contributions he has made to his community and province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Lewis Brown for all the work he does for others and congratulate him for receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 376

By: Mr. Gary Burrill (Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley)

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

Whereas the Truro Curling Club Junior Ladies team - comprised of Skip Mary Myketon-Driscoll, Third Taylor Clarke, Second MacKenzie Proctor, First Sara Sears, and Coach Jim Burgess - won the Nova Scotia Championship in the Chester Curling Club in December 2012, defeating the 2012 champions; and

Whereas the team thereby won the right to represent Nova Scotia in the Canadian Junior Curling Champions in Fort McMurray, Alberta, February 2-10, 2013; and

Whereas the Truro Junior Ladies were successful in their first round at Fort McMurray, following which they competed in a Canadian Junior Mixed Double where Sara Sears won with a single knockout;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join the people of Colchester County in honouring the Truro Curling Club Junior Ladies team for their hard work and successes at the Nova Scotia and Canadian Junior Curling Championships in 2012-13.