



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Speaker: Honourable Gordie Gosse**

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### Fifth Session

**TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2013**

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>SPEAKER'S RULING:</b>	
Fin. Min. deliberately misled the House in presenting Budget (04/13/12) (Pt. of privilege by Hon. S. McNeil [Hansard p. 31, 03/27/13])	
Motion to refer issue of breach of privilege to a committee, Hon. S. McNeil .....	1190
Vote - Negative .....	1192
<b>TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS:</b>	
Elections N.S.: Recommendations for Changes to the House of Assembly Act Rept., Hon. R. Landry.....	1193
<b>GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:</b>	
Res. 733, Boston Marathon Bombing: Dead/Injured - Honour, The Premier (by Hon. C. Parker) .....	1193
Vote - Affirmative.....	1194
Res. 734, PSC - Administrative Professionals: Contributions	
- Acknowledge, Hon. M. More .....	1194
Vote - Affirmative.....	1195
Res. 735, Cooling, Karyn/Webber, Karen: Outstanding Principals Award	
- Congrats., Hon. R. Jennex .....	1195
Vote - Affirmative.....	1195

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:

No. 56, Cyberbullying Intervention Act, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1196
No. 57, Language Schools Act, Hon. F. Corbett .....	1196

## NOTICES OF MOTION:

Res. 736, Hebb, Anne: Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal - Congrats., Ms. D. Whalen .....	1196
Vote - Affirmative.....	1197
Res. 737, LeBlanc, Monsignor Gerald: Ordination - Anniv. (50 <sup>th</sup> ), Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	1197
Vote - Affirmative.....	1198
Res. 738, Munro, John: Cdn. Science Challenge Role - Congrats., Hon. P. Paris.....	1198
Vote - Affirmative.....	1199
Res. 739, Rector, Shelley: AVRSB Educ. Wk. Award (2013) - Congrats., Hon. S. McNeil .....	1199
Vote - Affirmative.....	1200
Res. 740, Organ, Phil: Book Publication - Congrats., Mr. E. Orrell.....	1200
Vote - Affirmative.....	1200
Res. 741, MacNeil, Rita: Death of - Tribute, Ms. L. Zann.....	1200
Vote - Affirmative.....	1201
Res. 742, Cleveland, Alice: Clare Vol. of Yr. - Congrats., Hon. W. Gaudet .....	1201
Vote - Affirmative.....	1202
Res. 743, Henderson, Harry: Holland Mem. Award (2013) - Congrats., Mr. A. MacLeod.....	1202
Vote - Affirmative.....	1203
Res. 744, Mason, Paul: Commun. Serv. - Thank, Ms. B. Kent .....	1203
Vote - Affirmative.....	1204
Res. 745, Colford, James: Commun. Contribution - Congrats., Hon. K. Colwell .....	1204
Vote - Affirmative.....	1204
Res. 746, Valley Wildcats: Achievements - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	1205
Vote - Affirmative.....	1205
Res. 747, McCormack, Amy: Educ. Wk. Award - Congrats., Hon. M. Samson .....	1205
Vote - Affirmative.....	1206
Res. 748, Martell, Meghan: Modelling Success - Congrats., Hon. M. Samson .....	1206
Vote - Affirmative.....	1207

Res. 749, Debert Elem. Sch.: Diversability Fair - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey .....	1207
Vote - Affirmative.....	1208
Res. 750, Fennell, Dexter: Bedford Youth Vol. of Yr. (2013) - Congrats., Ms. K. Regan.....	1208
Vote - Affirmative.....	1209
Res. 751, Brown, Mary Beth - All-Star Swim Team: Success - Congrats., Mr. Z. Churchill .....	1209
Vote - Affirmative.....	1209
Res. 752, Gidney, Paul: Powerlifting Achievements - Congrats., Mr. H. Theriault .....	1210
Vote - Affirmative.....	1210
Res. 753, MacCabe, Douglas: Commun. Contributions - Congrats., Hon. K. Colwell .....	1210
Vote - Affirmative.....	1211
Res. 754, Eisses, Emma: Kuhn Scholarship - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey.....	1211
Vote - Affirmative.....	1212
Res. 755, Coneen, Alana: Bedford Adult Vol. of Yr. (2013) - Congrats., Ms. K. Regan.....	1212
Vote - Affirmative.....	1213
Res. 756, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" - Prince Andrew Players: Production - Congrats., Mr. A. Younger .....	1213
Vote - Affirmative.....	1213
Res. 757, Vol. Wk.: Honorees - Congrats., Mr. L. Glavine.....	1214
Vote - Affirmative.....	1214
Res. 758, Deveau, Trysten: Atl. Karate Championships Medals - Congrats., Hon. W. Gaudet.....	1214
Vote - Affirmative.....	1215
<b>ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS:</b>	
No. 166, Energy - Mar. Link Proj: Hearings - Deadline Extend, Hon. S. McNeil .....	1215
No. 167, Fin. - Budget (2012-13) Discrepancy: Treasury Bd. - Correspondence, Hon. J. Baillie .....	1217
No. 168, Justice - MacIntosh Case: Errors - Explain, Hon. M. Samson .....	1218
No. 169, Justice - N.S. Home for Colored Children: Public Inquiry - Denial Explain, Hon. S. McNeil.....	1221
No. 170, Justice - MacIntosh Case: Internal Review - Result, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1222
No. 171, Status of Women: Avalon Ctr. - Emergency Funding, Ms. K. Regan .....	1224
No. 172, Fin. - Budget (2012-13): Error - Confirm, Hon. J. Baillie .....	1227

No. 173, Energy - Muskrat Falls: Alternative - Consider, Mr. A. Younger .....	1228
No. 174, ERDT - High-Speed Internet: Serv. - Update, Mr. C. Porter .....	1230
No. 175, CNS: Educ. Advertising - Amount, Mr. A. Younger .....	1231
No. 176, NSCAD - Independence: NDP Gov't. - Stance, Mr. Z. Churchill .....	1233
GOVERNMENT BUSINESS:	
GOVERNMENT MOTIONS:	
ON MOTION FOR SUPPLY:	
Mr. K. Bain .....	1235
Ms. B. Kent .....	1238
Mr. L. Glavine.....	1241
HOUSE RESOLVED INTO CWH ON SUPPLY AT 2:48 P.M.....	1244
HOUSE RECONVENED AT 5:59 P.M.....	1244
ADJOURNMENT:	
MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5):	
NDP - Balanced Budget: Claims - Condemn,	
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1245
Ms. L. Zann.....	1248
Ms. D. Whalen .....	1251
HOUSE RESOLVED INTO CWH ON SUPPLY AT 6:30 P.M.....	1254
HOUSE RECONVENED AT 8:39 P.M.....	1254
[INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:]	
No. 58, Appropriations Act, 2013, Hon. Maureen MacDonald.....	1254
[GOVERNMENT BUSINESS:]	
PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:	
No. 58, Appropriations Act, 2013, Hon. Maureen MacDonald.....	1255
Vote - Affirmative.....	1255
PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING:	
No. 58, Appropriations Act, 2013, Hon. Maureen MacDonald.....	1255
Vote - Affirmative.....	1256
ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Wed., Apr. 24 <sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. ....	1257
NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):	
Res. 759, Women's Institute of Lakeville, et al - Anniv. (100 <sup>th</sup> ), Mr. L. Glavine.....	1258
Res. 760, Mattatall, Harold - Dart. Commun.: Dedication - Recognize, Mr. A. Younger.....	1258
Res. 761, Johnson, Alan - Truro & Col. C of C: Exec. Dir. - Appt. Congrats., Hon. K. Casey .....	1259
Res. 762, Millen, Curtis/Farmers - Health & Safety Act: Adherence - Recognize, Hon. K. Casey .....	1259

Res. 763, Sawada, Danielle: CNTA Tourism Award - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey .....	1260
Res. 764, Keddy, Jon - Ginger House: Restoration - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey .....	1260
Res. 765, Smith, Matthew: Student of Mo. (12/12) - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey .....	1261
Res. 766, Barrett, Herman & Vivian: Church/Commun. Serv. - Thank, Ms. K. Regan.....	1261
Res. 767, Hartnett, Bernice - Bedford Horticultural Soc./Daylily Soc.: Vol. Efforts - Congrats., Ms. K. Regan .....	1262
Res. 768, Bauer, Bob & Karen - Bedford Musical Life: Contribution, Ms. K. Regan.....	1262
Res. 769, Hutt, Warren - Lions Club: Serv. - Congrats., Ms. K. Regan .....	1263
Res. 770, Muldowney, Barb: Bedford Vol. Activities - Congrats., Ms. K. Regan .....	1264
Res. 771, Mitchell, Sandy - Bedford Players Commun. Theatre: Support - Congrats., Ms. K. Regan.....	1264
Res. 772, Murray, Virginia: Vol. Serv. - Congrats., Ms. K. Regan .....	1265
Res. 773, Howlett, Debby: Bedford Repair & Restoration Group - Congrats., Ms. K. Regan.....	1265
Res. 774, Kanne, Lynda: Prov. Vol. Award (2013) - Congrats., Mr. L. Glavine.....	1266
Res. 775, Harris, Joan: Prov. Vol. Award (2013) - Congrats., Mr. L. Glavine.....	1266



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 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 topic for late debate is:

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

It was submitted by the honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

Before we start the daily routine this afternoon, I'm going to do a Speaker's Ruling.

**SPEAKER'S RULING:** Fin. Min. deliberately misled the House in presenting Budget (04/13/12) (Pt. of privilege by Hon. S. McNeil [Hansard p. 31, 03/27/13]) Technically arguable case that should be considered by a committee if member chooses to make a motion.

On Wednesday, March 27, 2013, the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition rose on a point of privilege alleging that in delivering the government's budget to the House last year, on April 3, 2012, the Minister of Finance had deliberately misled the House by tabling a budget that contained information that was incorrect, and by stating to the House that the amount shown as a deficit demonstrated that the government was almost exactly where it had said it would be in its Back to Balance plan as set out in the previous year's fiscal plan. I won't repeat his allegations in detail, but they are set out in full in the Hansard of the day.

I find that the requirement that a matter of a breach of privilege be raised at the earliest opportunity has been met; it was raised during the first day of regular House business in the sitting after having been identified as a possible issue by virtue of statements contained in a report made by the province's Auditor General that was released on February 6<sup>th</sup> of this year, which was during the period between the sittings of the House.

I do not consider the arguments raised respecting the preparation of the budget and whether there was enough time to revisit it before printing, or that tabling the budget which contained figures that would be different later, if a later revenue forecast were used, to have established a breach of privilege.

During a number of Question Periods since this matter was raised, the current Minister of Finance, the Premier, and the Chairman of the Treasury Board have presented a different view on the budget process and what is appropriate in budget preparation. I am ruling that those aspects of the complaint raised are a disagreement between members and do not raise a point of privilege.

There was another aspect to the claim by the Leader of the Official Opposition. He took issue with a particular statement made in the House by the former Minister of Finance, which was as follows:

“In last year's fiscal plan, the deficit of 2012-13 was projected to be \$216 million. In this budget, the projected deficit is \$211 million. In other words, we are almost exactly where we said we would be in this point in our Back to Balance plan.”

This, he argued, was incorrect and misleading. Deliberately misleading the House would be a contempt of the House. The Leader of the Official Opposition stated the elements that need to be established by a committee when it is alleged that a member is in contempt of the House for deliberately misleading the House. These are found in *O'Brien*

and *Bosc*, and are as follows: one, it must be proven that the statement was misleading; two, it must be established that the member making the statement knew at the time that the statement was incorrect; and three, that in making the statement the member intended to mislead the House.

It should be pointed out that I do not have to find any of these elements to have existed, which is how some others have characterized this process, apparently based on a misreading of the reference in *O'Brien* and *Bosc*. The duty of the Speaker is limited to assessing whether the point presented is arguable on its face at first glance.

In his comments, the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition mentioned a finding in 2001 by a committee of the House of Commons that the Harper Government was in contempt of Parliament, in support of his point of privilege. The finding was in relation to a refusal to comply with a requirement to produce documents, which is quite different from an allegation that a member has deliberately misled the House, and which involves a different test. It is not relevant to a question of whether the House has been misled by a member.

In considering the points raised by the Leader of the Official Opposition, I have had the benefit of a number of rulings by other Speakers, including former Speaker Milliken of the House of Commons and Speakers from other provinces. While previous authorities suggested that an allegation that a member has misled the House should be raised as a point of order, I have determined that such allegations have more recently routinely been entertained as questions of privilege in Canadian Legislative Assemblies.

*Maingot* states that a member who is raising a question of privilege is entitled to the benefit of the doubt that he or she has raised an arguable point. *Maingot* says on Page 227:

“In the final analysis, in areas of doubt, the Speaker asks simply:

Does the act complained of appear at first sight to be a breach of privilege . . . or to put it shortly, has the Member an arguable point? If the Speaker feels any doubt on the question, he should leave it to the House.”

The Speaker’s ruling does not extend to deciding whether a breach of privilege has in fact been committed. That it is a question that must be decided by the House itself.

I am going to re-state a small portion of a ruling by a former Speaker Fraser of the House of Commons in which he was quoting a ruling of his predecessor, Speaker Jerome, found at Page 3,975 of Hansard for March 21, 1978, where Speaker Jerome quoted from a report of the United Kingdom Select Committee on Parliamentary Privilege. He stated:

“. . . It might be interfered that the test applied by the speaker in deciding whether to give precedence over the orders of the day to a complaint of a



breach of privilege . . . is, Does the act complained of appear to me at first sight to be a breach of privilege? Rigorously applied, it would mean that no complaint of a breach of privilege could ever be entertained unless the Speaker was of the opinion that the act or conduct complained of was a breach of privilege . . .

Borderline cases and arguable ones would be excluded automatically because in such cases the Speaker could not say that he was of the opinion that the act or conduct which was the subject of complaint *prima facie* constituted a breach of privilege.

In my submission the question which the Speaker should ask himself . . . should be . . . has the Member an arguable point? If the Speaker feels any doubt on the question, he should . . . leave it to the House.”

In ruling whether a member has raised a *prima facie* case of privilege, the Speaker has to consider, on the evidence presented, whether the fact could amount to a breach of privilege or a contempt of the House. In doing this the Speaker will also consider representations from other members, including the member who is alleged to have committed the breach of contempt. Speaker Milliken of the House of Commons has said that, “It is the element of deliberating seeking to mislead the House and not the presentation of information subject to differing interpretation that is the key.”

In the case I have had presented to me as Speaker, no differing interpretation from that presented by the Leader of the Official Opposition, which presented an argument for intent, was offered to the House for its consideration. A statement by the member that he or she did not intend to mislead the House will usually end such a matter, but that has not been offered to the House in this matter.

In a ruling on April 19, 1999, in a matter in British Columbia that also dealt with a question of budget accuracy, the Speaker noted that the Minister of Finance and Corporate Relations had stated, “In deciding to retable the April 1996 budget, I was satisfied that the plan was both plausible and attainable, and had I not believed that to be the case, I would not have proceeded with its reintroduction.”

The Speaker advised that this had been a factor in his finding that there was not *prima facie* case of privilege, stating, “There is another long-established rule, which binds not only the Chair but all members of this House, and that is the rule that requires all of us, in the absence of incontrovertible evidence, to accept the word of another hon. member.”

Based on the simple test the Speaker has to follow, which has a very low threshold, I have concluded that the Leader of the Official Opposition has presented a technically arguable case that could be considered by a committee if he chooses to make the motion he suggested earlier and should the House then choose to adopt that motion. I should point out

that should the former Minister of Finance advise such a committee he did not intend to mislead the House, it is my opinion that this would end the matter.

The characterization of \$27 million difference in last year's budget has been the subject of considerable debate in this House, particularly during Question Periods. In considering the member's point of privilege, I have become concerned that members, and possibly others, may not be clear on what it means for the Speaker to find that a point of privilege can proceed to the House any further on a prima facie basis. Under parliamentary procedure, such a finding does not in any way suggest a finding by the Speaker that any allegations by the member raising the point of privilege are true or proven. It simply says that at a first glance the member raising any point of privilege of any type, each of which is a serious allegation, has offered up a version of facts that, if they were later examined and all found to be true after fair deliberation and inquiry by the House, might provide the basis for a finding of breach of privilege.

It is important that all members and members of the parliamentary press media and the public in general have a clear understanding that a prima facie finding by the Speaker does not validate or prove any accusation of a breach of privilege. It allows for the House to refer the matter to a committee or otherwise dispose of the accusation in its discretion.

O'Brien and Bosc, which was cited by the honourable member in his point of privilege, is quite clear on the limited role of the Speaker in examining points of privilege to determine if they merit a finding that a prima facie case has been presented for further consideration by the House.

It is a procedural role, not a quasi-judicial role that establishes any finding of fact. O'Brien and Bosc says, at Page 145:

“The Speaker's role ought to be explained and it is that the issue put before the Speaker is not a finding of fact, it is simply whether on first impression the issue that is before the House warrants priority consideration over all other matters, all the other orders of the day that are before the House.”

To be clear, a finding of a prima facie case of a breach of parliamentary privilege is quite different from a finding of a prima facie case establishing a proposition in a court of law like we see played out on television in court dramas. The two words are used in distinctly different ways and do not mean the same thing. A finding of a prima facie point of privilege is a procedural step like a question of leave to appeal something in the court system, rather than a factual finding.

In fact, some Westminster-style parliaments have stopped using the term because it decided the term “gave an unwarranted impression that the Speaker thought that a breach of privilege or contempt had actually been committed” and now uses a more neutral finding that a question of privilege is involved.

The most important point of what I have just said, the bottom line if you will, is that no member of this House should take or use anything said by the Chair in this ruling as a suggestion in any way that the former Minister of Finance has deliberately misled the House with respect to the budget delivered last year. All I have said is that such allegations are important enough on their face to warrant some consideration if the House chooses to do so. The matter may then be referred to a committee of the House for a proper investigation that will then allow for a full and open airing of both sides of this complicated issue. This allows the House to then examine the allegations made by the Leader of the Official Opposition on the basis that they might in the future be able to be proved, if at that time, all conditions that a question of a breach of privilege have occurred are then met in the opinion of the House.

This is the ruling on this matter.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, thank you for your decision. I want to say, through you to the House, many times the former Minister of Finance has said that he did not intend to mislead anybody in this House or otherwise. I would urge all members of this House to vote against this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: It is now open for the Leader of the Official Opposition to propose a motion.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, after your ruling I would like to propose a motion to the House:

“Be it resolved that the statements made by the member for Halifax Fairview, while Minister of Finance, in presenting the budget on April 3, 2012 be referred to the Standing Committee on Internal Affairs to determine whether he deliberately misled the House and thus breaching the privileges of the House and that the committee findings be reported back to the House without delay.”

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to speak briefly in support of the motion that has been made by the Leader of the Official Opposition.

When we look at statements that are made in this House, the most important statements that are made are those made around the budget itself because it is held to the highest standard. Our own traditions show that budget matters are a matter of confidence in the Legislature, not by choice but an automatic matter of confidence. The budget votes

don't need to be declared to be a matter of confidence by the government. They are automatically matters of confidence because they are so important. For that reason, among others, Mr. Speaker, we support the motion to refer this matter to the committee.

I truly hope that all members on both sides of the House support that motion so that the committee can do its job and report back. To vote against the motion - and I say this to the members on the government side - is to not even allow a committee of the House, with the assistance of the House's legal representatives and others and other experts, including the member in question, to give their views on whether a matter of privilege has been raised and has been breached. Without allowing that committee to work, the members who vote against the motion are squelching a pursuit of truth in what really happened here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know many members on the government side, and I can just imagine the pressure that they're under here today, but I want to tell you, I don't know that the member for Truro-Bible Hill really wants to go home and tell the people there that she voted against allowing the committee to hear whether the budget contained a \$27 million error and whether that was disclosed or not. I don't think the member for Lunenburg West wants to go home and do the same thing.

I will not pursue every government member in that way, but I do want to point out what voting "no" to this motion really entails, which is to not even allow a consideration of whether the privileges of the members in this House have been breached, and ultimately, because this is a document with wide public interest, whether the privileges of all Nova Scotians have been breached.

Before I sit down, I will say that my only regret about the motion is that statements about being on track extend far beyond just the member for Halifax Fairview to the entire front bench of the government Party. That's why the committee needs to do its work, so all Nova Scotians can finally see what really happened.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. It was irrelevant to the motion.

The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MS. MICHELE RAYMOND: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this motion. I feel it is extraordinarily important that this House be permitted to do its work. I have no knowledge whatsoever of the matters under consideration concerning the Minister of Finance's statements. However, I do believe that the House needs to be permitted to do its work. (Applause)

The House is an assembly of people whose statements are taken *prima facie* to be true, and if that is permitted to be questioned outside of the House, then all of the House and the representations which it makes are under question. We must, for the integrity of the House, consider this matter within the House first. Thank you.

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

We will now have a recorded vote.

Are the Whips satisfied?

I will now ask the Clerks to take a recorded vote.

**YEAS**

Ms. Raymond  
 Mr. Gaudet  
 Mr. Glavine  
 Ms. Whalen  
 Mr. McNeil  
 Mr. Samson  
 Mr. d'Entremont  
 Mr. Baillie  
 Mr. Bain  
 Mr. Porter  
 Mr. MacMaster  
 Mr. MacLeod  
 Mr. Orrell  
 Mr. Younger  
 Ms. Regan  
 Ms. Casey  
 Mr. Colwell  
 Mr. Zinck  
 Mr. Theriault  
 Mr. MacLellan  
 Mr. Churchill

**NAYS**

Mr. Landry  
 Ms. More  
 Mr. Smith  
 Ms. Peterson-Rafuse  
 Mr. Corbett  
 Ms. Maureen MacDonald  
 Mr. Wilson  
 Mr. Paris  
 Ms. Jennex  
 Mr. MacDonell  
 Mr. Belliveau  
 Ms. Zann  
 Ms. Kent  
 Ms. Conrad  
 Mr. Preyra  
 Mr. Parker  
 Mr. MacKinnon  
 Mr. Epstein  
 Mr. Prest  
 Mr. Ramey  
 Mr. Skabar  
 Mr. Whynott  
 Mr. Morton  
 Ms. Birdsall  
 Mr. Burrill

THE CLERK: For, 21. Against, 26.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is defeated.

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the report of the Chief Electoral Officer titled *Recommendations for Changes to the House of Assembly Act*.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS****GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

**RESOLUTION NO. 733**

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

Whereas Nova Scotia and Boston have a long and proud history of supporting each other in times of need; and

Whereas last night, over 1,000 Nova Scotians gathered in Point Pleasant Park and ran together, united, as a silent tribute to the victims of the Boston Marathon bombing; and

Whereas Nova Scotians remain committed to our special relationship with the people of Boston, and will continue to support the city as it rebuilds and heals from this horrible tragedy;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join together in honouring the three dead and 180 injured, and recognize the message that has become a beacon of hope for people around the world: Boston Strong.

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 the Public Service Commission.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to make an introduction before I read the resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, joining us in the east gallery today are representatives from the Halifax-Dartmouth Chapter of the International Association of Administrative Professionals. I ask them to stand when I read their names: Lisa Young, Patricia Mombourquette, Fiona Marshall, and they are joined by Steven Stewart, part of our CNS staff assigned to the Public Service Commission. I ask all members to give them a warm welcome.

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

The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 734**

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

Whereas administrative professionals play essential roles in coordinating the operations of businesses, government, educational institutions, and other organizations; and

Whereas the work of administrative professionals requires advance knowledge and expertise in communications, computer software, office technology, project management, organization, customer service, and other vital management responsibilities; and

Whereas the week of April 21<sup>st</sup> to April 27<sup>th</sup> is Administrative Professionals Week, honouring those who make offices work and reflecting the integral role that office professionals play in the workplace;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House acknowledge the valuable contributions made by administrative professionals in workplaces across Nova Scotia and recognize that a well-trained workforce is essential for success in today's business 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 Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 735**

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

Whereas school principals play a vital and valued role in their schools and communities; and

Whereas Halifax Regional School Board principals Karyn Cooling of Cunard Junior High School and Karen Webber of Oyster Pond Academy were recognized with the Canada's Outstanding Principals Award by The Learning Partnership; and

Whereas Karyn Cooling and Karen Webber were nominated by their peers, school staff, and community members for the national award;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Karyn Cooling and Karen Webber on receiving the Outstanding Principals Award, and recognize their continued outstanding work as educators and community members.

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. 56 - Entitled an Act to Promote Cyberbullying Intervention and Parental Responsibility. (Mr. Allan MacMaster)**

**Bill No. 57 - Entitled an Act Respecting Language Schools for International Students. (Hon. Frank Corbett)**

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

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 736**

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

Whereas Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her accession to the throne 60 years ago with her Diamond Jubilee in 2012; and

Whereas the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal was struck to commemorate this once-in-a-lifetime event, and Canadians who have made a difference or a significant contribution to our country have been presented with this medal throughout this year; and

Whereas Anne Hebb was honoured with the presentation of a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal at a special ceremony on August 17, 2012, for her exceptional commitment to volunteerism and her dedicated work on behalf of Bedford United Church and her community of Clayton Park West;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Anne Hebb on her Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, and acknowledge with gratitude her dedication and commitment to strengthening our community bonds and helping eliminate discrimination in all its forms.

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. 737**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: M. le Président, a une date ultérieure je demanderai l'adoption de la résolution suivante:

Attendu que en 2004, le pape Jean-Paul II a conféré le titre de Monseigneur au Père Gérald LeBlanc qui était le curé à l'église Saint-Michel dans son village natal de Wedgeport; et

Attendu que Monseigneur LeBlanc a eu de nombreuses postes dans l'archidiocèse de Halifax-Yarmouth, Vicaire et curé de Stella Maris, Meteghan, Vicaire de la cathédrale Saint-Ambroise à Yarmouth, pasteur et administrateur à l'église Saint-Pierre de Pubnico-Ouest et l'église de l'Immaculée-Conception à Pubnico-Est jusqu'aujourd'hui; et

Attendu que Monseigneur LeBlanc va célébrer le 50<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de son ordination le 23 mai 2013 à Pubnico-Ouest entouré par sa famille, ses amis et paroissiens passés et présents;

Par conséquent, qu'il soit résolu que tous les membres de cette Assemblée félicitent Monseigneur LeBlanc pour ses 50 ans de dévotion spirituelle et son dévouement à sa vocation.

M. le Président, je demande l'adoption de cette résolution sans préavis et sans débat.

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

Whereas in 2004 Pope John Paul II conferred the title of Monsignor to Father Gerald LeBlanc who was, at that time, parish priest at St. Michael's Church in his native village of Wedgeport; and

Whereas Monsignor LeBlanc has had many postings in the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth: Vicar and pastor of Stella Maris in Meteghan, Vicar of St. Ambrose Cathedral in Yarmouth, pastor and administrator at St. Peter's Church in West Pubnico and Immaculate Conception Church in East Pubnico; and

Whereas Monsignor LeBlanc will be celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his ordination on May 23, 2013, in West Pubnico, surrounded by his family, friends, and parishioners past and present;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Monsignor LeBlanc for 50 years of spiritual devotion and dedication to his vocation.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 738**

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

Whereas on April 16, 2013, Commander Hadfield performed a unique science experiment, testing the weightlessness of water and its path in space, live on board the International Space Station and broadcast to over 1,200 students and onlookers at Lockview High School; and

Whereas Lockview High's Grades 10 and 11 math teacher, Mr. John Munro, encouraged the two winning students to submit an experiment into the Canadian Science Challenge, and was also the emcee and host of the special event; and

Whereas the Canadian Science Challenge was launched last September, inviting students to submit a unique science experiment using only those items already available on board the International Space Station;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in congratulating John Munroe for his role in this unique experiment connecting space to the classroom.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 739**

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

Whereas Shelley Rector, a teacher at Middleton Regional High School since 1995 and with the Annapolis Valley School Board for 26 years, knows that delivering a quality education happens not only in the classroom but beyond the confines of the school and out into the community; and

Whereas field trips involving youth, animals, the Bay of Fundy, and farm life contributed to creating well-rounded students in this dedicated teacher's Oceans and Agrifoods classes; and

Whereas Shelley's commitment to sustainability and good stewardship is also evident through her involvement in the Environment Club, Teens Against Poverty, and the Clarence 4-H Club;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Middleton Regional High School teacher Shelley Rector on being named the recipient of the 2013 Annapolis Valley Regional School Board Education Week Award in Teaching for a Sustainable 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 Cape Breton North.

**RESOLUTION NO. 740**

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 new novel called *Little One*, about a brave and intelligent ant and her discovery of the wider world, was written by North Sydney native Phil Organ; and

Whereas publisher Ron Caplan said that Mr. Organ “holds up a compelling and often disturbing mirror to the way we humans live,” and that the book possesses “kernels of terror, and kernels of exquisite light”; and

Whereas younger readers will be captivated by *Little One*’s inquisitiveness, kindness, and daring generosity, and adult readers will be challenged by the unique ideas in the book;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Phil Organ on the publication of his book, and wish him well as he spends his retirement years writing and painting.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill.

**RESOLUTION NO. 741**

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

Whereas Rita MacNeil, Cape Breton's First Lady of Song, was honoured, mourned, and celebrated yesterday in Big Pond, and is a dear friend to me as well as countless other Nova Scotians who worked with her and considered her a musical mentor and a staunch feminist, or who were simply fans of her beautiful music and admirers of this great ambassador for Nova Scotia and for Canada; and

Whereas Rita's daughter Laura Lewis, son and manager Wade Langham, her grandchildren, and all of her family and friends from Big Pond and beyond watched in awe as Rita showed us her strength and perseverance in the face of great challenges in the pursuit of her dreams; and

Whereas Rita MacNeil will be remembered for her 24 albums and cross-country and international tours to countries like Scotland, Ireland, England, Japan, and Australia, where she became a huge international star greeted by hundreds of thousands of fans, along with her top-notch band, which included Nova Scotians Al Strickland, Scott Macmillan, Dave Burton, Allie Bennett, Clarence Deveau, Al MacCumber, Bill McCauley, Lisa MacDougall, and Ralph Dillon, who also produced her early albums, including *Flying On Your Own*, which was her first album to go platinum;

Therefore be it resolved that this Nova Scotia Legislature honour the life of a great Nova Scotian, Rita MacNeil, and thank her family and friends for their loving support of this wonderful icon of Nova Scotian culture.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Clare.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 742**

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of every community in Nova Scotia, and the people of Clare are proud of the many dedicated individuals who give of themselves each day to make our municipality a better place to live; and

Whereas this year the Clare community has selected one of its outstanding citizens as Volunteer of the Year, and this individual has given much in the way of time and energy to various organizations; and

Whereas through this individual's genuine warmth and caring toward others, she has become a valuable asset to the organizations that she has been involved in;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alice Cleveland of St. Martin for being named Clare's Volunteer of the Year for outstanding contribution to her community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 743**

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

Whereas Harry Henderson of Sydney Forks was a recent recipient of the 2013 Anne Holland Memorial Award; and

Whereas Harry is a very active senior in his community and has been a dedicated volunteer for more than six decades; and

Whereas over the years, Harry has been active organizing events, raising funds, and working for every organization, not only in Sydney Forks, but surrounding communities as well;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Harry Henderson on receiving the 2013 Anne Holland Memorial Award, and wish him many more active years in the Sydney Forks area.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 744**

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

Whereas Cole Harbour resident Paul Mason has been an educator for 21 years, most recently as principal of Ross Road School for the past three; and

Whereas Paul, after a brief break for the past two seasons, is returning to coaching baseball this summer, a sport he has coached since 1979; and

Whereas Paul has been coaching minor hockey in Cole Harbour since 1979 as well, where players such as Darren Beals, Joe DiPenta, Sean Avery, and Sidney Crosby have honed their skills with his mentorship before embarking on successful professional careers;

Therefore be it resolved that this Nova Scotia House of Assembly thank Paul Mason for over three decades of selfless, dedicated service to his community and to the sports of baseball and hockey, and wish him well for decades to come.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.



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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Preston.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 745**

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

Whereas James Colford, a resident of East Chezzetcook, spent 30-some years working for Maritime Tel & Tel and Aliant, and after retiring, he became a very successful real estate agent with Century 21; and

Whereas James has been very active in his community, and has volunteered in the Gaetz Brook Junior High School Advisory Council, The Birches Nursing Home, the Chezzetcook Food Bank, and he continues to volunteer at St. Genevieve's Church and is still active in the Chezzetcook Recreation Society; and

Whereas James has researched and written a 12-book history and genealogy of 39 families from the Chezzetcook area for the Chezzetcook Historical Society, of which he is a member, and copies of same have been placed in all the local schools, the Musquodoboit Harbour Library, as well as Memory Lane Heritage Village in Lake Charlotte;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join me in congratulating James Colford for his tremendous contribution to the families of his community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hants West.

**RESOLUTION NO. 746**

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

Whereas the Valley Wildcats under head coach and Woodville, Hants County native Nick Greenough, opened the Canadian Major Midget AAA Hockey Championship in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario last night against the host North Stars, with another game scheduled for later this afternoon against the Ottawa 67s; and

Whereas Hants West residents Michael Dill of Windsor and Makail Parker from Ashdale are part of the Wildcats, who are the first Valley team since the 1979 Kentville Wildcats to play in such a prestigious national championship; and

Whereas Parker proved to be a smooth playmaker all season long for the Wildcats, collecting 17 assists to go along with his nine goals, while Dill scored eight goals and added nine assists in regular-season play;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly take a moment today to recognize the significant achievements accomplished by the Greenough-coached Wildcats in 2012-13 and the hard-working efforts of both Dill and Parker, and wish them every success in their goal to reach the national championship game to be televised by TSN Sunday afternoon.

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. 747**

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

Whereas Education Week is held from April 21<sup>st</sup> to April 27<sup>th</sup> to honour teachers and educational partners' commitment to their students, with this year's theme Teaching for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas Amy McCormack, a Grade 4 teacher at the East Richmond Education Centre, has created the Green Team and has worked tirelessly to teach students how to properly sort and recycle in the cafeteria; and

Whereas Amy and her Green Team have made videos and done presentations to all classes in the school to help promote a healthy environment and stress the importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling waste;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate East Richmond Education Centre teacher Amy McCormack on receiving an Education Week Award for the creation of her Green Team and her dedicated work with students, which is a great example of teaching for a sustainable 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 Richmond.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 748**

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

Whereas Meghan Martell, daughter of Blaire and Mariel Martell of L'Ardoise, has made an impressive modelling debut; and

Whereas while a Richmond County student, Meghan was photographed last October by Sydney-based photographer John Ratchford, later winning the Ratchford Next Top Model Competition and a trip to California; and

Whereas Meghan subsequently entered the Seniors Ignite Modeling Competition and earned the People's Choice TOP GIRL Distinction after a swell of on-line support that put her ahead of the second-place finisher by more than 800 votes;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Meghan Martell on her modelling success, and wish her continued success in her studies and future modelling.

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. 749**

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 Grades 3 to 6 students at the Debert Elementary School in Colchester North held an informative fair on January 30<sup>th</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup> of this year; and

Whereas the message of anti-bullying in schools focused on the positive, increasing everyone's level of understanding about diversity and acceptance in order to promote better relationships; and

Whereas 31 topics were presented by Grades 3 to 6 students who were well informed to discuss their topics, answer questions, and offer first-hand experiences to their projects;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate the staff of Debert Elementary School for their commitment to education, and to the students for their excellent research and their skill in passing information on to their audience.

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. 750**

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the extensive efforts of the many volunteers who make Bedford a wonderful place in which to live; and

Whereas 16-year-old Dexter Fennell volunteers his time with a number of organizations including 1<sup>st</sup> Bedford Scouts, where he is active in all its programs, and Bedford United Church, where he has participated in many service initiatives including Vacation Bible School, the United Church National General Council, and a 10-day service mission in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador; and

Whereas Dexter was a counsellor-in-training at Camp Abegweit in P.E.I., organized a food drive to support Feed Nova Scotia while he was still in junior high, and is active in many activities at Charles P. Allen High School including student political initiatives, and musical and theatrical pursuits as well;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dexter Fennell on being named the 2013 Bedford Youth Volunteer of the Year and thank him for his thoughtful and responsible efforts to better life in Bedford and beyond.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 751**

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

Whereas on Sunday, January 20, 2013, swim teams from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and P.E.I. competed in the annual Tri-Meet event in Halifax; and

Whereas Yarmouth's Mary Beth Brown, a Grade 7 honours student at Maple Grove Education Centre and member of the Yarmouth Y Whitecaps was the only swimmer representing Yarmouth on the select Nova Scotia 2013 All-Star team; and

Whereas Mary Beth Brown placed first in both the 50 fly and the 50 breast, second in the 50 free, was the lead swimmer in the second place 4 x 50 free relay team, swam the breast stroke leg of the first place 4 x 50 medley relay team and Team Nova Scotia won the meet;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Yarmouth's Mary Beth Brown on her success as a member of the Nova Scotia 2013 All Star swim team, recognize her for so impressively representing Yarmouth and Nova Scotia, and wish her all the best in what will surely be a very bright future in the pool.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

**RESOLUTION NO. 752**

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

Whereas on March 19<sup>th</sup> the Canadian National Powerlifting Championships were held in Richmond, B.C., where Digby power lifter Paul Gidney took the opportunity to bring home the gold; and

Whereas after competing in three powerlifting events - squat, bench press and dead lift - Paul set a Canadian record in the final event, lifting 290 kilograms, 27.5 kilograms greater than his previous record; and

Whereas Paul Gidney competed in the 105-kilogram Master 2 division for men over 50, winning the gold, qualifying him for the World Master Powerlifting Championship this September in Orlando, Florida;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate power lifter Paul Gidney from Digby on his outstanding achievements and wish him many more record-breaking successes.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Preston.

**RESOLUTION NO. 753**

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

Whereas Douglas MacCabe, a resident of Lake Echo, is an artist who has been successfully painting for the past 30 years and who has studied under Cheri Smith of England and also under the late William deGarthe; and

Whereas he held a class for some 25 junior high school students in his area, introducing them to the arts, teaching them to paint and mix colours for some three hours or more each session, at no cost to the students, as well he illustrated several books, worked as a volunteer for Literacy Nova Scotia, and also taught an adult class to paint at Bloomfield School for a number of years; and

Whereas he was also one of the six founders of the Citizens on Patrol in Lake Echo and stayed with them until his health left him no option but to retire from the organization;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join me in recognizing Douglas MacCabe for the many contributions he has made to his community and to Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 754**

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 Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture's P. Max Kuhn Scholarship is worth \$2,000; and

Whereas the scholarship is presented to a Nova Scotia student with a farm background and who is enrolled full time in a program that demonstrates an interest in working in the agricultural industry; and

Whereas Emma Eisses of Debert, Colchester North, a fourth-year Bachelor of Science student, was the recipient of the P. Max Kuhn Scholarship;



Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Emma Eisses for being the recipient of this award and for her continued success with her studies.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 755**

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the extensive efforts of the many volunteers who make Bedford a wonderful place in which to live; and

Whereas Alana Coneen has been a key volunteer and inspiring role model in the Girl Guide movement in Bedford, serving as a Spark Guider, a Brownie Guider and a Guide Guider and serving as district secretary as well; and

Whereas Alana has also volunteered for many years with the Parents of Multiple Births (she's the mother of twins), as well as the Bedford Beavers Swim Team, the Bedford Ringette Association and Sunnyside Schools;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alana Coneen on being named the 2013 Bedford Adult Volunteer of the Year, and thank her for her inspired and dedicated efforts on behalf of the young people of Bedford.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 756**

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

Whereas the Prince Andrew Players is the renowned and long-standing drama group of Prince Andrew High School in Dartmouth; and

Whereas each Spring, family, friends, and fans mark their calendars for Prince Andrew Players annual productions which showcase the theatrical talents of students, staff, and community volunteers; and

Whereas the Prince Andrew Players presented *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from February 27 to March 2, 2013 at the Prince Andrew High School auditorium;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the cast and crew of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on their heartening performance and acknowledge the good work of Prince Andrew Players, wishing the players many more years of 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 Kings West.

**RESOLUTION NO. 757**

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

Whereas April 21<sup>st</sup> to April 27<sup>th</sup> marks National Volunteer Week, a week to acknowledgement and to celebrate the many contributions volunteers make 365 days a year; and

Whereas this year's theme of National Volunteer Week - "Volunteers: Passion. Action. Impact." - celebrates the attitude volunteers possess to get involved, and 14 Wing Greenwood and area communities are the recipients of the invaluable impact volunteers make; and

Whereas this recognition evening, held at 14 Wing Greenwood, is a tribute to those who strengthen our community and make our province a much better and caring place in which to live;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate and commend all those being honoured on April 24<sup>th</sup> and encourage continued volunteerism.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Clare.

**RESOLUTION NO. 758**

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

Whereas the 2013 Atlantic Karate Championships were held in Fredericton, New Brunswick on February 16-17, 2013; and

Whereas Trysten Deveau from Clare won a gold medal in the girls kumite 14-15 division as well as a silver medal in the girls kumite 16-17 division; and

Whereas Trysten qualified to represent Nova Scotia at the 2013 Canadian National Karate Championships from March 15<sup>th</sup> to March 17<sup>th</sup> in Toronto;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Trysten for winning her gold and silver medals at the 2012 Atlantic Karate Championship and wish her all the best at the upcoming 2013 Canadian National Karate Championship in Toronto.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

MR. SPEAKER: Question Period will begin at 1:10 p.m. and end at 2:10 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

### **ENERGY - MAR. LINK PROJ.: HEARINGS - DEADLINE EXTEND**

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, last week a significant amount of evidence was filed with the Utility and Review Board that sharply criticizes Nova Scotia Power and the Maritime Link project. Experts hired by The Consumer Advocate and The Small Business Advocate stated that the Maritime Link is not the lowest, long-term cost alternative for ratepayers in the province and they offered proof of this assertion.

My question to the Deputy Premier is, in light of the evidence filed by these experts, will the NDP Government extend the deadline of the hearing before the URB.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Someone has got a good question; well he's going to get a good answer. The answer, quite simply put, is we've answered this question many

times and the Muskrat Falls and the Maritime Link is our best solution and we're going forward with it. (Interruption) See, Mr. Speaker, I've been finally stumped by another Cape Bretoner. But that's where we're going and the URB has the tools in which to decide this and I have every confidence in the board. They will move this forward in the timely manner that fits their schedule.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I think the Deputy Premier might have made a mistake there. He was actually going right beyond the Utility and Review Board and suggesting his government was going to push it right through. It wasn't just The Consumer Advocate or The Small Business Advocate but the Canadian Wind Energy Association as well, an association that is trying to bring business to Nova Scotia, business that the NDP Government is steadfastly against - it's called small business. If it doesn't have "Nova Scotia Power" or "corporation" attached to its name, the NDP Government isn't interested.

So my question to the Deputy Premier is, why is the NDP Government so soundly against independent renewable energy, jobs, and investments in Nova Scotia?

MR. CORBETT: I'd like to know from the Leader of the Official Opposition why he's against COMFIT, Mr. Speaker. I mean we've been working with these small utilities for quite some time, these people out with the wind energy. I don't know what more we can say on that. We've been working with these people. We've been the Party that's been moving it forward not standing in their way, not granting - with the set-up of Emera like the Liberals did. We are helping these folks, through COMFIT, and if they don't accept that, well?

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, this government is doing exactly what Nova Scotia Power tells them to do, let's be very clear about that. The Deputy Premier, the Premier, and the entire NDP Government are blindly championing a project that will cost Nova Scotians a minimum of \$1.5 billion but they can't tell us what it will mean to power bills until 2017. They won't extend the deadline of this hearing to ensure that Nova Scotians have a full review of this project and get a full hearing on all the evidence that has been put before the board. My question to the Deputy Premier is, why is the NDP Government and Nova Scotia Power hiding from the people of this province.

MR. CORBETT: I don't know what he's talking about with hiding, Mr. Speaker. It is at the Utility and Review Board, part of the name is public. We are there in the public doing it. I don't know why he keeps saying extend the deadline, that's because a couple of his friends may see that view but the board hasn't asked. We're going forward with it. (Interruption) I know the member for Dartmouth East is having a hard time keeping that hinge on his tongue together but the fact is we're going forward with this. The board is working on it, doing the right thing for all Nova Scotians and it will be done properly.

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

**FIN. - BUDGET (2012-13) DISCREPANCY:  
TREASURY BD. - CORRESPONDENCE**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, we in the PC Caucus sent a freedom of information request to the government asking for detailed correspondence around the decision the government made to not tell Nova Scotians about the \$27 million hole they had in their budget. We received 23 pages back, one of which was seriously blacked out.

The government has been keeping the decision around not telling people about the \$27 million from the people of Nova Scotia and this is just the latest example. I'll table that actually for the Deputy Premier, the blacked-out version, and ask him, will he agree today - never mind the freedom of information request - will he agree today to provide all of the correspondence around Treasury Board's decision not to tell Nova Scotians about the \$27 million mistake?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, you know, I don't know where the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, who does his questions but, I don't know, did he and his caucus sleep through the day that the Deputy Finance Minister was here and went through the whole system with him? Did they not hear it there? They keep saying these things, hiding, Mr. Speaker. We're very open about this and we're trying to answer their questions, but they just won't listen.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I was here the day that the Deputy Finance Minister talked about the \$27 million. What she exactly said, and the record will show it, is that the decision to not tell the people of Nova Scotia was made by the Treasury Board, the very board that that member who just answered a question is responsible for.

Now I pointed out that when we asked for the presentations that went to Treasury Board, we got a 23-page response, one of those pages was blacked out. Well I happen to have the other 22 pages with me, and I'll table them, and every single number, every single item in those 22 pages is also blacked out.

That has nothing to do with the Deputy Minister of Finance, who is not elected, and everything to do with the president of the Treasury Board, the Deputy Premier, who is elected, who did make a decision not to tell Nova Scotians why they presented a budget that was missing \$27 million.

I'll ask the Deputy Premier, if they truly have nothing to hide in this matter, will he agree to release publicly all of the presentations and correspondence at Treasury Board dealing with the \$27 million mistake?

MR. CORBETT: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member is asking these questions and he knows full well that these have been answered before and because of either just folks around his bench that have really not much insight into how government works - these have

been put forward - there was a timeline for the budget to be written and he knows that and we've told him that time and time again. That's the reality of it.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, here is a little insight for the Deputy Premier on how government should work - when you make a mistake and you know it, and you know it in time to change the budget you should tell the truth to the people of Nova Scotia. That's how government should work. (Applause)

What is so ironic is that when they were in Opposition the NDP promised more transparency in government. Yet here we have an example where they knowingly presented a budget saying they were on track when, in fact, they weren't, and when we ask for the information they don't give it to us, or to anyone else, Mr. Speaker, and that is what's wrong.

So as long as the Deputy Premier insists on keeping the information away from the people of Nova Scotia, I will ask him, will he apologize to the people of Nova Scotia for keeping them in the dark right up until today?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please, order. I wonder in that question did I hear that the honourable member was saying that the Deputy Premier wasn't telling the truth? That is unparliamentary to suggest that.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is will he apologize for not providing Nova Scotians with all the information.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, I'm just hoping - it is imputed motive to say that the honourable member is not telling the truth.

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, you know what? Maybe we'll play a little game here with the member - when he apologizes to the Auditor General, when questions he asked the Auditor General around it they were fixed and maybe he should apologize for the AG when the AG looked at our budget this year and gave it an unqualified thumbs-up. That's what he should apologize. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

### **JUSTICE - MACINTOSH CASE: ERRORS - EXPLAIN**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians were shocked yesterday to learn that Ernest Fenwick MacIntosh will be a free man. Our thoughts are clearly with his victims and their families at this unfortunate decision.

What is even more disappointing is the fact that charges for which Mr. MacIntosh was convicted were overturned due to the mishandling of the case by our justice system.

While there are clear issues regarding the extradition process, the fact is that it took the Nova Scotia Public Prosecution Service three years to bring Mr. MacIntosh to court after he was back in Canada.

My question is, will the Minister of Justice explain to Nova Scotians and to Mr. MacIntosh's victims - what went wrong here?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I can only imagine how heartbreaking this news was for those who testified about abuse. I do know that Nova Scotians are outraged and they want to know how this could have happened.

I'm very pleased that the Director of Public Prosecutions is doing a review and is going to get that report to me, that the RCMP are conducting a review and are going to get their report to me. They have advised me that they are going to get that within the next two or three weeks, so that will put me in a better position to have some context.

We know the historical nature of this file - it goes back into the 1970s, and the decade that this matter has been in the process raises concerns to everyone. I do know that tomorrow I'm going to have the opportunity to speak to my counterparts in Ottawa and this is one of the issues that I'm putting on. I couldn't agree more with the member's question is that we do need to take that and I want to assure all Nova Scotians that this government and this minister respects the point of view that's out there and that we're on top of this issue.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the facts show that the allegations against Mr. MacIntosh came forward in the 1990s. It took over 10 years to extradite him back to Canada and, once in Canada, it took a further three years for the Public Prosecution Service here in Nova Scotia to take action. At that point the Public Prosecution Service had to know that there was going to be a significant risk that Mr. MacIntosh was going to argue that justice had been delayed here, yet they waited three full years to finally bring this matter to court.

Mr. Speaker, when the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal in December 2011 overturned the convictions due to the delays that had taken place, I asked the Minister of Justice to immediately order a review of what had taken place here.

My question is, will the Minister of Justice explain why he refused to take action in 2011 to find out why the breakdown in the justice system took place and allowed the 18 counts of indecent assault and gross indecency against four boys to be overturned by our courts?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, as the Attorney General, I accept and respect the decision of the Supreme Court and I'm outraged with the fact that there are the allegations of abuse that have gone forward and are no longer before the court.



The fact is, as the member clearly pointed out, that this case goes back to the 1990s and that it is over 10 years old and that I am going to talk to my federal counterpart tomorrow and discuss this issue and my concerns surrounding that. I think it's very important, as the Attorney General, that I have sound facts and information and those reviews will be very critical to me. It's important that I don't overreact and make decisions that are not informed. I think it's critical to have information.

The member knows that when the court process is going on, that's not the time to do the review - it is see the findings of the court, get the information, and then conduct and move forward in a very practical manner.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the administration of justice and ensuring that justice is seen to be done in this province, one thing this Minister of Justice will never be accused of is overreacting.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice can't have it both ways. He stands in the House today and says the RCMP are reviewing what they did, the Crown Prosecution Service is reviewing what they did. Yet this is the same minister who created the Serious Incident Response Team to investigate serious incidents following police when he stated it's inappropriate that police would be reviewing themselves when a serious incident takes place.

Nova Scotians want a public inquiry, independent, to see exactly what went on here. If the Minister of Justice is going to Ottawa, we would hope he would be giving the same message to his federal counterpart, that there should be an independent inquiry as to what went wrong on the federal level when it came to extradition.

My question to the Minister of Justice today is, on behalf of all Nova Scotians who you have acknowledged are outraged, and on behalf of the victims who were proven to be correct by our courts, will you order a public, independent inquiry into the Fenwick MacIntosh case?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for acknowledging that I conduct my business in a very practical, responsible, respectful manner, so thank you for that comment.

I want to reiterate that I will be speaking to my federal counterpart and that I will get sufficient information, so that when decisions are made, Nova Scotians have confidence that they're well informed and that they carry out. I do thank the member for raising the question.

I want to end by saying that in my previous life as an investigator and looking people in the eye, who had been a victim or abused, I understand the conflict that they're in. I understand in this case, those who have alleged abuse and went through the system, how

they must feel. I respect that and will ensure that as I move forward, their conflict will be acknowledged and will be addressed.

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

**JUSTICE - N.S. HOME FOR COLORED CHILDREN:  
PUBLIC INQUIRY - DENIAL EXPLAIN**

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians have been calling on this government to conduct a full public inquiry into the alleged abuses at the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children since last year. Initially, the Premier said they couldn't act while civil and criminal cases were being investigated or were before the courts. That has since passed, and the government has had time to act. It has been years, and the people have been waiting to bring their stories forward and to start the healing.

My question to the Deputy Premier is, why has this government denied Nova Scotians a public inquiry into the alleged abuses at the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for that. I would ask that the Minister of Justice answer that question on behalf of the government.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I know that this is a long, emotional process, and I understand that the former residents want closure. This case has been going on for many years, under successive governments. This government has done more than any other government to give former residents a chance to have their voice, and we will continue to move that process forward. The consultation has been wide amongst the community and stakeholders on this issue. We are listening.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, it has been almost four years. It's time to stop listening and start acting. (Applause)

In the Speech from the Throne, this government committed to a hearing process for people to share their stories. Former residents have called on this government for an inquiry, not a panel, and have asked there be a restorative element of action taken by government so that we can learn from this tragedy and do better by our fellow citizens.

My question for the Deputy Premier is, will the Deputy Premier tell those individuals who continue to carry the weight of abuses suffered at the Home why his government has been inactive in their request for an inquiry?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, to the Leader of the Liberal Party, this government has been anything but inactive. We've been dialoguing with the folks at the Home. We've been very proactive with them, and we've been discussing - in the member's question,

we've been entering into dialogues with those folks. We're trying to move this file forward.

I understand that these types of instances are very emotional, and we are trying to proceed as carefully and as judiciously as possible with the respect of the perceived victims.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the government has been talking to residents of the Home for Colored Children, but they're not listening to them. Even in their statement from the Speech from the Throne, they alleged this was being supported by the victims, when in actual fact, if anyone listened to the dialogue that happened outside of this House, that is absolutely false. The victims in this case want a public inquiry.

Will the Deputy Premier tell those residents who are looking to this government to act and to right a wrong, why his government is just sitting on this file?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, it's confusing, because in part of his question, he rolls off a litany of things that we are doing to resolve this, and then he denies it over here. We are doing something, by the mere fact - if he'd just listen to his own question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

#### **JUSTICE - MACINTOSH CASE: INTERNAL REVIEW - RESULT**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. The people who worked on the Fenwick MacIntosh Case already know exactly why they failed to bring this man before the courts. We don't. There is no need to wait weeks for an internal review. The minister could have completed his review long ago. He has been aware for at least a year that there were serious questions around the delay of the prosecution of MacIntosh - questions raised in public by those who courageously came forward to tell their stories of abuse, and also by the court of appeal.

My question is, would the minister show that he has a heart and that he cares about what the victims of abuse went through and explain the result of his internal review by the end of this week?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: I want to thank the member for raising the question, because obviously he missed the Official Opposition Party asking the question earlier and the answer that I gave. I'm not so sure why he didn't hear it, but I'll repeat it.

I can't stress enough from a personal perspective that my heart goes out to all those who brought allegations forward before the court, and the outcome that has occurred for them. As the Attorney General, I respect the decisions of the Supreme Court and their

decision. I want to read the court's decision in more depth, and I also want to get direct feedback from the public prosecutions and from the RCMP. I don't think it would have been appropriate for me to ask for that prior to getting the decision of the court and the outcome, while that process is on. Everybody knows that that is a requirement within my office.

So, unequivocally, since he raised the question about having a heart, I want to look people straight in the eye. I've spent a lifetime dealing with these issues, and I am committed to the people of Nova Scotia and anyone who is abused.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, these matters could have been reviewed internally by the minister over the past year, but I want to go beyond this idea of an internal review, because can we really trust those who failed to bring MacIntosh to court to fairly review themselves? We need an independent review.

As we speak, the minister has officials in Ottawa offering to help on a bill for victims' rights - a victims' bill of rights. Yet back home, he plans to do an internal review.

It begs the question, Mr. Speaker, what is the goal of the minister? This minister represents the justice system in Nova Scotia. Can't he do something more than just bury this issue?

MR. LANDRY: Well, thank you to the member for the question. I'm very pleased that he asked that question and framed it that way, because the issue of victims is something that I had planned for some time to meet with my colleagues across the country. We're meeting in Ottawa tomorrow with my federal counterpart to address that. It's an issue that has been on our minds, and something that I've been working on for some time. So I do take this seriously.

Nova Scotia is not an island, the last time I checked - although you, being from Cape Breton, your part is - and we do not act alone. On these types of issues, we consult with other Ministers of Justice across the country, and the federal-provincial-territorial process. That's what's there. I have a meeting to speak directly to the federal minister. Short of going to the Prime Minister, that's as high as we can go on the issue. It's dialogue that has been ongoing. It is timely that the court decision has come back and I'm able to discuss these direct issues with the federal minister.

I hope that he shares his point of view and his Party's point of view with his contacts in Ottawa, so that when I am there, we have a consensus from Nova Scotia that we're deeply concerned about this and that we have to work in conjunction with our federal counterparts, and our other provincial-territorial, to set good policy in the rule of law enforced across the province.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I've heard a lot of talk but I haven't heard the minister say anything about doing an independent review. Now I know that the people who have been affected by this want an independent review and I think our actions in this Legislature speak volumes about where we stand on matters.

Now an independent review, with the input from victims, will verify whether the Public Prosecution Service is actually telling the truth. Will the minister do the right thing and not only ask for that Public Prosecution Service to deliver their report by the end of this week but also engage a full, independent review to see what went wrong, to honour the bravery of the victims who came forward to tell their stories?

MR. LANDRY: You know, I think Nova Scotians expect that the Auditor General would get sufficient information and have the knowledge and background on events that have occurred. When we talked about the truth, you, as a member, may not believe in the Public Prosecution Service. They are an independent body, from government, from the politicians directing them. There is a way and a method to assess and question them, and we are going to get to the bottom of this. There is a huge component of this with the federal government. I think it's critical that I meet and have dialogue with the federal government.

In addition, looking at how this issue was handled by previous administrations may be an area that may be needed. When the member talks about truth, I have a lot of concern when it comes from that Party on these types of issues.

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

#### **STATUS OF WOMEN: AVALON CTR. - EMERGENCY FUNDING**

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre has met with members of this government to discuss the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program, the shortage of sexual assault counsellors across the province, and the chronic underfunding of sexual assault services. In the wake of recent news reports, the number of calls to the centre has increased. More people are reaching out for support and are turning to the centre, the very centre that was underfunded in the first place and where people have to wait six months for counselling services because of understaffing.

My question is to the Deputy Premier. The Avalon Sexual Assault Centre is calling for emergency funding to deal with the onslaught of calls, so will you commit to providing the centre with emergency funding?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I think all Parties will agree that no matter who sits on this side of the floor, we support the work of the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre. I would ask the minister responsible if she could answer it in more fullness for the member.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I want to start my answer by commending all those who provide support services to women and girls in this province for the excellent work they have done over many, many years. Certainly the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre is part of that network.

One thing we want to do is make sure that the changes that happen in this province are done so they provide a comprehensive, coordinated support infrastructure across this province. Currently the province supports the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre to the tune of about \$640,000. Is this enough money for those services? Probably not, but we want to make sure that the changes or any improvements we make are done to support all women in this province.

For example, there is spotty coverage. In some regions of this province there is fairly good support; in other areas they don't have access to those programs and services. This isn't a time to look, necessarily, at the mandate and work of one organization. We are trying to be strategic and make sure that we bring all the organizations together to have more coverage across Nova Scotia. Thank you.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre submitted a needs assessment in 2008, so that was five years ago - five years and no response to recommendations from government. It took a public tragedy for this government to wake up to the sexual assault crisis in this province. It has been five years and we still have the highest rates of sexual assaults in the country and the lowest conviction rates. The need for funding is not a new phenomenon.

Will the Deputy Premier commit to sustainable funding for sexual assault services across the province?

MR. CORBETT: I believe that the minister had answered that in her previous question, but again, for more clarity, I'll ask the minister responsible to answer the question.

MS. MORE: I'm not going to stand in this Chamber and defend the status quo. Have we done enough and have we done it fast enough? The answer is no, but there is a renewed commitment. Right across this province, as we hear more and more incidents of sexual violence against women and girls in this province, we have to do something. There is enough blame to go around. I think every single individual in this province can probably think of ways that they could have intervened or made life better for girls and women.

We are committed to making a change this time, and we're going to be strategic. It's not a matter of just adding money. We have to work together, and we're going to look at both aspects of that.

I have already met with the executive director of the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre. I'm going to visit their centre and meet with her and some of the counsellors and leadership teams from that centre to get a better sense of what the additional workload might be. The request is under active consideration, but we need to do it in concert with all the other changes that we plan to make. Thank you.

MS. REGAN: The needs assessment was submitted to the former government in 2008. There was also another report submitted the year before about building a SANE network for Nova Scotia. That was submitted in 2007. The blueprint for this has been in the government's hands since it was elected. I will table that report. The Avalon Sexual Assault Centre has been asking for help to meet the needs of its clients since long before this current crisis.

Now the government says we're going to act because of this crisis, but the fact remains that this organization has been underfunded for a long time and it took a national tragedy, a national embarrassment, for this government to wake up. This government has been sitting on recommendations for action the entire time they've been in office. Why should Nova Scotians trust that this government is going to do anything different now?

MR. CORBETT: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the member wants to know about issues that happened in 2008, maybe she can ask the members sitting to her right.

I would like to allow the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act to answer that.

MS. MORE: Again, I'm not going to stand here and defend the status quo. It's not good enough. We all know that, and we're going to move forward on this, but we have to do it in a way that provides excellent or much better coverage in terms of the whole continuum: prevention of sexual violence, interventions, supports, treatment afterward. There are a whole series of actions and supports that have to happen. It has to happen at all levels of government, and there has to be support across our communities.

That's what I've been doing over the past week: talking to municipal councillors and mayors and wardens, talking to community leaders. There has to be a change of attitude and commitment on behalf of all of us, every single individual, and I would say that the change starts with us. I've had a chance to meet with the two Opposition Leaders, and I really appreciate their offers of help. I have not met one person who has approached me in the last week and a half who hasn't said, we have to do better, what can I do to help?

Let's take that interest, that energy, that spotlight on this issue, and make sure there is an improved situation for women and girls in this province. The onus is on all of us, not any particular government. Thank you. (Applause)

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

**FIN. - BUDGET (2012-13): ERROR - CONFIRM**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier. Throughout our questioning of the government about their budget with the \$27 million hole in it, the Deputy Premier and others have consistently said that the reason is simply due to updating of schedules and the need for a cut-off date where they can't accept any new information, and not actually an error in the budget.

That is not what the Auditor General says. From his own report he says: "The error resulted from two main factors . . . A change in the calculation to adjust calendar year revenues determined by revenue models to fiscal year revenues."

In other words, they were using the wrong year-end compared to what the province needs. An actual error, not a matter of just an update to the schedule. I will ask the Deputy Premier if he wants to reconsider his previous defences and tell Nova Scotians that there was an error, a real error, not a cut-off error in the budget that could have been fixed. I will table the schedule for the Deputy Premier.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, try as he will, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party just won't listen. That's his problem. We've told him over and over again there was no error, so to speak, as he likes to put it. The reality was that there was a filling date, we met it, we did the right thing and he just won't accept it.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, like all Nova Scotians, I've been listening very carefully and I still don't hear the proper answer and for that reason I would rather listen to the advice of the Auditor General, in his own report, instead of the Deputy Premier because the Auditor General says very clearly, it's an error. The Treasury Board used the wrong information with the wrong year end and they knew it and the difference was \$27 million and they kept it to themselves. I heard the Auditor General say that and he put it in writing. That's what is in dispute here.

The Deputy Premier had an opportunity to do the right thing and that is to tell Nova Scotians what happened, to provide that information openly. Yet, when we ask for the information, he blanked out 22.5 out of 23 pages. Well, that's not good enough. We're going to continue to ask, will he finally do the right thing and give Nova Scotians all the information his department has on the \$27 million, like we've been asking, and then they can decide for themselves who is listening to them and who isn't?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, they have all the information.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, here's a piece of information that we do have. The current Finance Minister, in an interview outside this Chamber, said: The \$27 million is not a lot of money; in fact, it would not matter one iota to the people of Nova Scotia.



Here's a news flash - \$27 million is a lot of money. You can do a lot of good with \$27 million, like supporting the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre and others like it; that's something that could be done, along with a whole lot of other things. I'll ask the Deputy Premier, does he agree with the Minister of Finance that \$27 million doesn't matter one iota? Are they really that out of touch?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, what I do agree with is later today we will be voting on a balanced budget, a budget that is in surplus and a budget that was brought in by this Finance Minister, one of the best Finance Ministers this province has ever seen. That is what I believe. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

### **ENERGY - MUSKRAT FALLS: ALTERNATIVE - CONSIDER**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Thank you for the applause. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier. The government has chosen to tie its hopes and dreams to a project in Newfoundland and Labrador, rather than looking at the evidence, which has now overwhelmingly been submitted that shows that building out the renewable energy system in Nova Scotia would be cheaper for ratepayers, would provide longer term stability, and would provide better supply protection.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear here. All of the evidence, with the exception of the evidence filed by the government and by Nova Scotia Power, says independently that built-in-Nova Scotia renewable energy would be cheaper for ratepayers.

Mr. Speaker, the consultant for the consumer advocate said we conclude the "analysis was faulty, lacking in robustness, incompletely documented, and biased to favour the Applicant's desired outcome." That is the government's and Nova Scotia Power's information.

Then the board's own consultant called the information submitted by the province and by Nova Scotia Power "Orwellian," and I will table that.

Mr. Speaker, why is the Deputy Premier and the NDP Government refusing to look at local, home-grown renewable energy projects as an alternative to Muskrat Falls?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, you know that member never ceases to amaze me. I always think his name should be "Grimm", for the fairy tales.

The reality is this, has he not heard of the COMFIT plan? We've been introducing locally produced energy throughout this province, the likes that no one has ever seen in this province before by either one of those governments, Mr. Speaker. We do support local, home-grown energy projects and that's the reality.

We're not tying ourselves to Hydro-Québec, we see it as an all-inclusive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I didn't know the Deputy Premier was running for re-election in Newfoundland and Labrador to create jobs there. I thought he wanted jobs in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier mentioned the COMFIT program, so let's talk about the COMFIT program. We certainly haven't forgotten about COMFIT, but the Energy Minister and the government have. In fact, in another consultant's report done for the board by Synapse, which I'll table, it says that the Nova Scotia Government and Nova Scotia Power forgot to include the COMFIT projects in their analysis of available energy.

Mr. Speaker, why would the government on one hand celebrate COMFIT projects publicly and on the other hand allow the Nova Scotia Power and its own consultant to ignore the impact the COMFIT projects have on the financial viability of the Maritime Link?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, (Interruptions) I hear the junior woodchuck from over in Yarmouth mouthing off over there. I'll try to please him.

MR. SPEAKER: That word is unparliamentary.

MR. CORBETT: Is it? Well, if it is - oh my goodness, Mr. Speaker, here I thought you were a friend of wildlife, but I withdraw the term that is offensive to this House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. CORBETT: You know what, Mr. Speaker? If I was to stand for election in Newfoundland and Labrador, they would say, way to go, Frankie boy, you represent the people of Atlantic Canada, you support a made-in-Atlantic Canada solution, not like the Liberals in Nova Scotia who turn their backs on Atlantic Canadians. That's what they would say to me.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, if the Deputy Premier ran for election in Newfoundland and Labrador, they would say thank you for throwing Nova Scotians under the bus so we could get all the economic investment. Every single study filed with the board, with the exception of the government's one and Nova Scotia Power's, says it is not the lowest cost alternative.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP likes to reference Mr. Dalton in his report, and Mr. Dalton says - and we tabled that earlier - that the two analyses support the same finding, that the Maritime Link project is the lowest cost alternative available to Nova Scotia - but the two studies are Nova Scotia Power's and his own initial study.

Mr. Speaker, will the Deputy Premier please explain how it is that the government study, using data supplied by Nova Scotia Power - data already called faulty, incompletely documented, and biased to favour the applicant by other experts - can come to such a radically different conclusion on the financial merits of the project than all of the other independent experts working independently of one another.

MR. CORBETT: You know, I make reference to a wildlife animal and it's out of order and then I listen to the alleged facts in his question, so sometimes the rules are bewildering, Mr. Speaker. But I'm going to tell you what I've got to say - I want to read from the platform in 2009 of the Liberal Party, and I will, like the member for Dartmouth East, table it:

“Atlantic energy sources, such as . . . Newfoundland's Lower Churchill hydro project, are important potential sources of renewable energy. We must ensure that their economic and environmental benefits are shared by all Atlantic Canadians. We can only achieve this goal through enhanced focus and investment in transmission infrastructure.”

Mr. Speaker, what happened?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

#### **ERDT - HIGH-SPEED INTERNET: SERV. - UPDATE**

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. Since 2009 I've stood in my place and asked the minister on multiple occasions for updates regarding the Eastlink issues that customers in my area continue to have with their high-speed connection and for some who are just not able to be connected. Can the minister update us this afternoon on how many of these customers are still having trouble with getting connected to high-speed Internet service?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I can say this, that we certainly as a government sympathize with all of the Nova Scotians who are not connected. Having said that, we remain one of the most connected jurisdictions in the entire world. We're at 99.9 per cent connected, we have less than 800 now that require the hard-to-reach places.

MR. PORTER: Serge Paquette has been calling Eastlink so much that they won't even take his calls any longer yet they don't mind billing him for service he's not receiving. Mr. Paquette lives directly beside the very tower that provides his so-called high-speed service yet as you will see from the data, and I'll table that data, he gets little to no service and this is broken right down by the hour. In conversation with those at Eastlink there are some questions being raised about the hardware to tower site.

Would the minister commit to contacting Eastlink given that the government and taxpayers have a contract with them to provide high-speed Internet service and ensure that the appropriate and most up-to-date hardware is in place to provide the necessary service?

MR. PARIS: I would request that the member submit the name, phone number, and the address of that constituent and I can guarantee you that somebody in our broadband unit will be in touch with the individual and there will also be a follow-up telephone conversation with the service provider.

MR. PORTER: I thank the minister for that commitment, Mr. Paquette will be pleased to once again try to get some results with this issue. Mr. Speaker, there are many people who are and have been paying for high-speed Internet, like Mr. Paquette, and other services that they have just not been receiving and the significant amount of data that I just tabled will actually reflect what that truly represents.

My question to the minister, will he stand with the people in this situation and contact Eastlink in an effort to see that these customers are reimbursed for all the service they have not been provided given that they have now paid for it twice, both as taxpayers and as customers?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, what this minister and what this government will commit to is we will commit to reaching out, contacting those constituents. One of the things that we - in those hard-to-reach places - we've asked the service providers - they are right now doing some experimentation, it has been in place for several weeks and we're hoping that service providers do have a solution, and I say hoping that they have a solution for those hard-to-reach places.

I can say, in all sincerity, we do feel for those who don't have access and we are doing what we can on our end to ensure that all Nova Scotians have access to high-speed Internet.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

### **CNS: EDUC. ADVERTISING - AMOUNT**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Communications Nova Scotia. The amount of money this government has spent on ad campaigns while cutting other needed services has many Nova Scotians shaking their heads. For example, when it comes to public education, the NDP Government cut \$76 million out of classrooms, resulting in 700 teacher cuts and a wait-list of over 2,000 kids trying to access speech pathology and child psychology services. My question for the Minister of Communications Nova Scotia, would he tell members of the House how much his government spent on education advertising while the government was slashing

education spending and keeping us among the lowest per student funding in Canada?  
(Interruptions)

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I have to admit, I don't have that information in front of me. I have it prepared for the estimates. I do know that it is critical that Nova Scotians understand what government is doing and why. Certainly the changes and improvements in our education system are very important, critical information that needs to be shared with Nova Scotians so that parents and guardians better understand how they can support teachers and other support people within that system.

We have actually taken our focus off marketing and advertising from outside Nova Scotia. Like previous governments, we are spending less but we're doing the advertising within Nova Scotia so that Nova Scotia citizens are better informed about programs and services that they want to better understand and have access to.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me apologize to the minister. I had forgotten they had switched portfolios; there was no slight intended.

The NDP Government was telling schools to tighten their budgets while they spent nearly \$750,000 on political advertising - I'll table that. I wonder if the minister can tell members of the House, then, how much was spent on the jobsHere campaign?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, I do have that information but as I said, not in front of me. I certainly would be prepared to answer it during the estimates debate, if the honourable member could wait. Rather than spin off eloquently into other areas, I think I want to focus on his answer and I do have the information and I can bring it to him later today during the Budget Debate. Thank you.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I guess we can hope that we make it to those estimates in the remaining four hours. In 2012 the government spent nearly \$680,000 on TV and print ads alone - I'll table that - on the jobsHere campaign. These aren't ads that tell people about a program or service to which they can apply. That is not to say the government has never run ads that direct them to a service, but the vast majority of the advertising this government has run, while at the same time cutting budgets to universities, cutting apprenticeship training and skills money, and while unemployment was increasing and its projected increase in this government's own budget, is all electioneering.

Mr. Speaker, why is the NDP spending public dollars on election ads over public services?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, I do want to say that we have taken a completely different approach to economic development in this province. We've based it on expert advice that we've received within the first year of taking over office. It's because of that

new approach - I mean, we are trying to improve on the disastrous record of previous governments, in terms of economic development.

The jobsHere and the Workforce Strategy marketing program bring residents of this province up to date in terms of the new strategy and it also directs them to Web sites that provide critical detail that they may want to know, in terms of looking at the opportunities here and better understanding the new approach. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

### **NSCAD - INDEPENDENCE: NDP GOV'T. - STANCE**

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, recent actions by this government to push NSCAD into merging with another institution have people questioning this government's commitment to NSCAD's independence and the arts and the education community itself.

My question to the minister responsible is, does this NDP Government support the independence of the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design or not?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, what we support are the strongest, most viable institutions of higher learning this province has ever seen, from the French Shore right up to Cape Breton Island. We want to support them all, and equally so. Thank you.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, if this minister wanted to support the post-secondary education community, perhaps he should stop cutting millions of dollars out of their budgets every year and handing those dollars to some of the largest corporations that we have in North America.

When it comes to NSCAD in particular, this caucus believes that it is an institution that's important to our arts and education community. We support its independence. We know that there were some financial questions around the administration of NSCAD, and those are now being dealt with.

The institution has put forward a 10-year plan to eliminate its deficit, but still this government continues its attack on their independence. Why is that?

MR. CORBETT: Again, Mr. Speaker, I wonder - a word I said earlier was out of order, but he can use a word like "attack."

We've given that institution \$18 million extra. What world does he live in that he's saying we're attacking that great institution? We've done everything to support it - extra money. We've gone forward with this. The next thing they'll be attacking prepayments. I don't know, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, he doesn't know, and I don't even know what he just meant. The fact of the matter is that an independent NSCAD is essential to our arts and education community, and if the minister was paying attention to its impact on the economy, he'd care a bit more about this question.

According to the 2009 report on *Building the Creative Economy in Nova Scotia*, Nova Scotia's culture sector contributed \$1.2 billion to the provincial GDP in 2003 and created 28,000 jobs. Mr. Speaker, NSCAD is at the heart of our creative economy. Why is this NDP Government so intent on attacking the arts community in Nova Scotia and killing NSCAD's independence?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I mean, talk about a drive-by smear - he has attacked the culture community, the university - you know, I was fortunate yesterday to be at the induction of the new president of CBU. I've got to tell you that the culture of Cape Breton was in full vision for everyone to see, and indeed, in that president's acceptance speech, if you will, he spoke about the importance of culture.

Now, the people in the Liberal Party can talk about culture, and I'm sure the only culture they really know about may be in a tube of yogurt, but I'm going to tell you, we've supported universities right across this province. We've supported them when they needed us, unlike those guys. The last time they were in power they attacked not only universities, they attacked all of our public sectors - our health care workers. They didn't care about culture workers. They attacked them all. That's about the only good thing, is that they were level: they attacked everybody. So if anybody knows about attacking universities, educators, health care workers, it's those people.

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

MR. KEITH BAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did have a question prepared, but I'm more interested in hearing about the tube of yogurt from the Deputy Premier. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

### **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 Victoria-The Lakes.

MR. KEITH BAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and this won't be about the tube of yogurt, I guarantee you.

I'm pleased to stand in my place this afternoon and spend a little bit of time talking about the tremendous attributes of the constituency I represent, Victoria-The Lakes. It has been an honour and a privilege for me to represent the fine people of Victoria-The Lakes in this Legislature since 2006. Over that time, we've faced many challenges together. Some we overcame, and others we collectively struggle with.

Because of the geography and demographics of Victoria-The Lakes, each community has its own uniqueness and its own different needs, but because of it being rural, the one thing we all have in common is the roads in our area. As in other rural constituencies, the conditions of our roads leave much to be desired. Just last year, though, I was pleased that approximately 18 kilometres of the road in the Bay St. Lawrence area and nine kilometres of the White Point Road were resurfaced. Both of these roads were in dire need of work, and now the residents of the area and the tourists that visit have much better roads on which to travel and do their business. But many more roads need to be done, Mr. Speaker. Roads such as those in Frenchvale, George's River, Ross Ferry, Southside Boularderie, Washabuck, and Big Bras D'Or, to name but a few that require attention as we move forward.

I also have to mention how pleased I've been with the work that's been done on the Cabot Trail, from the foot of Smokey toward Barrachois, including the St. Ann's Loop, over the years. But I would be remiss if I didn't express my disappointment that another section that was included in the 2012-13 five-year plan has been postponed until next year. I've expressed that concern to the minister, both by letter and in Budget Estimates yesterday.

The constituency of Victoria-The Lakes is unique in that it takes in all of Victoria County, parts of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality and, as a result of the Electoral Boundaries Review Commission, will now include part of Inverness County as well. And speaking of the CBRM, I'd like to commend His Worship Mayor Clarke and the CBRM Council for bringing forward a five-year capital plan that will ensure economic development and growth in the Cape Breton area.

It's also worth noting that, for the first time, the mayors of the CBRM and the HRM sat down together to talk about common goals as we move forward. As I'm sure all members are aware, the mayor and the CBRM Council will be here in Halifax tomorrow to



meet with all MLAs and their respective caucuses. I encourage all members to hear what they have to say.

I know I don't need to tell the people of the many assets that Victoria-The Lakes has, but because of such things as the Nova Scotia Highland Village, the Kidston Island Lighthouse, the Bell Museum, Christmas Island's Annual Féis, the Highland Links Golf Course, and St. Paul lighthouse museum, to name but a few, Victoria County plays a very important part in the tourism industry of this province, and is one of the main reasons that Cape Breton is recognized as the number one tourist destination in North America and number three in the world.

While I stand here, I have to express my deepest appreciation to the many volunteers throughout Victoria-The Lakes who make it such a great place to live. Whether it be involvement in the local church or fire department, the local school advisory council, or countless other organizations, the residents of Victoria-The Lakes are always there to answer the call. I would also like to recognize Councillor Larry Dauphinee and the members of the Ski Cape Smokey Society for their efforts in keeping the ski hill in Ingonish open these past few years. Without their hard work and the support of the community this wouldn't have happened, and they're to be congratulated for that.

Mr. Speaker, on a sadder note - recently a tragedy occurred on the Englishtown Ferry, the *Torquil MacLean*, and I first of all want to pass along from the PC caucus our deepest condolences to the family, but also I want to commend the workers on the ferry. These workers witnessed first-hand the tragedy and did everything in their power to prevent it. I also want to commend the RCMP, the paramedics, and the community volunteers who took part in the rescue process, and a very sincere thank you to all those involved.

Mr. Speaker, I also, as a result of the electoral boundaries review that has taken place, want to welcome some more new areas into Victoria-The Lakes, the areas of Eskasoni, North Side East Bay, Point Aconi, and Meat Cove. We do have some interesting times ahead.

Over the past winter the residents in the Bay St. Lawrence and Cape North area faced serious challenges with the federal EI program, with many individuals losing their benefits for no apparent reason, but again to show the resiliency of the people of Victoria-The Lakes, the residents and businesses of the area were there to help out in any way they could and set up a food bank in the area to assist those in need. Recent letters to the editor by the president of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour stated that the provincial Tories have been closed mouth on EI changes. Well, Mr. Speaker, I beg to differ. The PC caucus has said publicly that we have concerns about the EI changes and the potential impact they could have on Nova Scotians and on Cape Bretoners.

I want to personally thank the Leader of our Party for recognizing the importance of this issue and for taking time to join with the member for Cape Breton West and myself to meet with the people affected in the Bay St. Lawrence, Cape North, and Dingwall area. Our Leader did something the Leaders of the other Parties in the House did not do. As a matter of fact, in the comment section of today's Cape Breton Post, a reader thanks our Party for our continued interest and commitment to Cape Breton and Nova Scotia, and that despite several requests to the two other Parties, we were the only ones to step up to help get the situation resolved. That is what this Party is about, and under our new Leader we'll continue to do that and so much more.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to . . .

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member opposite raised that he is the only member that brings this issue to the federal government.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, that's not what he said.

MR. BELLIVEAU: I rise on a point of order - there is a presentation that I did before the Fisheries Standing Committee in Ottawa and I encourage all members of the House, I could get a copy of that and present it to him. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: I would advise the honourable member that that is not a point of order, that is a disagreement between two members.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes has the floor.

MR. BAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that ruling. I did not say that I was the only member that did that, I said our Leader is the only Leader that was in the area, and if the honourable member wants to check Hansard after a while, you'll see that's what I said.

So, Mr. Speaker, I referenced the letters to the editor and that response that I quoted, I'd like to table that. I can see that just the talk of that has stirred up a little interest in the Legislature this afternoon. I hope that interest for the residents of Victoria-The Lakes will still have an impression on the government of the day, because when you look at some of the needs that are out there, we have to work together collectively, as I mentioned when I began, to make sure that Victoria-The Lakes is well served by this government and any future government that comes forward.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks, I'm pleased to address the audience this afternoon and I'll take my seat. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

MS. BECKY KENT: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to rise in my place on behalf of the good people of Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage, to speak on the motion going into Supply. I have to say I'm very proud to be part of an NDP Government, a responsible government that is truly working for the future of Nova Scotians.

This balanced budget is perhaps a foreign concept to some of the members opposite. I want to share that we know this is one of the very few balanced budgets that are being presented across our nation today. It is one that I'm proud of for a number of reasons and I'll proceed to share some of that throughout my comments in a few seconds.

I want to tell you that I'm very, very proud, as a female member of our government, to share this moment in history with the honourable Minister of Finance, my friend. I want to congratulate the minister for this milestone in history for women of Nova Scotia. Mr. Speaker, the women in the Legislature, in Nova Scotia certainly, have never been as strong as today. We have strong members, both on the government side and the members opposite, who are doing their very best to make good decisions on behalf of their constituents and continue to be role models for our young women in Nova Scotia who clearly need that, want that, and I'm proud of being part of that sisterhood.

I want to make sure that our Minister of Finance knows how much respect we have for her, having been such a trailblazer, and to be here at such a significant point, a turning point for Nova Scotians.

Respecting this budget, I'm not really surprised that the members opposite, certainly in the Liberal Opposition in particular, who speak so vehemently against this budget because again, as I said, balancing a budget was perhaps a foreign concept to them. I don't believe that they've had a balanced budget since the 1990s. At that time they took great measures to hide enormous deficits accumulated by school boards and health boards and other government entities. Those were clearly mistakes. I know they are mistakes that they would regret now, knowing that Nova Scotia is in need of a government, more than ever, that will take on tough decisions and provide for great opportunities for all Nova Scotians - rural, suburban, and in the capital.

In 2009, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Liberal Party promised, in an election platform (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage has the floor.

MS. KENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just commenting on the last election. They talk about opportunities for Nova Scotians to weigh in on whether they did the right thing or not. I want to remind you and Nova Scotians that the same Party that is telling us that they won't support a budget that is so clearly good for Nova Scotia, that it's a habit of theirs to offer exorbitant amounts of spending promises - reckless promises, to be frank -

about irresponsible spending at a time when Nova Scotians need true resolve and commitment to the issues that they face.

They refuse to commit to a balanced budget; in fact, they've said that they will not vote against this one. It's a shame because what they would be voting against - and we'll see what they do, but they've spoken to that effect - they would, in fact, be opposing the very measures that will grow Nova Scotia's economy and create a bright future for Nova Scotia. They claim that they want that change, but yet they will stand in their place and speak to the very opposite.

It was our mission, as a government, to bring this province back to balance. It was not an easy task because we know that some of the choices that we had to make, not every Nova Scotian agreed to. Again, Nova Scotians needed a government that was committed to a plan. It came about as a result of a plan. It wasn't a Band-Aid here and there. For the last number of years it was a very specific, strategic plan that included the voices of Nova Scotians, all across Nova Scotia from Cape Breton to the South Shore. We want to thank all Nova Scotians for their participation in that.

Nova Scotians took that seriously. The former Minister of Finance went across the province in his term in that department. The current minister continued to engage on that and Nova Scotians came out and they spoke to it. They sent in submissions through our Web site. They made a point of calling all their members of the Legislature to bring that information to our minister. So that required sacrifice and that required commitment, and quite frankly, I know that was the right decision through tough times.

The driving factor behind every decision was about building a brighter future for Nova Scotians. You cannot go wrong when you do that. You may not please everyone, but at the end of the day, the right decision is building a brighter future and we are turning that corner; we're at that point in Nova Scotia where the future is bright.

There are unparalleled opportunities for families in Nova Scotia to keep our young people here and to bring our young people home. I know. I have felt the heartache of saying goodbye to loved ones at the airport, seeing them go off to work somewhere else. I know what it's like. I also have a young son who graduated from high school last year - it's a funny little story, but I want to tell you about the opportunities that are out there. This one makes sense and I was so proud of him.

Of course, we're putting pressure on him to work. We want him to make some decisions. He's not quite ready to proceed into post-secondary education because he wants to figure out what he wants to do, but he knows that the jobs are out there. So he did the traditional job-search services, job sites on the computer, but one day he put on Kijiji: strapping 18-year-old willing to work, wants to work, likes to work in labour - something like that. It was just a statement and within the same day he had a call from a business - at age 18 - in the Burnside Park. They were part of the apprenticeship program through the

Province of Nova Scotia. They have a metal fabrication program; they wanted him to come out the next day. They interviewed him and by Wednesday he was working.

That's what's out there. These are the opportunities. I was proud because he just put that ad, like that. It wasn't a traditional way to get a job but what was even nicer is that our Nova Scotian businesses, which are engaged in that program, are doing their part too. They recognized that as - here is a kid who just put that statement on there; I'm willing to take a chance and give him a call. It turns out metal fabrication was not the niche for my Matthew but it was an opportunity that was there. That's where we're going with this.

Another measure that we are taking with this budget is lessening unfair burdens on seniors and the vulnerable sector. We are attracting leading-edge companies to Nova Scotia with good, high-paying jobs, and there are more training opportunities for people to take advantage of these good jobs: long-term trades jobs through the ships contract, our investments in our schools, our investments in a trades-centred school in Cole Harbour - these are all things, all steps that our budgets are supporting to bring that bright future for Nova Scotia.

We were on an unsustainable path that Nova Scotia couldn't afford. Our children could not afford for us to continue down that path. Our seniors could not afford for us to continue down that path, so we are not going down that path. We refuse to repeat the mistakes of the past Liberal and Progressive Conservative Governments. The Liberals thought increasing revenues just meant increased spending with no thought for the future, with no thought for how that would affect the youth and residents of Nova Scotia and Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

Our government is forward-thinking and what we need is to create opportunities. They don't just fall into our laps. They are sought-after, strategic investments to win contracts, to create opportunities for strategic partnerships like the Maine-Atlantic Canada project, the Lower Churchill Falls project which will create stable and fair prices for Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, things like the HST - it's interesting because we specifically fought very hard to have the HST off home heating for seniors. We have members from the Opposition, in fact the Leader of the Liberal Party who will put the HST back on. He actually stood here in his place and had the audacity to say that he would not put it back.

Mr. Speaker, let me share some facts with you because I know Nova Scotians are smarter than what they're implying they are. In 1996 the Liberal Government of the day put the HST in place. In 1999 the Leader of the Official Opposition ran for that Party, knowing that they were committed to that HST on home energy. They campaigned against the HST being brought off the home energy for families, they voted but for adding it back on. They voted against our government taking it off again. They've said in this Chamber that they are against it.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a small town in Shelburne. I loved it there. I'm proud of how I grew up, but a little analogy that my parents taught me a long time ago - if it looks like a duck, if it acts like a duck and it sounds like a duck, it's a duck. This is a Liberal duck in its best form. You cannot tell us in this House that you would not do those kinds of things and then have a history like that.

Nova Scotians are smarter than that, Mr. Speaker. They will look at the history of the Liberal Party and they will say I am not prepared to go back to that. I'm very proud that we are putting so much energy into specific things in this budget for Nova Scotians that I know are meeting their needs - things like improved children's health, opening more CECs, insulin pumps. We know that's so important to Nova Scotians. Expanding children's dental care - again a mistake of the former Liberal Government, who cut that program for children ages 11 years and up. We're putting it back because we care about our Nova Scotia families and we will not repeat the mistakes of the past; in fact we are quite prepared to correct them.

Newborn screening for cystic fibrosis is in this budget, Mr. Speaker, for sickle-cell anemia and other illnesses that Nova Scotians face, reduced prices for more generic drugs. I can tell you regularly that the folks in Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage are benefiting daily on those kinds of choices, that our government is making life more affordable for Nova Scotians.

Continuing the heating assistance rebate - more Nova Scotians are receiving increased maximum property tax rebates, Mr. Speaker, more low-income seniors are now not paying income tax, there's support for domestic violence and developing a sexual violence framework. Again I will say that the Liberal Government is suggesting in this Chamber that they're going to vote against that. They're voting against Nova Scotia, they're voting against a bright future for Nova Scotia, and to me that is shameful. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in my place today and speak for a few minutes on a number of aspects. You know I do agree with the member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage because in every budget there are good things and the insulin pump, you know well I was hoping that government would adopt our bill, any one of the five bills that we had put forward to have insulin pumps covered by the province. In fact in a very short time that I was the Health Critic I was able to bring it forth, on two occasions, because the House was prorogued and we could re-enter those bills.

There's one thing for certain, Mr. Speaker, that we can be assured about and that is the unbalanced nature of today's budget. We have what a couple of my constituents coined "The Miracle on Hollis Street". There is no way that this budget is truly balanced based on revenues generated by the province and, of course, obviously the expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I would like to do today is just take a moment and talk about what is not reflected in the budget and that is a little bit of a report card. In fact, I think this is the week when midterm reports are going out, end of year reports for university students, so I'd just like to go through a few areas. Power rates - we can all see from the articles in The ChronicleHerald yesterday and today that, unequivocally, we paid the highest rates in the country, and we know that these are having tremendous impacts on our residents.

I know over the next couple of weeks, most of us here in the Chamber will be called - in fact the first two calls to my office today, according to my assistant, were not disconnection notices but disconnections and that is the reality of what we'll see over the next number of weeks. Very often, as in this case today, it is seniors. Seniors are struggling with their power bills and this NDP Government has been the champions of NSP and Emera. The Premier stood in this House and agreed that the rate of 10 per cent, two years ago, was justified, over 30 per cent increase in just the past four years.

I was pleased to see that government was looking at a housing strategy going across the province to find out what the needs are. But the reality is, it is four years too late. Affordable housing in Nova Scotia is less and less available to young couples as they are middle-income earners. A house is out of reach for many of them and, in fact, in the Annapolis Valley, Kings County started a Housing First Association that would be an enabler and an advocate for young couples to be able to get homes. Again, government has not responded. Kings County and people in the Annapolis Valley are stepping up to help young couples get their first home.

One of the things that we know for certain, Mr. Speaker, is that child poverty has increased over the past four years and the member for Kings South knows very well about the study done at Acadia University. Who would have ever thought that Wolfville and its environs would have a serious child poverty problem but yet, again, that is statically shown in our area and right across this province.

We have teachers who daily take food and school supply items to their classrooms because of children who cannot afford basic food and requirements that are needed in the classroom. Again, just take the report; these are figures that we can use from Feed Nova Scotia. Since 2009, about 2,200 more families are using food banks in our province. That's the kind of report card that Nova Scotians are taking a look at and will be taking a look at, over the next weeks and months.

When we go into the health care area, we have seen though losing a potential orthopedic surgery in the Valley, this issue came out very strongly, publicly. Even with the blitz of March we have over a thousand Nova Scotians waiting over a year for hip and knee surgery. If it happens to be a foot or ankle surgery, you can wait anywhere from five to eight years. Simply, in four years we have not seen an improvement in this area. One of the areas that is continuing to be a problem in many parts of Nova Scotia is the growing

emergency room wait time, simply because we have 50,000 to 60,000 Nova Scotians without a family doctor, and that means they're off to the emergency room. Also, when we get emergency rooms closed, we get a bottleneck into our regional hospitals. It's not uncommon now to have reports coming into my office - and I'm sure other MLAs' - that they waited six hours, they waited seven or eight to get stitches, for example, or they are suffering a gastroenteritis and to have to wait - again, in an emerg - for those kinds of hours.

We've had questions here in the House just since the Spring sitting has started, talking about the long-term care beds, and we know once again that there are at least 2,300 Nova Scotians who are waiting for long-term care. In many instances, family members will leave work for a period of time to look after their parents while they're holding up to get into a nursing home. So, you know, those aspects of health.

Before I go into Seniors' Pharmacare, it was good to see government add some more seniors to the list of being able to get a tax break. That's obviously a good thing, but then it's being offset by the fact that seniors are paying more through Seniors' Pharmacare. Just four years ago, seniors were paying 28 per cent of the co-pay. Now they've moved to paying 32 per cent for their medications, so government is paying less and seniors are paying more. Again, that's not what seniors were expecting from this government.

In the area of mental health, we see assessments are coming more quickly, but on the treatment side there haven't been the parallel or subsequent gains. Many Nova Scotians are waiting a lengthy period of time for their first treatment and then getting in for the regular treatment that they require. This is an area that is now really under scrutiny in Nova Scotia as a result of some of the recent events - unfortunately, very tragic events - that we have seen.

One other area on the medical side where we seem to be unable to meet this challenge is having enough family doctors. I'm sure the member for Shelburne would love to rise in his place today and talk about the need of four family physicians. They need four family physicians in Shelburne. One doctor was so overwhelmed by the demands on her and her office and in her home that she decided to go into emergency care. She was simply overwhelmed with the demands in her community, so she went off to upgrade for emergency care.

For real investment in the health of our citizens, having doctors in the right places and the right number is one of the areas that this government has really failed to address. There is no increase in the recruitment and retention picture. We do have a physician resource plan, but we need to get action taken to get more family doctors.

One of the areas that the Minister of Health and Wellness gave a full explanation of was around autism. Again, we're hearing from parents that they're waiting nine months at the IWK to get the autism assessments and treatment that their child needs. Basically now what we're offering families is the minimum and not the full autism program. The minister



said yes, we will offer one year to children before they go to school. We know that for best results, once a child between two and five years of age is diagnosed with autism - especially those at the upper end of the spectrum - they need continuous CIVI and then go into a school program that picks up with what has been done in the preschool years. Again, it's that minimum kind of effort that we often see from government.

When it comes to employment - the member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage is talking about opportunities for young Nova Scotians. Well the reality now as Cape Breton closes in on 20 per cent unemployment, it's been some time in the Annapolis Valley since we reached 11.5 per cent. That's not a figure that we're used to seeing in the Annapolis Valley; there's usually good year-round employment, strong seasonal employment. Yet the unemployed figure has reached 11.5 per cent.

The opportunities for our young people are certainly not there at the moment. We have to hope that some of the projects that are being presented to Nova Scotians come to fruition so that our youth will have those kinds of opportunity.

The area that I think needs to be in the report card is tourism. Tourism is those new dollars that come into the province from other provinces, from the United States, from Europe and of course we're getting a growing number of Asian tourists. We haven't grown tourism like I think we can. We're not selling the province to the kind of degree that will increase tourism. We've really fallen behind in southwestern Nova Scotia and all of the province.

I was surprised, attending meetings in Cape Breton and they were talking about the loss of the ferry from Yarmouth to New England and the kind of impact it's had on their tourism. It's interesting, one of the other areas - Pictou Lodge has gone through financial challenges. They've lost many of the nights they would normally have been filled by that natural passage of Yarmouth to Pictou.

There are many things that are in the report card and we could put in future report cards that need to be addressed in our province. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

[2:48 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Supply with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

[5:59 p.m. CWH on Supply rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Gordie Gosse, resumed the Chair.]

MR. 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.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The Adjournment motion was submitted by the honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes:

“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)**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

### **NDP - BALANCED BUDGET: CLAIMS - CONDEMN**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, this debate is one, of course, which we've put forward from the PC caucus. I have to say, when we even look at the budget documents this year, one thing that made me smile was the government seemed to be very self-conscious about the fact that they were trying to say their budget is balanced, because right on the cover of the documents they say “balanced budget.” (Interruption) Yes, it's like they were trying to convince themselves that it was balanced and maybe also trying to convince us - or there was a feeling that there was a need to try to convince everybody else.

That struck me funny, Mr. Speaker, because usually these documents would say “budget” and the fiscal year they're referencing, but the government had to put on “balanced budget” because it was such an achievement to them. Really, it's not incredible at all that we should expect this, this is a typical budget of this government. We look at the debt they've added and, after this year, by their own numbers they say they'll have added \$1.67 billion in debt - that is \$1,700 more for every person in the province because we have about one million people in the province.

I think about all the little people, little young people - of course we all do, Mr. Speaker, I have nieces, I know people have grandchildren and children in the Legislature here, those are the people - they are being handed that debt, they are going to have to pay that back in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I think about the HST. This is a budget - you know we've seen in the past number of years a lot of complaining about the state of the province's finances and then magically this year they're able to balance the budget. Well, I would submit to you that those tales were just that - tales - because for them to be able to go from what they called the structural deficit and to be able to balance so quickly tells me that the numbers they've been trying to show to make things look as bad as they were, were done to justify a tax increase.

The main increase - we've had a number of them - we've seen user fees go up this year significantly; in fact, I was renewing my licence plate the other day and they said - or switching to another vehicle and they said make sure you renew your plate before the end of May because the fees are going up. I thanked her for reminding me of that because I knew only too well that they were going up, but that's the reality for all Nova Scotians, Mr. Speaker.

So we're seeing this government try to suggest that things have been just in such an awful state as a means to justify tax increases instead of getting to work to make government affordable for people - and that is what they campaigned on, Mr. Speaker.

So we've got \$1,700 more per person in this province of debt that we all owe since this government took office, and they've also taken an extra \$1,000 out of all our pockets in HST because the federal government, as you know, Mr. Speaker, reduced the amount of HST. They lowered the federal portion, but this government took that away - they increased the provincial portion back up. That is what we're being asked to vote on and I can't imagine any member on this side of the House can support this budget because it is one of higher taxes; it is a budget of more debt.

There's also the matter of how they've presented this budget, and we wonder how accurate it is. We need only look at the situation with the \$27 million that was discussed today in Question Period, and the Finance Minister suggested that it wasn't a big amount of money and it really didn't matter. It's just the insensitivity I guess, Mr. Speaker. I guess when you're not really seeing the damage of your actions of throwing more debt onto the shoulders of everybody in the province and increasing taxes, I guess you probably wouldn't see the difference when it would come to an amount of \$27 million either.

I just want to highlight a couple of things. If we look at last year, the personal income tax revenue - everybody's paying their income taxes now, so they're familiar with this - ended up coming in way below than expected, because people earned less money. That's certainly a sign that an economy is not doing well, when you have people earning less money, and so we know the softening of personal income tax revenues kept the budget sinking more into deficit, and their projections for that were off by \$145 million.

This budget has a razor-thin surplus, according to the government. We do know that, once again, they've suggested to this House that they're going to have revenue

increases - I believe it was in the order of about 6 per cent, which doesn't make much sense to me, because we know the rate of inflation certainly isn't that. We're concerned about the revenue projections, which we believe will show that this budget, come next year, is not balanced. I know I've heard members from across the way here tell me that - when is the election going to be? Well, they're going to have to have it before September, because they don't want to face that quarterly update on the budget.

They're probably not going to hit their targets. There are people who agree that that's going to be an issue for the government. It puts them in a precarious position - do they call the election right after we vote on the budget tonight? Maybe they'll call it the weekend of their annual meeting with their members.

I'm looking across here to see if there are any poker faces or lack thereof, but I'm not getting any signals. We might see them call it after that weekend. I'm sure they'll be rallying their troops and saying, we're ready to go to the polls, we have a balanced budget, but they certainly don't want to meet that test in the Fall of whether they'll meet their quarterly targets. (Interruptions) Well, that's a good point. The member for Cape Breton North says that perhaps an update could be provided on the eve of the election call. In any case, that is one point.

I have to bring this measure up, because I've talked about this a number of times, and that is the FTE numbers and how this year they magically started to change, to be reduced. Every year we saw there were about 10,700 FTEs in government. What is an FTE? That's somebody working in the civil service. We know about 600 leave government every year. This government made a commitment to get rid of 1,000 over four years. Obviously they could have achieved that without hurting anybody, because these people are leaving, whether they're retiring or taking a job elsewhere. Those are numbers from the Public Service Commission, from within government.

They could have achieved this target, but they chose not to, and every year we saw them budget - we need 10,700 people - but when it would come time to reveal the actual numbers of people who worked in government over the past year, it was only 10,000. So they were consistently over-budgeting about 700 people every year.

Now this year, the year that they have to start reducing their expenditures, they have this nice - they reduced them by about 350, so they took it down by about half the margin. The point I'm making is that the government was using this and many other expenses that really weren't there, and they did that to make past budgets look worse, to justify tax increases, and to justify running deficit budgets and adding debt to the province.

I don't think we're turning much of a corner. As the member for Shelburne said, we're turning the corner of \$1,700 more debt for every person in the province. The point being, the numbers have been played with, and I know that's a specific one I'm pointing to.

The government was really suggesting they had \$70 million more in expenses than they had in the past.

I know I only have about 30 seconds left - I have so much more to go on here - maybe there will be an opportunity to elaborate more when we talk on the Financial Measures (2013) Bill. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill.

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to rise in my seat today and do late debate on this topic.

I decided to actually leave a different career and go into politics in 2009, after a long and successful career in the creative industries because I love Nova Scotia, I love my community, and I really wanted to help make life better for people from all walks of life across this great province of ours.

When I moved home in 2007 for good, I found a province where ERs were in crisis, our education and health care systems were unsustainable, and not enough was being done to protect our seniors or our environment because we were still dependent on power from dirty and expensive coal for our energy.

It seemed to me that Nova Scotia needed a seismic shift. We needed a progressive, innovative plan which would move our province forward, and although it's hard for this little province to compete against the high paying jobs of Alberta, we needed to attract new jobs and new types of industries that could help prevent so many of our youth from going down the road, so they say, like so many before them - and as indeed I, myself, had to do when I graduated from high school in 1977. In 2009, it seemed like not much had changed and I recognized that in fact it was time for a change and I vowed to be part of that change.

Mr. Speaker, in order for Nova Scotia to transition into a more innovative, economically viable, and environmentally friendly place to live and retire in good health I felt that the way of the future lay in investing in alternative green energy sources, including wind farms, solar energy, and the Muskrat Falls hydroelectric project. I believed in providing more support for entrepreneurs, small businesses and the creative industries while building our knowledge-based economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and I also believed that we had to balance our budget and live within our means.

When I was elected in 2009 with 48 per cent of the vote in Truro-Bible Hill, Millbrook and Salmon River, which I'm told is a good amount, Nova Scotia was facing a projected deficit of almost \$1.3 billion. Tough decisions had to be made, and believe me it wasn't easy, especially in the middle of the greatest global recession since the Great Depression. These are tough times, Mr. Speaker, and we as the government heard from Nova Scotians that they did not want massive across-the-board cuts like those that took

place in the 1990s under the Liberal Government, in what became known as the Savage Years under Premier Savage. People did not want the closure of hospital beds or collective agreements to be unilaterally rolled back, or toll highways, or P3 schools to be built. Teachers did not want their wages frozen or rolled back, and nurses, we did not want nurses to be paid to leave the province. No.

Artists right across the province begged us - begged us, Mr. Speaker - to bring back an arm's-length arts council that had been cut nine years before - under who? The previous Progressive Conservative Government. So what did we do? We brought it back. We brought it back just as we promised we would. People told us that they were tired of their children's health being compromised because of a decision by a previous Liberal Government to cut the free dental care that children had once received until the age of 14. Shame. What have we done? We reinstated it.

I am proud - proud, Mr. Speaker - of this current government. We know how to live within our means, we are not cutting very important services to the public, and we are now projecting a balanced budget for 2013-14 that gives Nova Scotia a surplus - yes, a surplus of \$16.4 million. This budget completes our four-year plan to a balanced budget. We made a promise to the people of Nova Scotia to bring it back to balance and we've made good on that promise.

Regardless of the political rhetoric, everyone knows that getting Nova Scotia back to balance has not been an easy task. As members of this House we all know we inherited a considerable financial challenge. The global economic slowdown was underway and no one could have predicted that it would have lasted as long as it has. But we didn't slash, Mr. Speaker, we didn't slash like other governments. We all know that kind of approach has very negative impacts and it has had negative impacts in the past. No. This government made strategic, well-thought-out decisions that had the best interests of Nova Scotians at heart in the long run.

Thousands of Nova Scotians had a say in our plan when they participated in the pre-budget consultation. I was there, I went to several of them. Based on what we heard from both the experts and from everyday citizens, we put together a three-pronged plan. That planning involved increasing revenue, reducing government spending, and growing the economy. We temporarily raised the HST by two points, and we helped to provide revenue at a time when the economic picture was uncertain. This revenue has helped to protect important government programs that Nova Scotians rely on.

We introduced offsetting tax rebates aimed at low-income Nova Scotians. The Affordable Living Tax Credit and the Poverty Reduction Credit have both helped make life more affordable for tens of thousands of needy Nova Scotians. So as we embark on a balanced budget, we look forward to a reduction of the HST. These reductions are built into our fiscal plan, and we are on track. In 2014, and then again 2015, we can responsibly reduce the HST, and that's what we're going to do.

Our processes are transparent. Budget and Public Accounts updates are given regularly in September and December. Financial information is right there in black and white for the public, for the media, and for the Opposition to scrutinize. The financial successes of this government are many. We have worked hard to get Nova Scotia back on a sound financial footing, and I would like to put forward that the proof is there for everyone who would like to see it. We've reined in spending - departmental spending has come in under budget now for three years in a row, and is back on track for a fourth year of having the same thing happen. This is an unprecedented level of restraint and responsibility, and I am proud to say that this government, the NDP Government - the first NDP Government in the history of Nova Scotia - is the government that has done so.

We've set budget targets for departments, we've stuck to them, and we've asked the departments to reduce the costs of their administration. I could go on. We've promised to bring sanity back to the province's finances, and we've done just that. We're supporting job creation. We've reduced the small business tax to its lowest level in 20 years, and yet you never hear that from the Progressive Conservative or the Liberal caucuses.

Average employment in 2012 was the highest level ever, and we won't rest on our laurels, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to work harder, and we'll continue to work smarter and more collaboratively for all Nova Scotians. We did not get back to balance at an easy time, but this is just what good fiscal management looks like. I guess our compadres on the other side just don't like to see that. We've made hard decisions, but we've made compassionate decisions. We had a steep hill to climb, and along that path to balance, we have realigned, reorganized, and modernized government in a way that will make life better for Nova Scotian families.

Our government has done things differently, Mr. Speaker. Knowing that spending must be controlled and sustainable, we took logical, step-wise approaches to tackling our fiscal challenges, working in partnership with Nova Scotians, DHAs, school boards, and others to rein in spending while protecting vital programs and services. We ended the March Madness spending. We held program expenses flat where possible. We brought departmental spending in under budget, as I said, for four consecutive years, and reduced debt servicing costs. We launched a strategic procurement project that is saving us millions now and in the future. We've reduced our full-time employees by more than 600, and will continue work on this. Finally, we've brought the previous pattern of wage settlements for government-paid employees down from 2.9 per cent and higher to 1 per cent, with no wage rollbacks, unpaid holidays, et cetera, and have saved just over \$200 million.

We've made hard decisions, but we've also made compassionate decisions, and the reason for that is because we are a compassionate government. We have a vision. We have a plan, Mr. Speaker - a good, fiscally-viable, and well-balanced plan - and that plan is working.

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

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, tonight we are here in late debate to debate a motion put forward by the Progressive Conservatives that we agree with completely. For context, I'm going to read it:

“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.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have just been regaled by a very passionate outburst by the member for Truro-Bible Hill - heartfelt and passionate, she believes. She has drunk the Kool-Aid, that's all there is to it. She believes it, she's been getting ready.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. That phrase, “drunk the Kool-Aid” is unparliamentary. I would ask the honourable member to retract that, please.

MS. WHALEN: I have just a few minutes to debunk this whole thing so I take that back right now, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to get on with the gist of this motion and that is that this budget was declared balanced. They had to convince themselves so strongly that they had to print it on the cover that it is balanced, in case they forgot, and maybe the truth seeped in. They have to make sure that everywhere they take it that it says balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, it's based on a fiction. It's based on four years of a developed narrative that takes the NDP to the brink of an election with what they hoped would be a balanced budget. They hoped it so much that they printed it on the cover.

Mr. Speaker, the previous member said that the NDP have made hard decisions and I disagree. I think that in preparing this budget they made some simple decisions; they made some simple sleight-of-hand. They decided they would take the very most optimistic, possible estimates for revenue next year because they had to create a big revenue stream in order to justify all the expenses and still come in with a razor-thin surplus of \$16 million - \$16 million out of a \$9.5 billion budget. It's insignificant and it's going to be very difficult to reach that under the best of circumstances.

Let me tell you why they are so far off base, Mr. Speaker. Only today did Statistics Canada come out with retail sales estimates and Nova Scotia is a province that had negative growth on all three measures and I want to tell you where we placed in the country. We placed eighth in our year-to-date growth, falling 1.6 per cent; ninth in our year-over-year growth, 2.2 per cent down; and tenth in the month-over-month growth, 0.6 per cent down. I think we're the only province that fell on all three measures but we're eighth, ninth and tenth in the country.



The NDP are living in a world where they think the projections are so wonderful that they're going to see \$145 million more in personal income tax next year. What is it based on, Mr. Speaker? The assumptions in the budget themselves show we're still going to have 9.1 per cent or 9.2 per cent unemployment, no improvement in the unemployment.

I want to bring a few facts to the attention of the House. Unemployment is expected to decrease by 0.2 per cent, that's 1,100 fewer jobs in 2013, but still the government is trying to tell us this fiction that we're going to have bigger personal income tax. They said we're going to be earning more money, but there are going to be 1,100 fewer of us working. We know that more people are working part-time; people are living on less money. Somehow there is a complete fiction here that's very easy to see through. Really I don't think it's going to take Nova Scotians very much to see to see that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to carry on with this, the things that I think make that prediction in the budget of an increase in harmonized sales tax, an increase in corporate tax and an increase in personal income tax. All three of those are required to even come in at this razor-thin surplus and they are based on absolutely the most optimistic figures that the government could possibly come up with.

Mr. Speaker, I've said already that retail sales are down now. We're at the lowest levels in the country in terms of growth, falling in eighth, ninth and 10<sup>th</sup> place and yet we're somehow going to come up with higher HST sales. Right now food and beverages is down, motor vehicle sales were down 6.4 per cent. That's where HST comes from, it comes from sales and they're down.

Mr. Speaker, I've said the personal income tax is going to come from all of us working, everybody who works and pays their taxes, and yet the projections are high unemployment. We know it's 18 per cent in Cape Breton today and I mentioned that it's going to be down - 1,100 fewer jobs in 2013. We're facing a slowing economy; nominal GDP is only expected to grow by 2.3 per cent and 3 per cent in the next year and the year after respectively. There has been a shift from full-time to part-time work, which I've already mentioned, and we actually have labour income growth last year was slower than it was observed during the recession of 2008-09. Our population growth is lagging behind the rest of the country and so on. There are many more points there.

Mr. Speaker, I understand I have about four minutes left. I've already said that the growth estimates that would justify such inflated tax figures, such an unsubstantiated growth in revenue that is the basis of this so-called balanced budget is just one part of my skepticism. The other part is even more obvious and it was the prepayment of two universities this year - \$34 million - prepaid to NSCAD and to Acadia so that last year's deficit could be larger, because who really cares about last year? You were \$200 million or \$300 million in deficit. That's much easier to stack the losses last year and take some of the expenses out of this year. The cheques that went out to those two universities were sent out March 28<sup>th</sup>, the last business day of the year.

That allowed them to be marked down as applying to last year. They did blow the deficit up last year more than \$100 million. It went from \$211 million to \$356 million. But the government doesn't care about that because they're trying to create a false narrative for the election and for the future. They don't care what happened last year, how much debt they had or how much the deficit was, that doesn't matter. Let's create a narrative based on fiction for next year so that we're going to feel better in the coming year.

So the universities were prepaid, even a Grade 9 student, even a Grade 5 student could figure out what that's all about. But Leo tried it on the Grade 9s and they understood it, they saw it right away when they saw the budget highlights. If you take that prepayment of \$34 million out you have an immediate deficit this year. One sleight of hand, one simple accounting decision suddenly made the year ahead appear to be balanced. Barely, but it appeared to be balanced.

Still, remember it only works if you inflate all of the projected revenues so that you can have the very highest expectations possible, that we're going to have a boom year, just a boom year and everybody's going to earn more money and pay more taxes and buy more items and contribute more HST into the government coffers. All of those factors show very clearly that this budget is not balanced. We haven't even begun to look at a lot of the other individual spending by departments, but you can see very clearly that this fiction is not justified.

Mr. Speaker, I'd be remiss if I didn't refer to the government's advertising and speeches here where they talk about how they slayed this huge deficit that was coming - \$1.3 billion deficit that they eliminated. But there never was any \$1.3 billion deficit. There was a study done with, again, very manipulated assumptions that said under the worst conditions, most profligate spending, what's the worst-case scenario we're headed to? In that scenario it might have been, possibly, a \$1.3 billion deficit.

The NDP never faced that deficit. They faced a very different financial system and time than the previous Progressive Conservatives did. They faced the loss of the royalties that the Progressive Conservative Government had, and the Progressive Conservative Government and the Liberal Government as well, nobody would have been spending at that same rate because the conditions had changed.

It is false to suggest that there has been a \$1.3 billion savings by the NDP Government; that's no more than completely misconstruing the facts and really misleading the public in Nova Scotia. It is not justified at all. That needs to be said. Again, this budget that we have before us is not balanced, not in any way, shape or form. The only thing that helps the NDP to say so is that they printed it on the cover of the budget, which has never before been done. It shows a complete lack of confidence on their own side on their budget and on what it contains. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The time allotted for the late debate has expired. Thank you for an excellent debate this evening.

We will now take a short recess to allow the minister's staff to set up in the main Chamber.

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

[8:39 p.m. CWH on Supply rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Gordie Gosse, resumed the Chair.]

MR. 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 and has come to agreement on 49 estimate resolutions, including votes on business plans and on capital. The Chair has been instructed to recommend these estimates to the favourable consideration of the House, each without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House concurs in the report of the Committee of the Whole House on Supply.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 58 - Entitled an Act to Provide for Defraying Certain Charges and Expenses of the Public Service of the Province. (Hon. Maureen MacDonald)**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the bill is printed and I believe the Pages have already distributed a copy to each member.

**[GOVERNMENT BUSINESS]****[PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING]**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 58, the Appropriations Act, 2013.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 58. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

**[PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING]**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill No. 58, the Appropriations Act, 2013.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 58. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

A recorded vote has been called for.

We will now ring the bells until the Whips are satisfied.

Are the Whips satisfied?

[The Clerk calls the roll.]

[8:41 p.m.]

**YEAS**

Mr. Landry  
Ms. More  
Mr. Smith  
Ms. Peterson-Rafuse  
Mr. Corbett  
Ms. MacDonald  
Mr. Wilson  
Mr. Paris

**NAYS**

Mr. Gaudet  
Mr. Glavine  
Ms. Whalen  
Mr. McNeil  
Mr. Samson  
Mr. d'Entremont  
Mr. Baillie  
Mr. Bain

Ms. Jennex	Mr. Porter
Mr. MacDonell	Mr. MacMaster
Mr. Belliveau	Mr. MacLeod
Ms. Zann	Mr. Orrell
Ms. Kent	Mr. Younger
Ms. Conrad	Ms. Regan
Mr. Preyra	Ms. Casey
Mr. Parker	Mr. Colwell
Mr. MacKinnon	Mr. Zinck
Mr. Steele	Mr. Theriault
Mr. Epstein	Mr. MacLellan
Mr. Estabrooks	Mr. Churchill
Mr. Prest	
Mr. Ramey	
Mr. Skabar	
Mr. Whynott	
Mr. Morton	
Ms. Birdsall	
Mr. Burrill	

THE CLERK: For, 27. Against, 20. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That concludes the government's business for today. (Interruption) I know, it's disappointing, Mr. Speaker. We want to spend more time together, but all good things have to come to an end, and so maybe we'll meet here tomorrow, and matter of fact I think - I know we will meet here tomorrow from the hours of 2:00 - 6:00 p.m.

After the daily routine and Question Period, it will be the Official Opposition day, and I ask now that their House Leader tell us what business they are going to give us.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable House Leader for the Official Opposition.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, following the daily routine tomorrow, and after Question Period, the Official Opposition will be calling Bill No. 34, Ratepayer Protection Act; and if time allows, Bill No. 1, Accountability in Economic Development Assistance Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion for adjournment has been made.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour of the motion say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

[The House adjourned at 8:46 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 759**

By: Mr. Leo Glavine (Kings West)

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

Whereas the Women's Institute of Nova Scotia is celebrating 100 years of women's work in Nova Scotia at a celebration and demonstration at the Waterville Fire Hall; and

Whereas the mission of the Women's Institute is to persuade governments of the time to support BUY LOCAL programs, teach and preserve traditional crafts, promote farm safety, seniors programs and 4-H; and

Whereas one of their valued members, Esther Chute of Berwick, recently turned 100 years of age and will run a booth at the Women's Institute's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary display on May 5<sup>th</sup> and is also the district treasurer for the Western District;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the Women's Institute of Lakeville, Cambridge, South Berwick, Burlington and Weston on 100 years of promotion and teaching of all Nova Scotians, young and old alike.

**RESOLUTION NO. 760**

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 Harold Boyd Mattatall was born in Westchester Station, Cumberland County, and was a second generation funeral director; and

Whereas Harold successfully operated AL Mattatall's funeral home in Dartmouth for over 30 years and served on many regulatory boards to assist the industry he served so dutifully; and

Whereas Harold was a chartered member and past president of the Dartmouth Kinsmen and K-40 Clubs, and will be well remembered for his kindness and exceptional sense of humour;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize and remember the dedication and service rendered to the Dartmouth community by Mr. Harold Mattatall.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 761**

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 the Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce, formed in 1890, has been involved in business advocacy and membership services for 123 years; and

Whereas the Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce has close to 430 members and is one of the largest Chambers in the province; and

Whereas Alan Johnson, who served as executive director of the Chamber from 2004 to 2008, returned to the position in March;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alan Johnson as the new executive director of the Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce and wish him continued success in his new role.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 762**

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 crop farmer Curtis Millen from Great Village, Colchester North, has about 100 acres of strawberries and 300 acres of blueberry fields to contend with each year; and

Whereas Millen has eight to 10 local employees who operate heavy equipment such as tractors, front-end loaders, forklifts, trucks and buses and more than 150 migrant workers on whom he depends to harvest his crop; and

Whereas Millen is proactive regarding farm safety, making sure that safe practices and procedures are strictly adhered to on his farm, not only during Canadian Agriculture Safety Week from March 10 to 16 but every day of operation;



Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Curtis Millen and all farmers who carefully follow the Nova Scotia Health and Safety Act, to ensure that they, and all those in their employ, work in the safest of conditions.

**RESOLUTION NO. 763**

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 the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual awards gathering of the Central Nova Tourist Association was held on March 1 in Millbrook, Colchester County; and

Whereas Danielle Sawada, who lives in Belmont, Colchester North, is owner of Thrown Together Pottery, located on King Street in Truro; and

Whereas her store is a working studio with a gallery that sells pottery, local art and gifts including jewellery, band saw boxes, original woodwork, pens, key chains, corkscrews and more;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Danielle Sawada for being the recipient of a tourism award from the Central Nova Tourist Association and wish her continued success with her business and her craft.

**RESOLUTION NO. 764**

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 the annual Heritage Awards Night at the Colchester Historeum celebrates people who promote and preserve the history of Colchester County; and

Whereas Jon Keddy purchased the 138-year old building known as the Ginger House, three years ago; and

Whereas the three-story Gothic style heritage property has been revitalized, due to extensive repairs to both the interior and exterior of the building, but the original components have been maintained;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jon Keddy for the excellent work he has done to the restoration and beautification of the Ginger House and commend him for his commitment to fostering community pride.

**RESOLUTION NO. 765**

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 Matthew Smith is an excellent academic student, earning awards in four subjects at the end of Grade 7, as well as the award for Best All-Around Student; and

Whereas Matthew is an avid sportsman playing soccer, hockey, track and field, and golf; and

Whereas Matthew has a pleasant personality and positive attitude, enjoys a challenge, and has excellent interpersonal skills;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this well-rounded Grade 8 student for being chosen as the December 2012 Student of the Month.

**RESOLUTION NO. 766**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the extensive efforts of the many volunteers who make Bedford a wonderful place in which to live; and

Whereas Herman and Vivian Barrett have been deeply involved in the work and ministry of Bedford Baptist Church for 50 years - Vivian with the Nursery Ministry, teaching Sunday School and the preschool program, Vacation Bible School, serving on the social committee, providing lunch for training programs, participating in the Missionary Society and the Sewing Circle, and quilting the banners and pictures that adorn the church, while Herman served as a spiritual leader and a Life Deacon, taught Sunday School, was a driving force behind the bus ministry, and volunteered to help build a new church in Happy Valley-Goose Bay Labrador in 2003; and

Whereas this devoted couple also served as CGIT, Explorer, and Club leaders, and still serve as outreach volunteers at Ivany Place, and continue to drive many seniors to their appointments;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Herman and Vivian Barrett on being such thoughtful and devoted volunteers, and thank them for their service to their church congregation and their community.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 767**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the extensive efforts of the many volunteers who make Bedford a wonderful place in which to live; and

Whereas Bernice Hartnett has volunteered her services to the Bedford Horticultural Society for the past 12 years as social director, running programs including Seeds and Cuttings and the annual plant sale, and looking after the bushes at Fish Hatchery Park; and

Whereas Bernice has also been a key member of the Daylily Society for the past six years, publicizing events and organizing displays;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bernice Hartnett on her creative and devoted volunteer efforts on behalf of the Bedford Horticultural Society and the Daylily Society - she helps keep Bedford beautiful.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 768**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the extensive efforts of the many volunteers who make Bedford a wonderful place in which to live; and

Whereas Karen Bauer has served as pianist and mezzo soprano soloist with the Bedford Leisure Club Orchestra and Choir for many years, and also with the Bedford

United Church Choir, directed the Youth Choir, and was a member of the Bedford United Church Women and a Brownie leader; and

Whereas Bob Bauer became choir and orchestra director of the Bedford Leisure Club Orchestra and Choir in 2007, sang in the Bedford United Church Choir and composed two works for it, and is deeply involved with the Atlantic regional council of the Canadian Music Centre, the national board of directors of the Canadian Music Centres, the Oscillations Festival of Electroacoustic Music, the Musikon Concert Society, and the Tuesday Night Band;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bob and Karen Bauer on their devotion to the musical life of Bedford and Nova Scotia, and thank them for enriching our community with their musical gifts.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 769**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the extensive efforts of the many volunteers who make Bedford a wonderful place in which to live; and

Whereas Warren Hutt has been a key volunteer with the Bedford Lions Club for 15 years, serving in many prominent positions including president and vice president, and as chair of seven committees, and has been involved in many of the most significant activities of the Bedford club including raising money for Sandy Lake Park, Seeing Eye Dogs, Camp Lion Maxwell, Children's Wish Foundation, and Bedford Lions Air Cadets, as well as Basinview playground and CP Allen Scholarships; and

Whereas in recognition of his many contributions Warren was awarded a life membership in the Lions Canada Foundation and received the highest award to a Lion, the Melvin Jones Fellowship Award;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Warren Hutt on his many years of outstanding service to the Lions Club, and thank him for helping to make Bedford a great place to live.

**RESOLUTION NO. 770**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the extensive efforts of the many volunteers who make Bedford a wonderful place in which to live; and

Whereas Barbara Muldowney is president of the Bedford Lionettes, is past president of the Bedford United Church Woman's Fellowship Unit, was a church elder for six years, and taught Sunday School for four years; and

Whereas Barb served as a Brownie leader, eventually rising to the rank of area commissioner; was general chairperson for the Heart and Stroke Foundation; served as an IWK volunteer; and is currently in her 15<sup>th</sup> year of delivering hot meals to shut-ins with the Meals on Wheels program;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Barb Muldowney on being a dependable, hands-on, go-to go-getter whose volunteer activities have made Bedford a better place.

**RESOLUTION NO. 771**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the extensive efforts of the many volunteers who make Bedford a wonderful place in which to live; and

Whereas Sandy Mitchell has been deeply involved in the Bedford Players Community Theatre for the past nine years, involved in every aspect of the theatre from acting to database management; and

Whereas Sandy has also served as theatre vice president, as well as a producer, stage manager, light and sound technician, social media coordinator, program editor, member communicator, and community liaison;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sandy Mitchell on her tireless support of the Bedford Players Community Theatre, and wish her many more years of entertaining volunteerism.

**RESOLUTION NO. 772**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the extensive efforts of the many volunteers who make Bedford a wonderful place in which to live; and

Whereas Virginia Murray has been involved with the Bedford Skating Club for nine years in a variety of roles, including junior chair, vice president, member at large, and registrar, and has been the club's chief liaison with HRM for the last decade; and

Whereas Virginia has also been a committee member for the BMP Centre Steering Committee and a Team Mom for the Bedford Titans Soccer, and is described as the kind of person who "sees what needs to be done and does it quietly without needing to be asked" - the kind of person "everyone knows is able to get something done and done well";

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Virginia Murray on her quiet competence and thank her for being willing to take on so many volunteer challenges.

**RESOLUTION NO. 773**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the extensive efforts of the many volunteers who make Bedford a wonderful place in which to live; and

Whereas Debby Howlett joined the Bedford Repair and Restoration Group three years ago, one of the first women to join this male-dominated group; and

Whereas Debby immediately made her presence felt, reorganizing the workspace and instituting new procedures to ensure quality control, all while being a reliable and pleasant team player;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Debby Howlett on her new avocation and thank her for being such a pleasant, competent volunteer.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 774**

By: Mr. Leo Glavine (Kings West)

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

Whereas April 21 – 27 marks National Volunteer Week, a week to acknowledge and celebrate the many contributions volunteers make 365 days a year; and

Whereas this year's theme of National Volunteer Week, "Volunteers: Passion. Action. Impact." celebrates the attitude volunteers possess to get involved and Lynda Kanne is the County of Kings representative volunteer who serves with Valley Trekkers, Nicholsville Community Park Committee, and the Nicholsville Garden Club; and

Whereas Lynda is truly interested in the well-being of her community as she is a Heart and Stroke Walkabout leader, a certified Senior Fitness Instructor, and a promoter of fitness for all ages;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Nova Scotia Assembly congratulate Lynda Kanne on receiving the Provincial Volunteer Award on April 15, 2013.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 775**

By: Mr. Leo Glavine (Kings West)

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

Whereas April 21 – 27 marks National Volunteer Week, a week to acknowledge and celebrate the many contributions volunteers make 365 days a year; and

Whereas this year's theme of National Volunteer Week, "Volunteers: Passion. Action. Impact." celebrates the attitude volunteers possess to get involved and Joan Harris is Berwick's representative volunteer who serves the Food Bank and St. Mary's Anglican Church through pastoral care at the Grandview Manor Seniors' Home; and

Whereas Joan doesn't miss an opportunity to give to others and her recognition by Berwick and the province is an acknowledgement of a lifetime of service through volunteerism;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Nova Scotia Assembly congratulate Joan Harris on receiving the Provincial Volunteer Award on April 15, 2013.