



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordie Gosse

Published by Order of the Legislature by Hansard Reporting Services and printed by the Queen's Printer.

Available on INTERNET at <http://nslegislature.ca/index.php/proceedings/hansard/>

Fifth Session

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 1147, Battle of the Atlantic - Remember, The Premier.....	1890
Vote - Affirmative.....	1890
Res. 1148, Petroleum Resources Team: Excellence in Pub. Serv. Award (2013) - Congrats., Hon. M. More (by Hon. L. Preyra).....	1891
Vote - Affirmative.....	1891
Res. 1149, Adopt-A-Highway Day (05/04/13) - Recognize, Hon. M. Smith.....	1891
Vote - Affirmative.....	1892
Res. 1150, NSCAD Starfish Award (2013): Finalists - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra.....	1892
Vote - Affirmative.....	1893
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:	
No. 76, Adult Protection Act, Hon. D. Wilson	1893
No. 77, Thinkers' Lodge Act, Mr. B. Skabar	1893

NOTICES OF MOTION:

Res. 1151, Pettipas, Terry: Commun. Contributions - Congrats., Hon. K. Colwell	1894
Vote - Affirmative.....	1894
Res. 1152, Motorcycle Awareness Mo. (05/13) - Recognize, Mr. E. Orrell.....	1894
Vote - Affirmative.....	1895
Res. 1153, Ettinger, J. Albert (Former MLA): Death of - Tribute, Hon. J. MacDonell	1895
Vote - Affirmative.....	1896
Res. 1154, Polack, Laura, et al: Metro Boston Pizza Female Midget AAA Hockey Team - Well Wishes, Ms. K. Regan.....	1896
Vote - Affirmative.....	1897
Res. 1155, Babin, Gilles: New Career - Congrats., Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	1897
Vote - Affirmative.....	1898
Res. 1156, EI - Changes: Gov't. (Can.) - Reconsider, Mr. J. Boudreau.....	1898
Vote - Affirmative.....	1899
Res. 1157, Cyr, Liam & Aidan/Jesso, Joey: Music Success - Applaud, Mr. A. Younger.....	1899
Vote - Affirmative.....	1900
Res. 1158, Wilson, Bridget: Achievements - Acknowledge, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1900
Vote - Affirmative.....	1900
Res. 1159, Godin, Master Seaman Peter: Crown Serv. - Congrats., Ms. B. Kent.....	1900
Vote - Affirmative.....	1901
Res. 1160, Bedford Jr. High: Waterloo Univ. Pascal Comp. - Congrats., Ms. K. Regan.....	1901
Vote - Affirmative.....	1902
Res. 1161, Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank MLA: African Diaspora World Tourism Assoc. Award - Congrats., Ms. B. Kent.....	1902
Vote - Affirmative.....	1903
Res. 1162, McBride, Ian: Medal of Bravery - Congrats., Mr. H. Theriault	1903
Vote - Affirmative.....	1904
Res. 1163, MacPherson, Robert Ian (Toomey) - Glace Bay Sport & Vol. Hall of Fame: Induction (Posthumous) - Congrats., Mr. G. MacLellan.....	1904
Vote - Affirmative.....	1904
Res. 1164, Cress, Emilee/Saunders, Hailey: Badminton Season - Congrats., Hon. S. McNeil	1905
Vote - Affirmative.....	1905
Res. 1165, Richmond Rize U-18 Girls Volleyball Team/Coaches: Championships - Congrats., Hon. M. Samson.....	1905
Vote - Affirmative.....	1906

Res. 1166, Rizg, Verena: Cultural Contributions - Congrats., Ms. D. Whalen	1906
Vote - Affirmative.....	1907
Res. 1167, Courtney, Fred: Commun. Support - Thank, Mr. G. MacLellan	1907
Vote - Affirmative.....	1908
Res. 1168, Reekie, Megan: Retirement - Congrats., Hon. K. Colwell	1908
Vote - Affirmative.....	1909
Res. 1169, Barry, Sandra: Heritage Award - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey	1909
Vote - Affirmative.....	1909
Res. 1170, YMCA - Pre Entry Employment Prog.: Participants - Congrats., Hon. M. Samson.....	1909
Vote - Affirmative.....	1910
Res. 1171, Saric, Adi/Team: Imperial Barrel Award - Congrats., Ms. D. Whalen	1910
Vote - Affirmative.....	1911
Res. 1172, van den Hoek, Maja & Wilhem - Cdn. Cheese Grand Prix: Finalists - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey.....	1911
Vote - Affirmative.....	1912
ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS:	
No. 235, N.S. Home for Colored Children: Gov't. Court Applications - Details, Hon. S. McNeil.....	1912
No. 236, N.S. Home for Colored Children: Gov't. Court Action - Explain, Hon. J. Baillie.....	1914
No. 237, Prem.: Muskrat Falls - Alternative Plan, Mr. A. Younger.....	1916
No. 238, Prem. - Muskrat Falls: URB - Timeline, Mr. A. Younger.....	1918
No. 239, Prem.: jobsHere/Job Losses - Details, Hon. J. Baillie	1920
No. 240, Prem. - Mar. Link: Electricity Rate - Confirm, Mr. A. Younger.....	1922
No. 241, ERDT - Job Creation: Procurement Plan - Effect, Mr. E. Orrell.....	1924
No. 242, Com. Serv.: Housing Stock - Maintenance Costs/Capital Improvement, Ms. K. Regan.....	1926
No. 243, Fisheries Loan Bd. - Boat Building Policy: Change - Details, Hon. C. d'Entremont	1927
No. 244, ERDT: C.B. Job Losses (2013) - Numbers Confirm, Mr. G. MacLellan	1928
No. 245, ERDT: Preston Job Losses (2013) - Numbers Confirm, Hon. K. Colwell	1929

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 71, House of Assembly Act	
Hon. F. Corbett	1930
Vote - Affirmative.....	1930
No. 72, House of Assembly Act	
Hon. F. Corbett	1931
Hon. Manning MacDonald	1931
Hon. F. Corbett	1935
Vote - Affirmative.....	1935
No. 73, House of Assembly Act	
Mr. J. Boudreau.....	1936
Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	1936
Vote - Affirmative.....	1936
No. 74, House of Assembly Act	
Mr. G. Burrill	1937
Vote - Affirmative.....	1937
No. 75, House of Assembly Act	
Mr. M. Whynott	1937
Vote - Affirmative.....	1937

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS:

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 67, Elections Act	
Hon. R. Landry	1938
Ms. D. Whalen	1939
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1942
Hon. R. Landry	1943
Vote - Affirmative.....	1943
No. 69, Statute Amendments (2013) Act	
Hon. R. Landry	1944
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1945
Hon. R. Landry	1947
Vote - Affirmative.....	1947

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING:

No. 36, Provincial Court Act	
Hon. R. Landry	1948
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1948
Vote - Affirmative.....	1949
No. 3, Support for Parents of Critically Ill or Abducted Children Act	
Hon. F. Corbett	1949
Hon. M. Samson	1949
Vote - Affirmative.....	1947
No. 42, Pension Benefits Act	
Hon. F. Corbett	1949
Hon. M. Samson	1950
Vote - Affirmative.....	1950

No. 54, Widows' Pension Act	
Hon. F. Corbett	1950
Hon. M. Samson	1950
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1951
Hon. F. Corbett	1952
Vote - Affirmative.....	1952
No. 57, Language Schools Act	
Hon. F. Corbett	1953
Hon. M. Samson	1953
Vote - Affirmative.....	1953
No. 32, Solemnization of Marriage Act	
Hon. F. Corbett	1953
Hon. M. Samson	1953
Vote - Affirmative.....	1954
No. 37, Innovative Transportation Act	
Hon. M. Smith.....	1954
Hon. M. Samson	1954
Mr. C. Porter	1954
Vote - Affirmative.....	1954
HOUSE RESOLVED INTO CWH ON BILLS AT 3:05 P.M.	1955
HOUSE RECONVENED AT 3:27 P.M.	1955
CWH REPORTS.....	1955
[PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:]	
Private & Local Bills Committee,	
Ms. M. Raymond	1955
ADJOURNMENT:	
MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5):	
Power Rates: NSP Responsibility - Legislate,	
Mr. A. Younger.....	1957
Mr. C. Porter	1959
Mr. B. Skabar.....	1962
ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Fri., May 3 rd at 9:00 a.m.	1964
NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):	
Res. 1173, Bay Bys: Mar. Title - Congrats.,	
Mr. G. MacLellan	1965
Res. 1174, Bear River Vineyards: Accomplishments - Congrats.,	
Mr. H. Theriault	1965
Res. 1175, Global Pet Foods - Animal Charities: Fundraising	
- Congrats., Mr. A. Younger	1966
Res. 1176, Fish, Dylan - NSCAD Starfish Award (2013):	
Finalist - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra	1966
Res. 1177, Oxby, Mary Ellen - NSCAD Starfish Award (2013):	
Finalist - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra	1967
Res. 1178, Allison-Goodfellow, Carrie - NSCAD Starfish Award	
(2013): Finalist - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra	1967

Res. 1179, Ferguson, Duncan - NSCAD Starfish Award (2013):	
Finalist - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra	1968
Res. 1180, Elsiddique, Teto - NSCAD Starfish Award (2013):	
Finalist - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra	1969
Res. 1181, Beamish, Torrance - NSCAD Starfish Award (2013):	
Finalist - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra	1969
Res. 1182, Nowlan, DM - NSCAD Starfish Award (2013):	
Finalist - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra	1970
Res. 1183, Fleming, Tori - NSCAD Starfish Award (2013):	
Finalist - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra	1970
Res. 1184, teBogt, Stacy - NSCAD Starfish Award (2013):	
Finalist - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra	1971
Res. 1185, Harley, Merle - NSCAD Starfish Award (2013):	
Finalist - Congrats., Hon. L. Preyra	1972
Res. 1186, 4-H - Anniv. (100 th),	
Mr. L. Glavine.....	1972



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, MAY 2, 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. Before we start the daily routine, the subject matter for late debate has been chosen, which I will now read:

Therefore be it resolved that since the Premier stated in a CTV panel that the power rate Nova Scotians will pay is 8 cents per kilowatt hour, despite Emera saying no rate will be decided until 2017, that the NDP should introduce legislation that forces Nova Scotia Power, and not ratepayers, to be responsible for any costs above 8 cents.

It was submitted by the honourable member for Colchester North.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 1147

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Nova Scotia has a storied and rich naval history; and

Whereas the Battle of the Atlantic remains the largest, longest, and most complicated battle at sea in history, spanning over five years and claiming the lives of 36,000 Allied soldiers; and

Whereas this month we continue to mark the anniversary of the end of the Battle of the Atlantic, and salute the brave sailors who fought, and remember those who paid the ultimate price;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join together to remember the Battle of the Atlantic and recognize the sacrifices of our sailors who fought, died, and ultimately triumphed on those waters so many years ago.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 1148

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

Whereas the Excellence in Public Service Award recognizes outstanding on-the-job contributions of employees and teams of employees serving Nova Scotians; and

Whereas the Department of Energy's Petroleum Resources Team was recognized with the Excellence in Public Service Award for its unprecedented approach to responsible petroleum resource development, which helped attract billions of dollars in investment in Nova Scotia's world-class offshore oil and gas industry; and

Whereas the Petroleum Resources Team advanced and strengthened the province's energy industry, ensuring long-term viability and stimulation to our economy by reinvigorating interest in the exploration of the province's offshore resources;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Petroleum Resources Team for being recognized with the 2013 Excellence in Public Service Award for supporting responsible petroleum resource development, and offer congratulations to all public servants who work to make a difference to the people of Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

RESOLUTION NO. 1149

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

Whereas each year thousands of Nova Scotia volunteers participate in the Nova Scotia Adopt-A-Highway program by cleaning litter from sections of highway; and

Whereas the Nova Scotia Adopt-A-Highway program continues to recognize the volunteer spirit of its participants who strive to keep our highways and environment clean and litter-free; and

Whereas May 4, 2013, marks the 21st Anniversary of the Nova Scotia Adopt-A-Highway program;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly recognize May 4, 2013, as Adopt-A-Highway Day in Nova Scotia, and congratulate those civic-minded volunteers.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 1150

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students in each of 10 visual arts disciplines as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas the 10 finalists of the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award are Torrence Beamish, Teto Elsidique, Duncan Ferguson, Dylan Fish, Tori Flemming, Carrie Allison-Goodfellow, Merle Harley, DM Nowlan, Mary Ellen Oxby, and Stacy teBogt, each of whom is enrolled in the Bachelor of Fine Arts program; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, these 10 distinguished students will be honoured at the 4th Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, when nine finalists will receive a

\$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive a \$5,000 purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award, and extend best wishes for long and fulfilling careers in our artistic and cultural communities.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. WILSON: I would like to draw the members' attention to the east gallery, where we have with us today Bill VanGorder, who is the chair of the Group of IX. We also have Valerie White, CEO of the Department of Seniors, and Tina Hall, who is legal counsel with the Department of Health and Wellness. I ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 76 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 2 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Adult Protection Act. (Hon. David Wilson)

Bill No. 77 - Entitled an Act to Preserve and Protect Thinkers' Lodge. (Mr. Brian Skabar)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

RESOLUTION NO. 1151

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

Whereas Terry Pettipas of Porters Lake owns and operates THI Construction and has successfully run his own business since 1987, providing new construction and renovations and acquiring most of his work through word-of-mouth referrals from satisfied customers; and

Whereas Terry has always had a heart for construction work and works closely with his customers to ensure that the job is a pleasant experience rather than a stressful one, beginning from the written contract through to the end of the project; and

Whereas Terry not only runs a successful business but cares about the community by sponsoring many hockey and baseball teams and donating to community organizations, as well as the Legion's Crime Stoppers Safe Awareness for Children Program;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House congratulate Terry Pettipas for providing employment for local residents and at the same time giving freely to community organizations, helping make his community a better and safer place to live.

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. 1152

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

Whereas every Spring motorists take to Nova Scotia's roads to enjoy the fine weather and beautiful scenery; and

Whereas May is Motorcycle Awareness Month and this year the Safety Services Nova Scotia office in Dartmouth launched the safety campaign; and

Whereas Halifax Regional Police Integrated Traffic Unit led a guided group of riders through Burnside Park to promote the importance of driver safety, as riders and motorists await summer's arrival;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize Motorcycle Awareness Month and support this important safety campaign, so all motorists can safely take advantage of Nova Scotia's scenic drives.

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 Agriculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 1153

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

Whereas to serve as an elected member of the Nova Scotia Legislature is a great honour and privilege; and

Whereas J. Albert Ettinger of Shubenacadie represented the people of Hants East from 1962 to 1970, having succeeded his father Ernest; and

Whereas Mr. Ettinger passed away at the age of 94 on April 23, 2013;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly mark the service to this august institution by former MLA J. Albert Ettinger with thanks, and offer sincere condolences to his family.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate, and ask for a moment of silence.

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.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1154

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's Metro Boston Pizza female midget AAA hockey team won gold at the AAA Midget Atlantics, in an exciting 2-1 victory on April 7th, earning them a berth at the national championships; and

Whereas forward Laura Polack of Bedford won Most Valuable Player at the tournament and Katherine Purchase of Halifax won top goaltender; and

Whereas the team also consists of Bedford residents Allison Hay, Chantal Beauchamp and Emma Wang, as well as Rebecca Weagle of Lunenburg, Rachel Carr of Halifax, Hanna Lipton of Halifax, Emma Winters of Sackville, Kenzie MacPhee of Fall River, Breanna Lanceleve of Sackville, Kristen Gordon of Liverpool, Monica Morley of Fall River, Annie MacDonald of Fall River, Mariah Snow of Herring Cove, Lisa MacLean of Lower Sackville, Alyssa MacNeil of Halifax, and Victoria MacIntosh of Hammonds Plains;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Metro Boston Pizza female AAA team and their coaches Trevor Larade, Shauna Neary and Chad Winters, their trainer Kathy Gallagher and their manager Susan Purchase, and wish them well in their future endeavours both on and off the ice.

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. 1155

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

Attendu que le 11 avril 2013, le Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse a annoncé l'arrivée d'un nouveau conseiller sénior en affaires pour la région d'Argyle; et

Attendu que Gilles Babin a joint l'équipe de Service en affaires et en entrepreneuriat afin de fournir des conseils en affaires, d'assister dans la préparation des plans d'affaires, et le marketing pour la communauté acadienne et francophone; et

Attendu que M. Babin, originaire de Lower Eel Brook, a obtenu sa baccalauréat en administration des affaires de l'Université Sainte-Anne a 1998, et au cours à qui une grande expérience en affaires, marketing, comptabilité générale, qui lui sera une grande atout dans sa nouvelle carrière;

Par conséquent, qu'il soit résolu que tous les membres de cette Assemblée se joignent à moi pour féliciter M. Gilles Babin sur sa nouvelle carrière, et lui souhaitent plein de succès à l'avenir.

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

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

Whereas on April 11, 2013, the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse announced the hiring of a new senior business consultant for the region of Argyle; and

Whereas Gilles Babin joined the Business Development and Entrepreneurship Services team to offer guidance in business, the planning of business, and marketing plans for the Acadian and francophone community; and

Whereas Mr. Babin of Lower Eel Brook received his Bachelor of Business Administration from Université Sainte-Anne in 1998, and over the years has acquired lots of experience in business, marketing, and general accounting which will be a great asset to him in his new career;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Gilles Babin on his new career, and wish him continued success in his future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

RESOLUTION NO. 1156

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

Whereas postal delivery is an important service for families and small businesses across our province, particularly in rural areas, villages, and towns such as Yarmouth, Mulgrave, and Sheet Harbour; and

Whereas local sorting centres and post offices not only provide a valuable service but keep good-paying jobs in our rural communities; and

Whereas the federal Conservative Government's recent restructuring of Canada Post puts these jobs at risk and threatens to increase wait times and reduce services in rural areas;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature call on the federal Conservative Government to reconsider these changes and stand with the workers, families, and small businesses for whom this service is vital.

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. 1157

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 energy of local music is an essential part of Nova Scotia culture and identity; and

Whereas Liam Cyr, Aidan Cyr, and Joey Jesso of local band Clockwork from Dartmouth East are proudly known around Nova Scotia's music community for their invigorating and soulful alternative rock; and

Whereas on February 2, 2013, the boys of Clockwork travelled to Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, to record their music with multi-Grammy Award-winning producer Dave Way, and are thrilled to now be showcased by Mr. Way in a wider music market;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House applaud Liam, Aidan, and Joey for their shining success representing Nova Scotia's music culture, and wish them every success as they take their place in the international music market.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1158

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

Whereas Bridget Wilson began her path of academic excellence while attending Whycomog Education Centre and Dalbrae Academy; and

Whereas Bridget has earned numerous academic scholarships each year while attending the Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, and was once again named to the Dean's List; and

Whereas Bridget pursues excellence not only in academics but also in sports and 4-H, making her a true student leader;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge Bridget Wilson for her achievements as one of Nova Scotia's leaders of tomorrow.

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. 1159

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

Whereas Master Seaman and Weapons Engineering Technician Peter Godin has served in the Canadian Forces and the Royal Canadian Navy since October 16, 1986; and

Whereas his service has seen him posted on HMCS ships *Kootenay*, *Algonquin*, *Huron*, *Protecteur*, *Halifax*, and *Toronto*, with shipboard experience involving NATO peacekeeping missions, Canadian anti-terrorism missions in the Persian Gulf, and the Canadian Forces humanitarian missions in Haiti; and

Whereas after 26 years of service, Peter is to retire this May 17, 2013, to spend more time with this wife Lynn, his son Andrew, and his daughter Maria;

Therefore be it resolved that this Nova Scotia House of Assembly salute Master Seaman and Weapons Engineering Technician Peter Godin of the Royal Canadian Navy for his 26 years of service to the Crown, and wish him all the best for many years of happiness 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 Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 1160

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 University of Waterloo Pascal math competition is an opportunity for students to have fun and to develop their mathematical problem-solving ability; and

Whereas Bedford Junior High has an enviable record of achievement in the University of Waterloo competition, placing first in the province in 2011, third in 2012, and first again in February 2013; and

Whereas BJH also competed in the regional Math On zone competition in April of this year, placing first in the region, and in fact BJH was the only school across the province to post a perfect score;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House congratulate the dedicated team of BJH math teachers - Diane O'Conner, Jennifer Fletcher, Alison Digot, and J'Aime Steele - along with the hard-working students who took part in the University of Waterloo Pascal competition and the Math On zone competition, and wish them perfect scores in all their future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

RESOLUTION NO. 1161

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

Whereas the African Nova Scotian community is an important part of our collective history and culture in this province; and

Whereas the MLA for Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank has always been an active promoter of African Nova Scotian culture and as Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, and Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs, continues to be a role model for young people in our province; and

Whereas at the First Annual African Diaspora World Tourism Awards in April, the MLA for Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank was honoured with the Tourism Executive of Distinction Award and received a spot in the Hall of Fame, alongside such iconic names as Mohammed Ali and Coretta Scott King;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature recognize the member for Waverly-Fall River-Beaver Bank's commitment to promoting the importance,

diversity, and culture of African Nova Scotians internationally, and congratulate him on receiving these prestigious awards from the African Diaspora World Tourism Association.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate. (Standing Ovation)

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. 1162

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

Whereas Coast Guard crew member Ian McBride of Digby was awarded the Medal of Bravery on February 8, 2013, in Ottawa; and

Whereas in December 2009, the Coast Guard crew were called out to rescue three men whose fishing boat sank during a storm in the Bay of Fundy; and

Whereas the crew made their way, with great difficulty, through rough seas to reach the victims, who were finally found in an inflatable life raft;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Ian McBride of Digby on his Medal of Bravery, and commend him on his courageous efforts.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

RESOLUTION NO. 1163

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

Whereas the 2013 Glace Bay Sport and Volunteer Hall of Fame will induct deserving teams and individuals into the prestigious community hall on Saturday, May 11, 2013 during a ceremony being held at the Bayplex; and

Whereas Robert Ian (Toomey) MacPherson will be posthumously inducted in the builder category for his efforts in representing his community and promoting sport in the areas of Glace Bay and Dominion; and

Whereas Toomey served as a former deputy mayor for the Town of Dominion, fire chief, member of the Donkin School Board and the Cape Breton Regional Vocational School Board in addition to being a hockey coach, former president of the Lingan Golf Club, former president of the Nova Scotia Golf Association and captain of the Nova Scotia Willingdon Cup golf team in 1990 during the Canadian Amateur Championship in Western Ontario;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in congratulating the family of Robert Ian (Toomey) MacPherson on their dad and granddad's induction into the Hall of Fame and recognize his work in shaping the lives of many during his community endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1164

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

Whereas on April 13, 2013 two young girls from Bridgetown Regional High School proved to be a formidable force on the courts of the Cobequid Educational Centre as they played their way to the gold medal round in Junior Badminton Provincials, defeating Bedford in two straight games; and

Whereas Emilee Cress and Hailey Saunders, two Grade 7 students at BRHS, have been teaming up for the past two years playing a sport they both love and excel at; and

Whereas communication, skill and having a combination of left-handed and right-handed strength proved to be a winning combination as these girls captured gold at NSSAF provincials;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Emilee and Hailey on their impressive season and wish them continued success in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Richmond.

RESOLUTION NO. 1165

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

Whereas the Richmond Rise Under-18 girls volleyball team competed at Volleyball Nova Scotia Provincial Championships in Halifax April 19-20, 2013; and

Whereas the Richmond Rise team placed fifth out of 27 teams at the provincial championships; and

Whereas the team consists of Micheline Savoury, Michelle Samson, Megan Gurney, Lindsay Kehoe, Andrée Samson, Alicia David, Brittany Gurney, Simonne Savoury, Carly Carter with head coach Stephanie Landry and assistant coach Ron Savoury;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating coaches and the Richmond Rise Under-18 girls volleyball team for their hard work during the season and wish them continued 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 Halifax Clayton Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 1166

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

Whereas Clayton Park is very proud of popular and captivating spoken word artist Verena Rizg of Poets 4 Change who gives generously of her time to perform at many charity and arts events; and

Whereas in addition to her amazing musical talent, Verena is also a registered nurse who demonstrates her belief that art is a platform for social change by volunteering her time and talent to support many organizations such as the Kids Help Phone and the YWCA; and

Whereas Verena was recently featured at a Canada's National Youth Arts Week event to recognize the creativity of youth and is a regular host and performer at the monthly community event that raises funds for charity while providing a venue for poets and spoken word artists;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize Verena for her stated mission to use art for social change and thank her for her contributions to the cultural environment of Halifax and wish her every success in her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

RESOLUTION NO. 1167

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

Whereas the 2013 Glace Bay Sport and Volunteer Hall of Fame will induct Fred Courtney in the athlete category of the prestigious hall on Saturday, May 11th during a ceremony being held at the Bayplex; and

Whereas Fred's accomplishments include being the youngest player in the Cape Breton Junior Hockey League at 15, 1955-56 Junior League MVP, captain of the famous Cinderella Miners, multiple scoring race champion for both the regular season and playoffs, and was selected to try out for the New York Rangers during the Original Six era of the National Hockey League; and

Whereas after his playing days, Fred dedicated much of his time to coaching hockey, influencing the lives of generations of students as a teacher, supporting many community initiatives offered by the Salvation Army, and is a long-time member of the Donkin Citizens Brass Band;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Fred Courtney on his tremendous career as an athlete and supporter of youth in our community, and thank him and his better half Jean for their dedication to helping others and wish them the best in health and happiness on the road ahead.

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. 1168

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

Whereas Petty Officer Megan Reekie joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1995 as a reserve musician with the Governor General's Foot Guards in Ottawa, and has since worked with the 36th Canadian Brigade Band in Nova Scotia, as well as the Land Forces Atlantic Area Band, and most recently served as a regular forces musician with the Stadacona Band of the Royal Canadian Navy; and

Whereas Petty Officer Megan Reekie has performed for many years at the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo here in Halifax, has represented Canada on multiple tours to Europe and to the United States, as well as serving during the ice storms in Quebec and volunteering with countless community bands and orchestras throughout the years; and

Whereas Petty Officer Megan Reekie will be retiring from the Canadian Armed Forces on May 6, 2013, after a distinguished career in the Music Branch;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Petty Officer Megan Reekie on her retirement, thank her for the service, and wish her well in all her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1169

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

Whereas Heritage Day was established in 1973 by the Heritage Canada Foundation to encourage the preservation and promotion of Canada's nationally significant historic, architectural, natural and scenic heritage; and

Whereas for more than 30 years, the Colchester Historical Society hosts a celebration of those who promote and preserve the history of our community; and

Whereas Sandra Barry received a Heritage Award for her book, *Elizabeth Bishop: Nova Scotia's Home-made Poet*, which highlights the impact of Colchester County, in particular Great Village, on the life and writings of the world-famous poet Elizabeth Bishop;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sandra Barry for receiving a Heritage Award and for her continued efforts to promote the talent of work of renowned poet Elizabeth Bishop.

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. 1170

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

Whereas the Pre Entry to Employment Program is a transition to employment program through the YMCA, which has a strong emphasis on life skills and an employment component by having each participant work one day per week in a field of their interest; and

Whereas the Pre Entry to Employment Program enables individuals to experience new opportunities while, at the same time, becoming better prepared for the workplace and gaining valuable life experiences; and

Whereas on February 25, 2013, a ceremony was held at the Port Hastings Fire Hall to celebrate the graduation from the Pre Entry to Employment Program of Shannon Bona, Justine Martell, Jeffrey Lawrence, Amy Atkinson, Kyle Burton, Felicia Schurman, Norman Boudreau, Juanita McPhee, Keith O'Brien, Kyle Timmons, and Brett MacDonald;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating each participant of the Pre Entry to Employment Program through the YMCA for their hard work and dedication, and wish them success in their future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 1171

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

Whereas on March 22, 2013, the Imperial Barrel Award program (IBA) held their annual international basin evaluation competition for small teams of geoscience graduate students in Calgary, Alberta; and

Whereas Dalhousie University proudly sent delegates Adi Saric and his teammates to demonstrate the best use of high-tech computers and software to evaluate a petroleum

geological dataset of 2D and 3D seismic and well logs to best determine the potential prospects for oil and gas exploration; and

Whereas Adi Saric, the seismic specialist from Dalhousie's team, made a major contribution towards the victory of the team and helped them bring home the first-place win and scholarship funds for the school's geosciences department;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly applaud Adi Saric and his team on being victors in our Canadian regionals, and wish them the best of luck in May at the Imperial Barrel Award International in Pittsburgh against worldwide regional competitors.

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. 1172

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

Whereas Maja and Willem van den Hoek, co-owners of That Dutchman's Farm in Upper Economy, Colchester North, have owned and operated a cheese business for more than 30 years; and

Whereas two of their cheeses, Old Growler which is a gouda cheese, and Dragon's Breath which is a blue cheese, have been nominated as finalists in the 2013 Canadian Cheese Grand Prix hosted by Dairy Farmers of Canada; and

Whereas the competition features 225 cheeses in 19 categories, made from 100 per cent Canadian milk, and only three finalists were chosen for each category and were judged on flavour, texture, body, colour, appearance, and salt content;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of the Assembly congratulate Maja and Willem van den Hoek as successful, small business entrepreneurs for the high quality and uniqueness of their cheeses, for being named as finalists in the Canadian Cheese Grand Prix, and for promoting Nova Scotia as a place where fine cheeses are made.

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 QUESTION PUT BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: Question Period will begin at 12:48 p.m. and end at 1:48 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

N.S. HOME FOR COLORED CHILDREN: GOV'T. COURT APPLICATIONS - DETAILS

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the NDP Government stooped to an all-time low. Former residents of the Home for Colored Children have come together. They provided painstaking evidence in their affidavits - evidence that was personal, hurtful, and painful. Evidence that for many was locked away in a bank of horrid memories for many, many years, only to come out now so we can get to the bottom and find the truth.

And what does this NDP Government do - the NDP Government that wants people to believe it is kind, compassionate, and stands for social justice? It sends in the troops to wipe out that evidence. So my question to the Premier is, could the Premier tell us why he is so afraid of the truth?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, nothing in the world could be further from the truth. The applications made yesterday before the Supreme Court were routine. They are a routine matter. The reality is that we are engaging in a process where we are putting together a panel to look at all of the circumstances surrounding the events around the Nova

Scotia Home for Colored Children. We want to look at what the social mores of the day were, if they dictated how the people there were treated. We want to ensure that the stories of those people are heard, that the process is open, transparent, is honest.

It is a much different matter than the question of compensation; that's a different matter altogether. The Supreme Court has its own set of rules that it applies, it looks at evidentiary questions, all of those things. They have nothing to do with the question of how we get to a complete story. In fact, before the courts, much of the things that those people would want to say would not be relevant to the case. Much of the evidence would not be relevant. We think it is important that the examination of this issue be far broader, that in fact it actually looks at the questions associated with social justice, that it actually looks at the questions associated with fairness.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, it's a sad day when the Premier of the Province of Nova Scotia says it's routine to send lawyers in to try to discredit victims.

Yesterday the government, in a rare legal move, sent in a bank of lawyers to wipe out this evidence. They sent them in to wipe out those memories. They sent them in to, once again, try to discredit the victim.

My question to the Premier is, could the Premier tell us whether it was his office or the Minister of Justice's office who ordered the actions of government lawyers yesterday?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I already pointed out, these are routine applications. They happen all the time. The rules before the Supreme Court are that they have control over their own process. It has nothing to do with the question of how we go about dealing with the questions surrounding what happened at the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children. They have to do with the question of compensation.

Everyone, including the claimants, has the right to ensure that the examinations of those claims is full and complete, based on appropriate evidentiary standards, because that's how we have confidence in the system that we have.

On the other hand, we also have a process, which I have announced, which is designed to look at the larger questions associated with the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children, the questions associated with social justice, the ones that my colleagues and I care very much about.

We have no problem facing these issues, and we will do it with integrity, with honesty, and ensuring the transparency of the process.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, there's nothing routine about this case, and for the Premier to suggest that this case is routine and that the actions by his government are routine is shameful. What went on in the courtroom yesterday on behalf of the NDP

Government was an embarrassment for all Nova Scotia. There are no words to describe the steps and the extent to which this government will go to try to discredit victims and hide the truth.

Does the Premier personally and morally agree with the shameful actions undertaken in the court of law by his NDP Government yesterday?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, to cast those kinds of aspersions on people is - it's very difficult to understand how the Leader of the Official Opposition could stand up and say those kinds of things. The reality is that for years the people of Africville asked for an apology and recognition of what was going on with them. There were Liberal Governments that refused to do that.

This government took an active part in understanding and ensuring that the recognition of the people of Africville was properly recognized. It was this government that looked at the injustice that went on with Viola Desmond, in the Viola Desmond case, and it was this government that faced the reality of the difficult past of the Province of Nova Scotia and ensured that a pardon was granted.

We understand completely the anxiety and the pain of the people associated with the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children. We are ensuring the integrity of the process. The Justices of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia are bound - they have the jurisdiction to deal with these application issues. I believe they will look at them fairly.

As I said, the kinds of applications I saw yesterday were absolutely routine, and I'm confident that when - which we will do in the next little while - we set out the terms of reference for the examination of this issue, we will have a full, open, and transparent examination of what happened.

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

N.S. HOME FOR COLORED CHILDREN: GOV'T. COURT ACTION - EXPLAIN

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday a team of government lawyers was sent in to demand that the courts throw out all or portions of 13 affidavits filed by former residents of the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children in their attempts to be certified as a class to tell their story. This is an action that constitutional expert Dr. Wayne MacKay called extreme, and that well-known law firm Wagner and Associates called unprecedented. Now I ask the Premier, why is the Premier trying to silence the former residents on such an important matter, in such an extreme and unprecedented way?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I read the comments and I was at a loss to understand how they came to those conclusions because I think most people understand

these applications are made every day. They are made in class action suits. They're made in all kinds of suits.

But everybody in the community, even the lawyers, on behalf of the victims, they are entitled to their opinion on that. What I believe is the important piece here is the fact that we have a government that has listened, we have a government that is putting together an examination of the very issues on the very terms that we asked to examine: one that is aimed at reconciliation, one that is aimed at trying to heal the community, one that is aimed at trying to get to the bottom of what actually occurred over those years.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier cannot claim to be listening when he sends a team of lawyers in to stop 13 affidavits from being allowed to be heard in court. That is the opposite of listening. The Premier talked about forming his independent panel to create a process for healing a month ago. He said "They . . ." meaning the former residents, ". . . wanted one of reconciliation and one of healing. It is really about a community wanting to have some recognition of the things that happened in the past." Yet now they are being silenced in court by their own government. I will ask the Premier to explain why he says one thing in public and then sends his lawyers in to do the opposite in court.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, all Nova Scotians, the victims included, have the right to expect that the process of law will be carried out forthrightly, honestly, without prejudice, and that the applications of the rules will be exactly the same, regardless of who stands before them. In fact, it's one of the fundamental principles of law that people have the right to stand before an independent adjudicator and to hear the case. Both sides have that right to expect that they will be treated fairly, openly, and honestly.

In the courts, they have control over that process and they arbitrate these questions, they arbitrate them every day. We recognize that is one process. The other process, which we have announced, is the one that seeks an understanding of the social justice aspects of this case that looks to lay bare the facts of history, one that looks to take the stories of the victims and the explanations of the other people who were associated with that institution at the time, and seeks to understand and address the effects that have happened.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all members appreciate the lecture that they just received from the Premier. The fact of the matter is that the former residents also deserve to have a government that doesn't treat their claims in such an extreme and unprecedented manner, as has been described by constitutional experts like Wayne MacKay. They deserve to be treated fairly. They deserve to be heard. They don't deserve to be faced with a crushing team of lawyers intent on stopping them from telling their stories, the opposite of what the Premier told them and told the people of Nova Scotia when they came forward just a short time ago. That's the court process.

The Premier has also created a second process, an independent panel. The former residents, through their group voices, as articulated by Tony Smith, say they don't have confidence in the independent panel. He said on Maritime Morning just last week that they don't have trust in the government's independent panel so now they have a court procedure where the government sends in its lawyers to stop them from telling their stories. It's an independent panel that they say they have no trust in, that's what's going on.

If, truly, those former residents are going to be silenced in court and they have no confidence in the independent panel that the Premier has created, will he at least call off his lawyers and let them tell their stories in court, and certify as a class, so we can get on with the process of healing once and for all?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the court process is not about healing - it is about compensation and it is about examining individual claims, and that means examining evidence. You can't put evidence before the court and not expect that it's not going to be tested because that is, in fact, the exact purpose of the courts. That's why the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia looks at all these applications, as they should. They protect their own process, they protect the interests of the parties that stand before them. That is fundamental to our system of justice.

As to the independent panel, I'm at a loss to understand how anybody could criticize a panel that hasn't been appointed yet; that could criticize terms of reference that don't yet exist. Mr. Speaker, we listened very directly to them. Mr. Smith wrote to me; he asked for exactly the kind of panel that we have struck.

We are doing our best to take what is a difficult thing, an artifact of history, and to look at it in the most transparent way. That is our commitment.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

PREM.: MUSKRAT FALLS - ALTERNATIVE PLAN

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. I think Nova Scotians pretty well know that the Premier is tight with Nova Scotia Power and Emera; they know that he endorsed the Maritime Link deal before he even knew what the deal was. Now the Premier has signed agreements and deals to ensure the project and Emera's bottom line are secure without regard for the people of the province, and he has given guarantees to Emera that he will not negatively impact Emera with regulatory change - and I'll table his press release stating that.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that the Premier sincerely believes that the Muskrat Falls deal, as structured, is the lowest and best cost for Nova Scotians; I sincerely believe that is what he thinks. But if the Utility and Review Board does say no to the Muskrat Falls deal, what is the Premier's plan?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, of course there is no other project out there. I mean, the Liberal Party and the Progressive Conservatives like to pretend that there is some other project that mysteriously would emerge, but there isn't. The reality is that the Maritime Link is a project which will provide the lowest, fairest rates for Nova Scotians. It will do so and, in addition to having the lowest and fairest rates, it will also usher in a new era for renewable energy in the province.

Mr. Speaker, you might think that those are just my words but in fact, if you check Hansard, those are actually the words of the member for Kings West.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, this is about the deal itself and the deal as currently structured. The Premier refused to answer that question, obviously.

Nova Scotians want to know what his plan is. The Premier needs to make it clear what he will do if the board says no. This has already happened in Newfoundland and Labrador, where the board there determined it didn't have enough time to make an informed decision and then the government legislated the project.

The Premier here already guaranteed they wouldn't negatively impact the company through regulatory change - I believe that was through 2014. This government already committed to enacting regulations to require that ratepayers pay for the Port Hawkesbury biomass plan on the grid when the board said it was uneconomic for ratepayers, so it's not a stretch to think it could happen with this project.

Mr. Speaker, I'll ask again, if the Utility and Review Board says no, does the Premier plan to legislate the project; otherwise, what's his plan?

THE PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, what I don't plan to do is speculate about a result from the Utility and Review Board. I expect them to do their job and, as the member for Dartmouth East would know . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: No, he wouldn't.

THE PREMIER: Or he might know - or should know, I guess is probably right - commentary and speculation by the Premier of the province is not the right way to conduct ourselves.

We now have a project, one that is going to change the energy equation for Atlantic Canada, for decades in front of us. It is going to provide us with the lowest, fairest, most stable rates, one that is going to create an economic engine for our region. We're confident that the URB will deal with it appropriately.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I think it's also fair that Nova Scotians would ask their Premier what his plan is and where he will move forward if exactly what happened in

Newfoundland and Labrador happens here. I think Nova Scotians deserve to have an answer to that question.

Mr. Speaker, critical to the board's work is the evidence before it and yesterday I tabled all 14 studies that the Minister of Energy referenced the other day - and I'll table Hansard here. He had said that nine of the 14 presented evidence that was positive. In fact that was not the case and I'm sure he read those 14 studies, in fact only one of them did. I went through all of the rest that showed what each one of them said. That is the only one of those studies that actually says that. In fairness, some of them don't actually deal with cost at all; some of them are on technical merits and so forth.

Now would the Premier please list - other than the Dalton Study - which of those 14 studies he says state that that project and this deal is the fairest and lowest-cost long-term alternative? As far as we can tell, none of the 14 do except Dalton's.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, if he has read them then he knows and he understands that nine of those 14 reports are supportive of the Maritime Link. He would understand that over and above that, almost everyone who has looked at this project - outside of the Liberal caucus, outside of the Progressive Conservative caucus - understands that this will change the energy future of our region for generations to come. This has been compared to our CPR. This will create an economic engine for the region.

I'm sorry that the Liberal Party is against it. They started off jetting off to Newfoundland and Labrador to promote this. They've spoken on it, they supported the bill and now, because they think it is politically convenient, they have changed their mind. I think that is a sad, sad commentary.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East on a new question.

PREM. - MUSKRAT FALLS: URB - TIMELINE

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Premier that neither the Leader of the Official Opposition when he went to Newfoundland and Labrador, nor myself when I went to Newfoundland and Labrador, flew Emera Airways.

Mr. Speaker, the issue here is not about whether the project could have strategic values but whether this deal, as structured, is good for ratepayers. Increasingly it is appearing that it may not be. The Premier has now taken to quoting former federal Conservative Cabinet Ministers to justify the deal and all I can say is I hope his federal Conservative Party membership card is up to date because Mr. Prentice will be very happy about that.

The Premier clearly believes the Consumer Advocate is wrong. He clearly believes the Small Business Advocate is wrong. He believes the board's own consultants are wrong.

I guess the Premier knows better than all of those internationally respected experts in the energy field who have questioned the Premier's position.

Mr. Speaker, if the Premier is so sure that all of the contrary evidence to this deal is wrong, why won't he allow whatever time the board decides is necessary, so the Premier can be proved to be right?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, this project has had more review, more conversation, and more examination than any project that has ever come forward for the Utility and Review Board with respect to energy; more studies, more work than any other. I realize that this is difficult because it is visionary and that is something that the Liberal Party lacks.

This is about delivering the lowest, most stable, fairest rates to ratepayers. It is about building a piece of energy infrastructure that will serve the region for decades to come. It is about creating economic opportunity for the entire region. This is the kind of commitment that we have in this caucus that is so sorely lacking in the Liberal caucus.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the Premier looks at this stuff as black and white and it's an insult to Nova Scotians that he doesn't understand that people could say that there could be a strategic value in a project, but the deal as structured could still be a bad deal for ratepayers. That's what the issue is here.

We talk about strategic value but that strategic value is linked to other markets and when the Premier selectively quoted Mr. Prentice the other day, he forgot to mention - I'll table Mr. Prentice's comments to the media - that in fact there needs to be changes to the regulations in the U.S. because many U.S. states won't count the project as green energy. This is despite the fact that the deal, as currently structured, assumes that the entire link's capacity between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. will be exported to the U.S.

Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that has been raised by his favourite former Conservative Cabinet Minister and also by some evidence before the board. Has the Premier tried to address that issue with his U.S. counterparts?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, first of all we don't see it as an issue because it doesn't actually affect the sale. Secondly - I know he was probably tied up but I actually had all of my U.S. counterparts here last year and this in fact was the focus of that discussion. Do you know what they said? They said, let's get busy, let's see this project built and let's start talking about the contracts that we can sign for this kind of power.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, maybe the Premier should check to see what some of those Premiers have done since leaving here, including recently signing a deal for a very high-capacity line into the U.S. that will bypass Muskrat Falls.

The evidence before the board now points out that the Dalton and Nova Scotia Power evidence ignored the impact on supply of the COMFIT projects. It also ignored the impact, according to the evidence, of energy efficiency. These are two things that, on the other hand, the Premier talks a lot about. The study the Premier commissioned selectively ignores projects so that the Maritime Link project looks better.

During the last election, the Premier said that the conservation tax should be paid by Nova Scotia Power - there's the letter from his chief of staff during the election. Here's from the Synapse report that we tabled yesterday, evidence before the board saying that stuff was ignored. Why does the Premier on one hand promote energy conservation in the COMFIT programs but turn around and endorse the study which makes the Muskrat Falls deal look better by ignoring the COMFIT projects and energy conservation?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised that the member for Dartmouth East is able to talk out of so many sides of his mouth at one time. (Interruption) Is that unparliamentary, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Any word that causes disruption or disorder is deemed by the Chair to be unparliamentary, so yes.

THE PREMIER: I'll try to be a little less evocative of imagery. The Liberal Party is against Efficiency Nova Scotia, they said they were going to close it down or they're going to take that away. They voted five times against taking the HST off home electricity.

The people of Nova Scotia know that the renewable electricity plan put forward by this government was not only the first one, but it was widely praised as one of the most progressive plans anywhere in North America. The kinds of things that we have done with respect to renewable energy have been praised by the David Suzuki Foundation. It is far and away the most rational, most progressive renewable energy and electrical plan in our country.

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

PREM.: JOBSHERE/JOB LOSSES - DETAILS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday when I presented the Premier with evidence of growing youth unemployment in our province, he accused me of cherry-picking the statistics. So I want to take this opportunity to provide the Premier with more evidence of what we are talking about.

The experience for young people in Nova Scotia's workforce from 2009 until 2012, according to Statistics Canada, has been very dismal. For example, for young people aged 15 to 24 working in the retail trades, 2,400 full-time jobs have been lost in the four years from 2009 to 2012. If you're a young person working in a trade-related business, 2,500

full-time jobs have been lost for those young Nova Scotians. If you are working in the category of business, building and other support services, 1,300 jobs for young people have been lost. I will table all of that from Statistics Canada for the benefit of the Premier.

So my question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier is, how did he manage to spend \$200 million on his jobsHere scheme and lose so many jobs for young Nova Scotians at the same time?

THE PREMIER: It is remarkable that the Leader of the Party who, when the PROJEX company came from Alberta and said we are going to bring people back from Alberta, we've been employing Maritimers and Nova Scotians in Alberta for years but we are going to come back to Halifax and we're going to create 440 jobs, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party criticized those people to such an extent that when I went out of this House with them they literally turned to me and said, you know, we're trying to do a good thing for Nova Scotia and we just can't believe that somebody would say those kinds of things.

AN HON. MEMBER: Shame.

THE PREMIER: It is a shame because those kinds of projects, whether it's RIM, IBM, PROJEX, or any of the other investments we have made it is all about keeping young people here.

MR. BAILLIE: I really don't know what the Premier is talking about. I met with the PROJEX team the same day and we had a very good meeting and yet the Premier seems to be offended. The only one who's offended, Mr. Speaker, is the Premier who hands over bucket-loads of taxpayers' money to move jobs from one end of Hollis Street in Halifax to the other. That was the public policy issue that we were debating that day, if he can't remember, and that doesn't create a single job for a young Nova Scotian.

Statistics Canada also reports in that same report, Mr. Speaker, that the population of young Nova Scotians, aged 15 to 24, dropped by 4,500 during the last four years, that's almost four per cent of the total; the labour force of young Nova Scotians dropped 3,900, that is almost five per cent of the total young labour force; and employment opportunities declined by 3,600, or over five per cent for people in that young age range.

That is the record of the NDP in the last four years. Young Nova Scotians are already voting with their feet when it comes to the record of this NDP Government. I'll ask the Premier, why are so many young Nova Scotians moving away or dropping out of the labour force under your watch?

THE PREMIER: You know, Mr. Speaker, he always stands up and he says those things, tables them, and we check and it turns out to be absolutely untrue. I'll table Statistics Canada from 2008 through to 2012, which shows the population of Nova Scotia

increasing from 937,000 to 948,700. It is just the kind of nonsense that Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party enters into.

The simple fact of the matter is he won't - even though for years, and even though the rebate program itself that we have was something that was used by Nova Scotia Business Inc. when they were in power, we were able to go out and to actively attract new businesses to the Province of Nova Scotia. The IBM Global Delivery Centre, the first one in Canada, a huge victory for young people, graduates who are going to be able to go to work in the Global Delivery Centre; RIM, cementing those jobs here in Nova Scotia; PROJEX, 440 engineering jobs for young graduates - that is success.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the fact that the Premier can count on one hand the example he knows of, of jobs, compared to the overwhelming evidence from Statistics Canada that thousands of young people are without work today compared to four years ago actually proves the point. What is so unique about Nova Scotia that the labour force for young people is going down when it's going up everywhere else? We have the highest taxes in the country. We have the highest power rates in the country.

What more evidence does the Premier need that his policies are driving young people away and ruining their chance of starting their careers here?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'll give him this: it takes a lot of temerity to stand up and say those kinds of things. The simple fact of the matter is that we inherited a colossal mess from the former government. It took years to try to fix it - a huge deficit, an economy that was faltering, and a slavish adherence to the worst kind of economic development initiatives. We changed all that. We moved, we turned a corner here in Nova Scotia, creating thousands of new jobs - 11,000 jobs associated with the shipyard contract that is just starting to get underway. We cemented in place jobs in Port Hawkesbury, in a place where the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party would have given up on the industry and those workers.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

PREM. - MAR. LINK: ELECTRICITY RATE - CONFIRM

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier. Last night, CTV aired a panel of Atlantic Premiers discussing the Maritime Link, and the Premier stated that the rate Nova Scotians would be paying for power as a result of the Maritime Link deal would be 8 cents a kilowatt hour. I will table that quote.

Now, that's really interesting. If that's true, it would be really good news, because we're paying over 13 cents now. In fact, the Premier has been asked repeatedly in this House and couldn't give an amount. It's also interesting because Emera says they won't

know the rate until 2017, and I will table that. It's impressive that the Premier knows the rate, but Emera doesn't.

Since it would seem that the Premier has been given a guarantee by Emera that no one else has seen, would the Premier please table the written confirmation he has from Emera that the total blended electricity rate, as he put it, will be 8 cents a kilowatt hour once Muskrat Falls is on-line?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, first of all, just for the record, what I actually said was that I saw what Emera predicted. They said that the blended price per kilowatt hour would be somewhere in the vicinity of 8 cents. That, firstly, is what I actually said as opposed to what he says I said. And secondly, what is absolutely impressive is the fact that I stood here in this House and I said that during the Address in Reply, and somehow, he missed it.

For his edification, I will table in this House a story from The ChronicleHerald. It reads as follows: "As an energy price, the \$1.5 billion works out to eight cents per kilowatt hour, Emera said. That's based on 2017 energy price forecasts and assumes that Nova Scotia Power is getting one-third of its electricity from Labrador or other imports." So I said exactly what the story out of The ChronicleHerald says, and it's not the first time I've said it. I've said it here in the House; I said it during the Address in Reply to the Throne Speech. I'm just surprised that it took him so long to get that.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, if the Premier said it in the Address in Reply, I did miss that, and I apologize, but he has been asked repeatedly by the Leader of the Official Opposition in Question Period, and the Premier did not have an answer since then.

Emera says there will be no rate known until - and they've actually said in their filings it will be well over that. So is the Premier prepared to legislate that the total blended rate that Nova Scotians will pay as the result of the Maritime deal will be 8 cents per kilowatt hour, and that any cost not covered by that will be covered by Nova Scotia Power shareholders?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, it's a shame when the livelihoods of businesses in this area, the rates that people pay, become the subject of a football for the Liberal Party. It is a shame, because the process that's being undertaken, first of all, you have two Atlantic Canadian provinces - actually three, including New Brunswick - acting in good faith and co-operating on a project together for the best interests of all their citizens, one that is designed to try to create stable energy prices, that puts in place an energy infrastructure that will benefit us for decades to come. It is a shame that the Liberal Party would ridicule that effort.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, he thinks it's a shame, but the fact of the matter is, if it's 8 cents and he gave a guarantee to Emera, then he should give a guarantee to ratepayers. It's as simple as that.

On CTV, this Premier told Nova Scotians that their power bill will be 8 cents a kilowatt hour, which is about 60 per cent of what they're paying now. So if he believes it, and if he's going to stand on CTV and say that, he should legislate it and stand by it. Otherwise, he shouldn't say it. The Premier also went on to say in that interview that rates will then decline.

So since the Premier knows the rate will be 8 cents once Muskrat Falls comes on-line, and that given that Emera officially says they won't know the rate until 2017 - and I tabled that as part of their filing before the board - would he tell us and Emera exactly what the rate will be declining to?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the member for Dartmouth East thinks that people out there are naive, that they don't actually hear what he says from one question to the next.

First of all, I just read exactly what I said, which is not what he says I said. That's the first thing. The second thing is, I didn't say that last night on CTV. In fact, what I pointed out was that they said there would be under a 1 per cent increase for the first four or five years - under 1 per cent - and then the prices would decline. That's what I said. That is what is being filed, Mr. Speaker. (Interruptions) I realize that . . .

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

THE PREMIER: I realize that from the Liberal Party's perspective, they don't really care about this. They consider this a politically-convenient target for them to try to destroy. That's a shame, because this is the best project. It is the lowest, fairest rates when combined with our proposal, our policy to take the HST off. It means that it is of great benefit to the people of Nova Scotia.

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

ERDT - JOB CREATION: PROCUREMENT PLAN - EFFECT

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, the NDP have a habit of making life hard for small- and medium-sized businesses. The procurement plan continues that trend. Contracts are now too big for local businesses to bid on. Money is leaving the province to large international corporations that have the ability to undercut local manufacturers. The manufacturing industry in Nova Scotia has been hit hard by the NDP economic failures, losing 1,600 from the labour force in the last four years.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, why does the minister continue to make life hard for job creators in rural Nova Scotia?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to respond to that question. What we are doing is quite the opposite. We are making life easier for SMEs in the Province of Nova Scotia. We've improved the Web portal. We streamlined it with all the cluster and programs that we have available. Now SMEs can go into the Web portal directly and go, more so now than ever before, to those programs that are going to be of great assistance to them.

In all the years that we've been in government, we lowered the small-business tax rate. We've done it every year that we've been in government. Mr. Speaker, we are doing the right things to help SMEs.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the NDP don't understand how the Nova Scotia economy works. They cut the subsidy to the Yarmouth ferry, which costs the province nearly three times the subsidy. That is a special kind of growth plan - save \$5 million in subsidy only to lose hundreds of jobs, millions from spending of visitors, and then spend millions propping up small- and medium-sized businesses on the verge of closing due to the NDP's poor economic foresight and lack of research.

The NDP doesn't understand the economy and will continue to cripple small- and medium-sized businesses. My question to the minister is, unlike the Yarmouth ferry economic disaster, has the NDP evaluated the potential loss to small- and medium-sized businesses and the overall impact to Nova Scotia, or have they simply taken a narrow, overly-simplistic view again, throwing caution to the wind?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, through this government we have assisted approximately 400 businesses in the Province of Nova Scotia. The majority of those businesses are SMEs - that's through the PIP program. Also through the PIP program 10,000 employees are more educated today than they were three years ago. Those are the kinds of investments that we are making into SMEs and businesses throughout the Province of Nova Scotia, from one end of the province to the other.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the NDP doesn't care about small businesses. We can see that through their wind energy plan, which stacks the decks against the small-business guys. Small- and medium-sized businesses are the backbone of our province. They simply require that government get out of their way so they can create wealth. The NDP have interfered, picked winners and losers, subsidized hand-picked industries, and sent rural Nova Scotia into a recession.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, does the NDP not expect their procurement policy to end up like the wind plan, where only large companies can benefit, and continue to close their eyes when it comes to the small guys?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, what small businesses have said to us is they need lower tax rates. What they've said is that they need more access to programs and services that we have. What they've said to us is that they need a better-educated workforce. It is obvious that this government has heard them because that's just exactly what we are doing.

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

**COM. SERV.: HOUSING STOCK
- MAINTENANCE COSTS/CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT**

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Community Services has been touting her government's affordable housing strategy since her initial announcement in November of last year. Consultations have been held and research, I presume, has been done. My question for the minister is, as of March 31, 2013, what were the deferred maintenance costs and capital improvements needed in Nova Scotia's housing stock?

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I'm excited about the fact that we will be announcing a housing strategy, to be able to show the people of Nova Scotia and work with the people of Nova Scotia. For the first time in the history of this province, we have a plan and it's a plan with the people of Nova Scotia.

We have looked at what type of housing stock we have in the province. The honourable member does not understand what this housing strategy is about. It is not just about the number of housing stock, it is also about the people of Nova Scotia, those with disabilities, those who are looking towards more community options, seniors, how we can work with them in order that they can stay in their home longer. Also the plan is looking at how we can encourage young people to obtain their first home.

It's an overall, very comprehensive plan so she should stay tuned and educate herself a little bit better as to what it's all about.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, when asked in the House about numbers of families and seniors waiting to get into public housing, the minister couldn't give an answer and now, when asked about capital needs for housing stock, she can't give an answer. It has been six months, Mr. Speaker, and this simple information gathering to set targets - it's project management 101. Can the minister please give members of this House a timeline, when can we expect some housing built as a result of this strategy?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Once again, as I said, the member opposite does not understand the workings of the housing strategy. We do identify what areas in the province that our stock needs some input and fixing. With the stimulus projects we have focused on a numerous amount of homes that we have repaired in public housing. But this is much more than what she is thinking about, this is not about going out and just fixing up housing.

What this is about is a whole concept of housing opportunities for Nova Scotians, whether that's through co-operative housing, whether that is supporting youth and their ability to purchase their first home, whether it is working with partnerships and municipalities to be able to build mixed community housing, whether it is working with the advocacy groups and focusing on how we move toward more co-operative and community living. It's very comprehensive, there are a lot of different areas and that's where the member opposite needs to do a little bit more research and see exactly what the plan is.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

FISHERIES LOAN BD. - BOAT BUILDING POLICY: CHANGE - DETAILS

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister responsible for the Fisheries Loan Board. Last year one of our prominent boat builders, Dixon's Marine Group, in the minister's home community of Woods Harbour, was unfairly treated by the loan board when one of its customers was told by loan board staff that they were overpricing their vessels and that the fishermen should look elsewhere. This came as a complete surprise to the shipyard as it strives to be competitive.

As the minister knows, vessel selection is a very personal issue and fishers want specific boats. This move by the loan board staff would be kind of like if one of us wanted to buy a car, wanted a Volkswagen Jetta and was told that it would only fund a Honda Civic. My question to the minister, has there been a change in policy of the loan board in regard to who can build boats?

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: First of all we do not discuss personal files in the House of Assembly but I can tell you that the loan board, since I've been elected and since I took this position - when I entered politics in 2006, fishermen did not have access to capital for a loan for a licence. I ran on that campaign and I can tell you right now that fishermen have access to capital for licences and it has been much improved and I thank the member opposite for bringing that question to the floor.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, what's even more interesting about this issue is that when Dixon's went to the loan board to find out what they were basing their pricing on, they were told that the information doesn't exist. So my question to the minister, since apparently he's doing such a great job - how does the loan board determine its pricing and who makes that decision.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Again, Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite there is a process in place, there are inspectors that go and inspect the boats in question and I'm very confident in the procedures that we have in place and the member opposite from Argyle should know this because he was actually the minister at one time, and since 2006 when this member took this position we have improved access for capital for fishermen and the loan board has improved since then.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: There you go, typically no answer here. Dixon's Marine Group tells me in the end the loan was capped - the capped amount to lend to the fishers, causing those fishermen to dig even deeper into their pockets to the tune of almost \$32,000 in both cases - there were two cases of this one. So when the industry is hurting, prices are at an all-time low, the rural economy is in recession, Mr. Speaker, the government stuck it to these fishermen.

My question to the minister, will he immediately instruct the loan board to fix this problem and apologize to Dixon's Marine Group which employs many of the minister's neighbours for damaging their stellar reputation.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, it's an interesting question. We have improved the Loan Board and fishermen's access to it and I'm very confident in the staff that we have. We have a great program but there is also a little bit of history here. Since we have taken this position, our government, the member opposite and his Party has not defended owner-operator policy, which we have. We also put more protection around Georges Bank (Interruptions) and we have stood up for EI in Atlantic Canada and we went to Ottawa in February and that member opposite was silent. Thank you for the question.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay.

ERDT: C.B. JOB LOSSES (2013) - NUMBERS CONFIRM

MR. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, throughout the province we have an unemployment rate of 9.5 per cent but of course that is masking the trouble outside of metro. With most other areas being double-digit unemployment, then we have that weighted average of metro bringing down the reality of the numbers. In Cape Breton we are struggling with a rate of 18.6 per cent. To make matters worse, the government is projecting even fewer people working in the province in the coming year.

A drop in employment of 1,100 people for 2013 is not good news for Nova Scotia and given the tough circumstances in Cape Breton already, it is certainly not good news for our island. Will the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism tell Cape Bretoners how many of the 1,100 projected job losses in 2013 will disappear from Cape Breton?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I can stand in my place and say that if it hadn't been for this government, 1,400 direct and indirect jobs would have disappeared from Cape Breton Island. If this government hadn't stepped in and worked with Port Hawkesbury/NewPage for new ownership - and now one of the most productive mills in North America if not in the world. This government did this, contrary to the Opposition Party.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, since this government took office, there has been a spike in unemployment for Cape Bretoners to the tune of 10 per cent. This makes 11,000 unemployed islanders at last count. Those 11,000 people are certainly not better off under this Premier, under this government. If the government's own employment projections are to be believed, there are more job losses on the horizon for the island and the island's economy. Will the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism explain why his government is content with its record of 11,000 unemployed Cape Bretoners?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, what we are not content with is the loss of federal jobs on Cape Breton Island. We're not content with the fact that Canada Post is closing. We're not content with Veterans Affairs closing their office, contact centres and the list goes on and on. What we are doing in Cape Breton Island is investing in businesses on Cape Breton Island. While we are creating jobs in Cape Breton, the federal government is eliminating jobs.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, the CBRM and council have recently proposed a sound, five-year capital plan to address infrastructure concerns, put tradespeople back to work and bridge the gap to possibly improving economic conditions. As you know, things can't get much worse on the island. If the Minister of ERDT is truly committed to helping Cape Breton, will he signal his support by identifying the CBRM capital plan as a provincial priority and will he earmark funds for the capital plan in this fiscal year?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, we've shown our commitment, not only to Cape Breton but to all Nova Scotia. Maybe the Opposition will stand side by side with this government and endorse the Maritime Link, a huge employment effort in Cape Breton Island.

Mr. Speaker, we've made investments in IIBG for a feasibility study on future work in Cape Breton. We've invested millions of dollars in the dredging of Sydney Harbour, not to mention all those other small- and medium-sized businesses throughout all of Cape Breton, from Billdidit to Copal, a whole list of things. We've shown our commitment, and it's unfortunate that the Liberal Party is not standing alongside us.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

ERDT: PRESTON JOB LOSSES (2013) - NUMBERS CONFIRM

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, the GDP for the province in 2012 was 0.2 per cent. The economy is at a standstill, and rural Nova Scotia is in a recession. Business confidence has dropped, and consumer confidence has dropped. The government estimates that the provincial employment will drop by 1,100 jobs in 2013.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism tell the residents of Preston how many of the expected 1,100 job losses will be in Preston?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I will say this: when Irving Shipbuilding approached us and they talked about the 11,500 jobs that were going to be created at the peak of the shipbuilding, one of the things that this government emphasized to Irving Shipbuilding - and do you know what? It's unfortunate that all members of the House will not understand this, but we made sure that there was going to be a strong diversity component of that employment.

Mr. Speaker, Irving shipyard has committed to ensuring that diversity is a pillar of their go-forward motion when it comes to those 11,500 jobs.

MR. COLWELL: Our rural economy is already in recession, and the government is predicting a drop in employment of 1,100 people in 2013. A large amount of people in the Preston riding rely on the construction industry for employment. Housing starts are down - one of the leading indicators of economic growth - and are being forecast to drop by 11.1 per cent in 2013 and again by 5 per cent in 2014. This forecast drop . . .

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Premier.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill No. 71.

Bill No. 71 - House of Assembly Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 71 be now read for a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 71. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 72.

Bill No. 72 - House of Assembly Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 72 be now read for a second time.

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

HON. MANNING MACDONALD: I rise to say a few words about Bill No. 72 and the significance of the proposed name change from the riding of Sydney to the riding of Sydney-Whitney Pier. Mr. Speaker, it's a known fact, and you would know this and other members of the House particularly from Cape Breton would know, that Whitney Pier has been a historic community within the City of Sydney for many, many years, going back to the turn of the last century when many immigrants from that area of Sydney came and established residence in the area of Whitney Pier to work at the Sydney steel plant - and other industries such as the coal mines but particularly the Sydney steel plant at the beginning of the 20th Century.

The area of Whitney Pier, I believe, has a tremendous historic importance and I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is indeed important that that be recognized in the present bill before the House and it is, in fact, being recognized by the fact that Sydney will now be - once this bill clears the House - this riding of Sydney-Whitney Pier.

Mr. Speaker, as you know having represented that area, that I too have a connection with Whitney Pier over the years and I'm proud of that connection that all the way back to my days of coaching Little League baseball in Whitney Pier, the Seymour Harrison Senators and then on to the Police Athletic Club Dodgers. You'll remember those days, you were around - you're a little bit younger than I am but anyway - you were around those days and I can recall coaching little league baseball at the Whitney Pier playgrounds until we moved to the brand-new Tupper Street field and renamed the team the Dodgers at that time, and we did very well.

The significance of what I'm saying is that certainly the community of Whitney Pier has demonstrated over the years that it is a unique community within the boundaries of the old City of Sydney. The Whitney Pier Historical Society, Mr. Speaker, has kept that image alive over the years of the important significance of the multiculturalism that exists in that part of Sydney, known as Whitney Pier. I say that because the community of Whitney Pier is indeed unique in the fact that it has many, many different cultural

backgrounds inhabiting the residences from the South Bar boundary right up to the overpass which connects Whitney Pier to the rest of the City of Sydney.

Mr. Speaker, I can also say to you that over the years the boundary of that particular riding which is known as Cape Breton South - still known as Cape Breton South until the next election and all the changes are made - that particular riding of Cape Breton South has changed many, many times since I've been in this House. I can recall that the riding changed - at one time it encompassed the entire City of Sydney only, including the Whitney Pier area. Then it was changed and the new riding of Cape Breton Nova was formed which took in areas of South Bar, New Victoria, Grand Lake Road, and Lingan Road and those particular areas as well as Whitney Pier. Then it was changed again to take in Ashby, the riding moved over the overpass up into Ashby, part of the old riding of Cape Breton South. Then it changed again to take Cape Breton South across the harbour to Westmount and Coxheath, Balls Creek, Point Edward, Sydney River to the bypass, all of those areas then became part of Cape Breton South, Mira Road.

Now in the recent boundary changes all of that has been dispersed pretty well into other ridings and now we're back to where we started 20 or 25 years ago, the old City of Sydney boundaries are now . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Six wards.

MR. MACDONALD: Yes, as you correctly pointed out six wards of the old City of Sydney, including Membertou, are now back in the riding of Cape Breton South which will be renamed Sydney-Whitney Pier. I can say to you, Mr. Speaker, that - and I do appreciate the historic significance of the area of Whitney Pier but there are also other areas of the new riding of Sydney, the historic north end where Sydney was founded, as a unique community in itself. The historic community of the north end of Sydney has many buildings that are declared heritage properties because the founding of Sydney actually took place in the North End of Sydney, with the old St. George's Church being one of them and Jost House and all of the facilities, including the army barracks that were down there and now the entire operation for the army is still based in the North End.

Then as you move up, you get to the place called the Townsend Street area, where I was born and that area is affectionately known as the Gaza Strip and the reason it is is because it's the home of the Lebanese community, which is a very strong Lebanese community in the City of Sydney, and I was proud to be born in that community and that is also a very vibrant and strong community.

As you move up you move up to Hardwood Hill, which was a new part of the development of Sydney. Younger families moved up to the Hardwood Hill area, all the way up to where the CTV television station is, which was formally known as CJC TV. The old city boundary was up right by the television station. Then, of course, you moved to the shipyard, which is also an historic part of Sydney. A lot of young people over the years

developed their homes and brought up their families in that particular part of the riding of Sydney as well.

In the middle of all this you have Membertou, the First Nations Reserve, which in the boundaries of the City of Sydney, soon to be known as Sydney-Whitney Pier, and was known as Cape Breton South, but the entire First Nations community is included and that's historic in itself. Very few First Nations communities are located within the city boundary. Most of them are in rural areas, but in this particular case, the entire Membertou Reserve is located within the boundaries of the City of Sydney, the former boundaries and indeed the current boundaries and the future boundaries. How long this particular name and boundaries will last is anybody's guess in the future because since I've been elected here, six times - time flies - my boundary has changed four times, so heaven knows how that is going to change in the future. We deal with what is.

If we take in the historic parts of Sydney and Whitney Pier, we will note the historic implications of Whitney Pier and we should also note the historic implications particularly the north end of Sydney, the Hardwood Hill area, the shipyard area and, of course, Membertou. So if we were to start naming the riding with all the historic parts in it, we would have a riding that would look like this: Sydney-Whitney Pier-North End-Hardwood Hill-Shipyard-Membertou. I realize that if I made a motion to amend that bill to include all those names in there, by the time you read them on the ballot, the election would be over. I would like to see all of those names recognized, but certainly, on the floor of this House, over the years they have been recognized, all these parts of the riding of Sydney.

You are absolutely right that all of those areas of Sydney deserve recognition and they get that in the riding because Sydney is an historic city. It has been around for a long time. I can remember when we had the 200th Anniversary of the City of Sydney, the founding for the City of Sydney. It was at that time when I was mayor of the city, we dedicated a project to the 200th Anniversary of Sydney and it was called Centre 200 for the citizens of Sydney at the time. It was to recognize the fact that Sydney was 200 years old, or 200 years young I should say, and the significance of the importance of preserving that history.

Also, we had bicentennial year celebration during that time and we re-enacted the landing of Governor Des Barres and all the things that happened during the historic founding of Sydney, with a lot of the celebrations taking place at St. George's Anglican Church in the north end of Sydney, and at the Army base which was known as "the garrison of Sydney" at the time.

All of those things were significant and led to the development of Sydney, over the years, to where it is today, a very cosmopolitan city, a city that is on the move in my opinion. And it's important that we recognize where the City of Sydney came from. I'm happy to see that the name "Sydney" is back on the electoral boundaries and on the

electoral map. I have no difficulty with the add-on of Whitney Pier, and I would say if we added them all on we'd have a pretty long name, but I made that point before.

I want to emphasize that Sydney has many historical parts and, as I said before, one of the more significant ones, of course, was connected with the founding of Sydney - and that was the north end of Sydney. As the son of a Sydney steelworker, my father had the opportunity over many, many years at the plant to work with the many, many cultural aspects of Whitney Pier, the people who came from different countries to Sydney and established in Whitney Pier. My father made many friends from the people in that community over the years, and those were the people who certainly preserved the kind of historical importance of those who laboured, and laboured hard, to toil in the rough, tough conditions that were evident at Sydney Steel, particularly when it was owned by a British Empire Company, and the Dominion Coal and Steel Company and, finally, with the government.

Those people toiled long and hard and deserve to be recognized - and I want to say, with respect to that, there are many people living who did live in the community of Whitney Pier and are now living in other sections of Sydney, but they remember their roots in Whitney Pier. We all recognize that the entire City of Sydney has historical importance, one that has been around for a long time. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, it has been a privilege of mine to represent that particular city, Sydney, over the years. Despite the fact that I never thought that I would be representing an area that moved across the harbour, because at one time there was very little deliverance of one thing to another with the rural areas outside Sydney.

I can recall a lot of young families moving to Westmount and Coxheath to avoid Sydney's bad water at the time, years and years ago. They went over and had their own wells constructed and everything and became less a part of Sydney than they were before that. I can tell you now the water system in Sydney is one of the best anywhere because of much money spent over the past number of years to achieve that goal. Now all of the people who were moved out of there or did move out to have wells are now wanting to connect to the city's water system because they're having difficulties with the wells, particularly out in areas of Cape Breton West and now soon to be known as Cape Breton North-Westmount - and that's a handle, too. Is it Cape Breton North-Westmount? (Interruption) Northside-Westmount, that's right, pardon me, let's not get the two mixed up here.

While we do have some name changes in some of the boundaries, nevertheless all of us who live in Cape Breton, no matter what riding we live in, are proud of where we live. I know my good friend, the member for Glace Bay, is extremely proud of his constituency, and I can recall the previous member for Glace Bay brought a bill to this House changing the name to Glace Bay from Cape Breton East, because it encompassed only the boundaries of the former Town of Glace Bay. So it was obvious that that riding should be named Glace Bay instead of Cape Breton East because, quite frankly, a lot of people didn't

know where Cape Breton South began and ended, and they didn't know where Cape Breton East began and ended, but they do know where Sydney is and they do know where Glace Bay is.

I commend the previous member for Glace Bay for bringing that bill to the House, and I also commend the present member for Glace Bay for keeping the problems connected with the economy of Cape Breton to the front in this House. Certainly, as we move towards the next election, and if you, Mr. Speaker, could give me a hint as to when that might be, I could then take my place and get on with life.

I just want to end up by saying that on this particular bill, I'll certainly be - if we're here any longer than tomorrow - I'll certainly be back up on my feet next week to say a few words about other issues. On this particular issue I do want to say that we'll certainly be supporting this bill to rename the riding of Cape Breton South, which was renamed Sydney by the Electoral Boundaries Commission, and then when it came back to this House it's being amended to the riding of Sydney-Whitney Pier.

Mr. Speaker, I probably would suggest to you that if we had all those communities in the name, it would certainly be something that I could support as well but I recognize that the name would be extremely long. Maybe if you indulge me, where I was born in the Gaza Strip, maybe we could name it Sydney-Whitney Pier-Gaza or something like that. Anyway, having said that, I can assure you that our caucus will be supporting this bill. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: If I recognize the minister it will be to close the debate.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 72.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 72. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable member for Cumberland North on an introduction.

MR. BRIAN SKABAR: Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to bring the attention of the House to the gallery opposite. I'd like to introduce Mr. Terry Rhindress, a long-time councillor of the Town of Amherst and a tireless worker for his constituents, particularly with regard to the West Highlands area. I've heard of him twice or three times a week for the last two years about the West Highlands School and now here he is to see us in action. Please give Councillor Rhindress our best regards. (Applause)

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 73.

Bill No. 73 - House of Assembly Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

MR. JIM BOUDREAU: Mr. Speaker, I move this bill for second reading.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I'm finding this one a little odd as we go along - this number of bills. I mean we're talking about some significant changes to the names of constituencies that have been set forward by the Electoral Boundaries Commission, in this particular case changing the East Nova or Eastern Nova Scotia to a full Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie.

I would think that maybe the member should speak a few moments to the changes because from this side of the House (Interruption) - maybe on third reading, maybe we will be lucky to hear about it - on this side of the House we are wondering why this is happening. Who asked for the changes or are they specifically done because the members opposite feel that that should happen that way? I would think that this is something that comes from the community, to be interested in it. I mean we are going to support them as they go on, but just maybe a little history would help us all out in our process as we listen to these bills.

So, thank you very much. We will be supporting these bills as they go forward.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 73. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 74.

Bill No.74 - House of Assembly Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley.

MR. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the member for Truro-Bible Hill, I move that Bill No. 74 be read for a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 74. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 75.

Bill No.75 - House of Assembly Act.

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

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 75.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 75. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 67.

Bill No. 67 - Elections Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 67, and it is my pleasure today to speak about this bill which contains changes which I'm sure members of this House will be paying close attention to. As we all know, the Elections Act sets out the rules under which elections are run. It contains some inconsistencies in some areas that are unclear, and these amendments will clear up those issues. Put simply, we want to make it as easy as we can for Parties and candidates to follow those rules. I'm sure everyone in the House can agree with that goal.

I'll start by talking about how these amendments will better define election expenses. Currently the legislation puts disabled candidates at a financial disadvantage. If they have to incur additional costs as a result of their disability they are required to claim those as part of their allowed campaign spending. For example, a candidate in a wheelchair might have to pay to install a ramp at their campaign office or modify it slightly so that cabinets can be reached. A blind candidate might have to have campaign literature translated into Braille. These amendments would mean that any candidate who incurs those incremental expenses would be able to hold those outside their allotted election expenses, ending that financial disadvantage. I think that's an important amendment.

It's important that we encourage more people to run for office, people who have a wealth of life experience. We must make sure that we don't inadvertently make it more difficult for someone with a disability to become a candidate.

Those are not the only amendments to election expenses. Candidates will now be able to include the cost of travel outside their districts to a provincial rally or meeting. They will be able to claim close-out costs for a campaign office for seven days after election. There will also be some amendments around campaign contributions. Currently there is no contribution limit for candidates who run independently. These amendments will set it at at \$5,000, the same as the contribution limit for candidates who are affiliated with a Party.

We are also clarifying that organizations cannot buy tickets to fundraising events where a portion of the ticket price is a political donation. Currently organizations cannot make donations to candidates or political Parties so this change will make the Act clearer and more consistent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Act states that individuals can give up to \$5,000 to the political Party of their choice, in any calendar year. The Act also allows them to will up to \$5,000 a year, after their death. The Election Commission believes the provisions make it difficult for the executors of an estate, since they would have to take years to pay out a bequest. These amendments will allow anyone who chooses to support a political Party in their will to do so in one lump sum, rather than having to pay out an amount over a number of years. The responsibility would then transfer over to the electoral district association or political Party to hold that money aside and to draw it down in annual amounts of no more

than \$5,000 and to report these funds, and interest earned on them, as part of their annual reporting requirements.

Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that the amendments to this Act are not all about money. Amendments to this Act will ensure that the political candidates will be required to prove they have the endorsement of the Party they claim to represent, before they register as a candidate, otherwise they will be registered as an independent.

Mr. Speaker, Elections Nova Scotia has told us that they have not had complaints of people misrepresenting themselves; they simply want to make sure that all candidates represent themselves honestly to the people of Nova Scotia, which I would say is a laudable goal.

I'd like to close with one very important amendment the Elections Nova Scotia believes will help encourage the habits of voting from the first possible moment. Elections Nova Scotia has asked us to amend the Act to allow them to collect data on 16- and 17-year-olds. Currently the Act allows Elections Nova Scotia to hold such information but does not specifically permit the agency to collect it.

They plan to get this information from various public sources and directly from Nova Scotians who will be eligible to vote in the future. They only plan to collect the basic data they keep on all registered voters. That means full names, registration address and date of birth. When these young people turn 18 and are eligible to vote, Elections Nova Scotia will use this information to contact them and ask for their permission to add them to the voters list. No one will be added to the voters list without permission and political Parties will not have access to their personal information, until they agree to be added to the voters list.

I think it's important to note that all of these amendments have been requested by Elections Nova Scotia. I also want to point out that these amendments have the full support of all seven members of the Election Commission, which includes representatives from all three political Parties. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the Liberal caucus to say a few words on Bill No. 67, which is our opportunity to amend the Elections Act. The government has brought forward a number of changes and improvements that will, perhaps, tighten up the language and improve some of the practices during our elections.

Mr. Speaker, the minister did go through those and said, at the end of his introduction or moving of this Act, that the recommendations they brought have been supported by all members of the Electoral Boundaries Commission. That is very good but I

wanted to ask the government to look again and to perhaps reply later to a memo that all of us received on - it's dated April 12, 2013, and it comes from the Chief Electoral Officer from Elections Nova Scotia. This memo actually calls for or recommends that the government make another change to the Elections Act and it's not in this Bill No. 67, which is before us today.

I wanted to speak a little bit to that concern. It's interesting to note that both the Department of Justice and the CEO of Elections Nova Scotia have recommended that this change be made to the Act.

Just by way of a little background, Mr. Speaker, so that we know what it's about, it's referring to loans to registered Parties, candidates, electoral district associations and third parties, and what happens in the event of a default. There are both the memo to all of us, to the official agents of registered Parties, and a circular which is sort of a question and answer, which talks about what exactly a guarantor of a loan is and what happens, as it stands right now, if a union or a corporation signs as a guarantor on those electoral loans.

I think it really is an oversight or certainly a problem that it's been left as-is right now. I wanted to read from that circular just so that we'll know what the Chief Electoral Officer has said. It says, "While this circular provides guidance to you on how ENS interprets the Elections Act today, the opinion from Justice included a recommendation that the Act should be amended to provide unambiguous language and I am recommending in my annual report that the House of Assembly review and where necessary, redraft the relevant sections to reflect the intent of the members."

That's pretty clear, but we haven't seen the annual report from the Chief Electoral Officer yet. I believe it's expected within the week, or very soon. It was to be tabled here, so it will come soon.

I realize that perhaps we've jumped the gun with these amendments that are before us in Bill No. 67. There is no mention of this issue around guaranteeing of loans, and members of the House know this, but during an election it's very common practice to take out lines of credit or to take a loan out at a bank or financial institution in order to have funds available immediately to get going on signs and renting office space and purchasing printing and all the other things that are costs during an election.

Because that's common practice, sometimes there isn't money in an association, and the fundraising is happening at the same time as the election has begun and is underway. Really, the problem right now is that the bill, as it stands, will allow unions and corporate involvement in guaranteeing and being involved in the financing of campaigns. The question then is, does that not contravene the changes that we made some years ago to ensure that unions and corporations would not be involved at all in the financing of our campaigns and our electoral system?

Just to go through that - under our current rules, a union, corporation, or other affiliated organization would be allowed to guarantee a loan for election purposes that therefore provides a financial benefit to the recipient. The spirit of the amendments that we made to the Elections Act in 2010 was to completely prohibit union and corporate involvement in financing elections. That's it in a nutshell, but this sort of loophole - I should say gap - still exists.

The government has been made aware of it through this circular - this memo - that came out from the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, and on their Web site today there's also a circular that answers the Q&As around this, so it's very clear to Parties what is currently allowed. But the recommendation is there that we close this gap. I would like to - perhaps I should table this, Mr. Speaker. I think you would probably like me to do so. I'm going to table both of those. I think I've read already from one section of it.

That is a shortcoming in the current bill, and I wanted to raise it today. We certainly have no objections to the amendments that have been included, but the whole purpose of doing amendments to the Elections Act is to make sure we take our entire province to a higher plain, to a position where there can be no abuses, even inadvertently, that we will not rely on unions or on corporations to backstop our campaigns and to support campaigns. The onus right now is on the NDP Government, because they brought in the original changes in 2010, and here they are - we are today looking at Bill No. 67, with more amendments to the Elections Act. We really believe the government has been made fully aware of this loophole and that the onus rests right now with the Minister of Justice to ensure these changes are made.

Mr. Speaker, none of us want to see us have anything left in the bill that can call into question the appropriateness of financing during an election. In the last election there was a mistake made, a mistake or a contravention of the rules by the NDP Party, and they were fined for that. It was accepting \$45,000 from a union donation, which was not allowed, and the NDP Party was fined \$10,000 and had to return the funds that they received. We don't want to see that sort of thing and we also don't want to see the door left opened for unions to be supporting - unions or corporations - to be supporting candidates by guaranteeing their lines of credit and guaranteeing loans that they take out to run an election.

Mr. Speaker, people might say there won't be a default on those loans, and I understand that if the loan were to the Party and there was a default on the loan, it really isn't a problem because every Party gets a repayment at the end, based on the number of voters and they receive the rebates for votes cast and so on, I believe it's so much for voter in the province, and the return doesn't go to the electoral district associations, the small associations on what will be 51 electoral districts, the rebate goes to the party and then depending on how the party chooses to do it, they share some of that back to the individual campaigns that are runs for the Liberals, to the NDP and so on.

Mr. Speaker, so that means there would be a rebate coming back, or money coming back from the province that would cover any default on a loan and therefore it would be - even if a corporation or a union guaranteed the loan, there isn't the danger that they will ultimately pay for it because that rebate coming from the province would cover off any such default. But the loophole really relates to local campaigns and if a union or a corporation were to guarantee loans at the local level for individual district campaigns, there is no opportunity for a rebate directly coming back from the Province of Nova Scotia to that campaign, and if in fact it were bankrupt, or had no money, or couldn't pay its loan back, then the guarantor would be called on to pay that loan. In that case then, if we allow this loophole to stay in place, there is the opportunity or the possibility that a union or a corporation could actually be paying that back.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that the onus is on the government to address the shortcoming and I think it's important that I raise it today and that we talk about it in this House because all parties have been made aware of it. I've tabled the circular from the Chief Electoral Officer. It is supported by the Department of Justice and the Minister of Justice is well aware of that recommendation that this section of our Elections Act be amended.

The current bill before me, while it has merit and it has some good points, is not addressing this shortcoming and I believe it is against the spirit of the original changes that were made in this House, which were sweeping changes, quite frankly. They took away years of large union donations to the NDP Party, changed the way we finance our elections going forward, and I think it's very important that we listen to the Chief Electoral Officer and make the changes that have been recommended, through the memo that went to all three Parties. All of us have had access to that and it has been brought up through that circular, on the Web site, and it has been given to the minister.

Mr. Speaker, with those few comments I would like to see later what the government has to say and I feel that it was important that we raise this shortcoming in the bill, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be very brief. We look forward to hearing what Nova Scotians have to say in the Law Amendments Committee, if anybody does come forward. We have looked at this piece of legislation and much of it looks like the changes are good and it's important that this kind of legislation be continuously updated.

We know that Parties that are vying for power in elections are always coming up with new ways to campaign and it's important for legislation to keep pace with that to ensure that, when people are running for office, the conditions are fair for everyone, and that Nova Scotians have a true ability to understand what's going on, to make donations

that are fair to political Parties, so that we can have results in elections that we can all - even if we're not happy about them - we can all accept that they're fair. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

MR. JIM BOUDREAU: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, indeed.

MR. BOUDREAU: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce a couple of gentlemen up in the gallery.

AN HON. MEMBER: Fine gentlemen.

MR. BOUDREAU: Yes, fine gentlemen. As the member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour - and this doesn't happen too often because many of my constituents don't have the opportunity to get here to the House - today we have Mr. Ray White, a former MLA in this House, I believe, between the years 1993 and 1999. Ray is a very active member of the community; certainly the Lions Club and the Seamen's Memorial are two of his passions in the community, and his work there is very much appreciated.

We also have Mr. Harry Delorey from the community of Canso as well. Harry is a past King Lion, as I'm sure Mr. White is as well. Harry does a great deal of work in the community, and is an integral part of the Lions Club and the social fabric of Canso and area. I do want to emphasize that, because it is Canso and area. So I would respectfully ask that the House extend the warmest of welcomes to those two gentlemen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: If I recognize the minister it will be to close the debate.

The honourable Minister responsible for the Elections Act.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: I just want to thank my colleagues for their comments and close debate on Bill No. 67.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 67. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No 69.

Bill No. 69 - Statute Amendments (2013) Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 69, amendments to the Statute Amendments (2013) Act, be now read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill covers a series of mainly housekeeping amendments, to Acts ranging from the Body Armour Act to the Motor Vehicle Act. Let's start with the one that most Nova Scotians would take note of - amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act.

Mr. Speaker, the most notable amendment here, I believe, is that if Nova Scotians get into a collision that causes damage to their vehicle, they will only have to report to police if there is over \$2,000 worth of damage. Right now it's at a \$1,000 damage threshold. Anyone with a car certainly knows that costs of repairs have gone up significantly in recent years. The Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators has recommended that all provinces and territories make this change to reflect those increased costs.

We are also amending the Motor Vehicle Act to correct certain references to the Criminal Code. The federal government has changed some sections in recent years, so we need to update the Motor Vehicle Act to ensure we've referenced the right sections.

Mr. Speaker, we're also adding "theft of a motor vehicle" to the list of Criminal Code offences that automatically trigger someone's driver's licence to be revoked. If someone is convicted of this offence and does not have a driver's licence, they won't be able to get one. These amendments also clarify that the Registry of Motor Vehicles can revoke a person's licence more than once if they are convicted of any of a list of criminal offences. To be clear, the Registry of Motor Vehicles already revokes people's driver's licences more than once for these offences. These amendments simply clarify the law to reflect current practices.

I'd like to move now to amendments to the House of Assembly Act, Mr. Speaker. Elections Nova Scotia has recommended minor boundary changes in Meat Cove and Mineville, which it believes would make elections easier to administer. These amendments change the boundaries slightly between Dartmouth, Preston and Eastern Shore electoral districts, and between Inverness and Victoria-The Lakes. Twenty registered voters in Meat Cove will be impacted and another three in the Mineville general service area. Elections Nova Scotia has informed them about the change and has also sent letters to other homes in the area that do not have registered voters.

Mr. Speaker, we are also amending the Body Armour Control Act. Today professionals like police, corrections officers, security guards and paramedics are not required to have a permit to have and use body armour. We've proposed to add security agencies to the list of jobs that do not require a permit for body armour. This bill also contains an amendment to the Fatalities Inquiries Act that will allow medical examiners authorized by the Chief Medical Examiner to issue a certificate to allow a body to be cremated or removed from the province. Currently the Act only gives the Chief Medical Examiner the authority to issue that certificate.

Mr. Speaker, medical investigators can provide the same level of oversight more quickly and most cost-effectively. Alberta and Manitoba already give medical examiners this authority.

There are another three amendments here I would like to quickly discuss. Another amendment to the Housing Development Corporation Act will change the name of the Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation to Housing Nova Scotia. It will also update outdated ministerial and departmental references. We are correcting drafting errors in the Personal Interest and Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, cadets' organizations have asked that we change the date of Sea, Army, Air and Navy League Cadets Day. It will now move from the first Saturday in November to the first Saturday in October.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to talk about our amendments to seven different pieces of legislation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I know this is an omnibus bill. There are a number of good pieces of legislation in here and I certainly know there's value in omnibus bills because they can get a number of items through the Legislature at once. There is a place for omnibus bills.

There is one piece of this legislation that has caused a lot of trouble for people in my area and those are the people who live in Meat Cove. I can tell you that in my electoral district of Inverness, I was not aware that the people of Meat Cove were being moved to Victoria-The Lakes until early January of this year. That was well after I had voted on the legislation to change the electoral boundaries. Of course we all voted against that legislation but I want to say I was not aware of the changes happening in Meat Cove.

How did I find out? Well, we were having a founding meeting - I think we had ours on January 4th - and in the lead up to that, I discovered that we were required to send some of our funds raised, that we would have raised for the next election, to the constituencies that we were giving up people to. So I knew that Port Hawkesbury was going to Richmond

and we were sending a fairly large sum from our coffers over to the new Richmond PC Association. I also noticed that there were a small number of voters somewhere else who were being sent to Victoria County. I was thinking maybe these people are in the Whycomagh area because I know my boundary extends just past the community of Whycomagh. So we asked the Electoral Office and they said well actually it's the community of Meat Cove. I said well they're not going to be happy about that because I know in the past they had lobbied to stay in the constituency of Inverness.

We started making some phone calls and of course it was reported in the media - I think I had put out a release and I mentioned that point in it because I wanted to make people aware. It was actually in my annual report that I do every year and one of the points I made was that the people in Meat Cove won't be able to vote in Inverness this coming year, if we have an election.

Mr. Speaker, I think what happened here, the Electoral Boundaries Commission that was struck to decide the boundaries had a look at a lot of communities around the province and their intent, when they drew the maps, was to put Meat Cove with Victoria but when the publications were printed to show where the new boundaries were, when Meat Cove was described it was described as going to and from Meat Cove, but never including Meat Cove. For that reason, while it appeared on the maps that people in Meat Cove were going with Victoria, there was no clear indication that they were, in writing.

That's how I missed it. I actually went back over both reports to see, did I really miss it? I did and for good reason, because it really wasn't explained in the reports. That may have been an error, Mr. Speaker, and I think it likely was.

The reason I cannot support this bill, while there are many good pieces in it, being an omnibus bill and there are all kinds of various pieces of legislation, as the minister just described, I will not be able to support this bill because I know people in Meat Cove are upset because they were never made aware of the changes, they never had a chance to come forward, even outside of the hearings to even write a letter, before the final decision, before the final vote was made in the Legislature here.

I believe that was unfair to them and, if it was due to a mistake, that's fine to some degree, but at the end of the day they never had a chance; they never knew it was happening. Myself, Mr. Speaker, representing the area, I never even knew it was happening and I was certainly watching it - nor was my colleague here, the member for Victoria-The Lakes, aware. He has handed me a short note here about their identity and I know they have always identified themselves with Inverness County. It's a beautiful place, Meat Cove. They are used to working with the municipal council or the Municipality of Inverness.

I know I worked with them during the flooding situation a couple of years back when there was significant damage. I know I worked with the government members, the Emergency Measures Organization - I think they've changed the name of it now,

Emergency Measures Office. I know the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal at the time, we were working on making sure that the bridges were getting replaced as soon as possible. I know I've worked on some issues in Meat Cove with respect to the moose hunt and certainly general road conditions there, and everything from student grants over the years and projects to help out with their community centre, and I know they feel upset that they are now, all of a sudden, going to have to move in a different direction with their concerns.

Should the people of Victoria choose my colleague here to represent them again, I know he will do a good job and look after the people in Meat Cove. I've made the offer to them as well, Mr. Speaker, that whatever happens they can always call me if I have the good fortune of being successful in the next election - members opposite are laughing, but that's while I'm smiling. I was sincere when I made that offer.

I must state, Mr. Speaker, and I will conclude, I cannot support the legislation because I believe what happened here, for people in Meat Cove, whether it was by mistake or not - and it very well appears to be - but either way they are not happy and I feel bad that they have been taken out of the constituency of Inverness without them even being able to know about it and to state their opinion on it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: If I recognize the minister it will be to close the debate.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to close debate on Bill No. 69.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 69. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 36.

Bill No. 36 - Provincial Court Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill No.36.

Mr. Speaker, the government is required, under legislation, to act on the recommendations proposed by the Nova Scotia Provincial Judges' Salaries and Benefits Tribunal. That is what this bill does. As I'm sure most members of this House know, judges' salaries and benefits are set by our tribunal, this is to ensure judicial independence.

In 2010, the Public Service Superannuation Plan, to which some judges belong, was amended to change the way pension benefits are calculated and indexed. In July 2012, the Tribunal proposed that judges keep the pension benefits they had before changes were made in 2010. The Tribunal also recommended that it should be deciding future pension indexing. This independent Tribunal helps to ensure that the independence of our Provincial and Family Court Judges, Tribunal members, take their responsibilities seriously. I respect their decision.

I would to take a moment to thank our Provincial and Family Court Judges for their work. They are dedicated to ensuring that the justice system in our province runs smoothly and effectively. They have a difficult job and their work helps us to feel safe and secure in our communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to speak very briefly on this piece of legislation. I want to put something on the record here from a constituent. I want to make the point, as I have in this Legislature many times before, about pensions and the importance of regulation of pensions. I know there are people in my area, the NewPage pensioners, whom we've certainly heard a lot about, whose hopes for retirement income were really dashed when they had to take big hits on their pensions. Yes, in part due to the state of the funds in their pensions at the time that NewPage went into creditor protection, but also because of changes that happened with their pensions, based on choices they made, based on information made available to them.

That is the sticking point for me because I think that in some cases people were encouraged to make decisions. I don't think they really, fully understood what they were being asked. I think there is a greater role for regulation in these kinds of pensions, if we're going to have them, so that people know what they're voting for and understand if there are possible negative impacts down the road.

I'm not going to get into the detail of it today. We've covered it in the Public Accounts Committee, but I do want to raise the point again, just because we were talking

about pensions here. We must recognize that people's pensions are different. In the case of private sector pensions that are regulated, they need to be properly regulated. I will stop at that, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 36. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

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: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 3.

Bill No. 3 - Support for Parents of Critically Ill or Abducted Children Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 3 now be read for a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to advise that the Official Opposition will certainly be giving our support to Bill No. 3. Merci.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 3. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 42.

Bill No. 42 - Pension Benefits Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: I move third reading of Bill No. 42.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Official Opposition, I'm pleased to advise that we will be in support of Bill No. 42 for its final passage.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 42. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

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: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 54.

Bill No. 54 - Widows' Pension Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: I move third reading of Bill No. 42.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: The Official Opposition certainly will be supporting Bill No. 54. I just want to say a few words.

I hadn't had the chance previously, but it was interesting to see some of the widows here in the Legislature when this bill was first introduced. When I heard the name Betty Bauman, I was thinking, why do I know that name? I recall - Mr. Speaker, I believe you indicated that yourself when you were speaking - many, many years ago receiving correspondence and receiving presentations from Ms. Bauman, and many other widows as well. They have certainly kept at this and kept up the fight, and it has paid off for them. We are pleased to see that.

I'd be remiss, Mr. Speaker - at Law Amendments Committee we did have some presentations from the Pictou County Injured Workers Association that raised some concerns as to how this transpired, and the fact that I believe there is a committee forum that does receive advance notice when changes are going to be made. No notice was given in this case, which they found to be a bit bizarre. Again, they highlighted a number of

issues which still do exist in the Workers' Compensation system, which I'm sure both the Deputy Premier and all government members are aware of.

One of the issues that I raised as well, based on concerns brought to me by a constituent, was the federal government's decision to move Old Age Security from 65 to 67. Many of the benefits that are made available to injured workers under the Workers' Compensation benefit system terminate at the age of 65 because they were tied in with receipt of Old Age Security benefits. The question that was raised to me is, what happens now between the age of 65 and 67 if the federal government proceeds with that change? It's down the road, but still. The constituent who contacted me is permanently disabled and will be affected by this change. He's at an age where he has calculated that he will not be in receipt of Old Age Security until 67, based on the proposed changes. It's an issue which I haven't heard much from the government on.

I know it is down the road, but there is obviously going to be a cost incurred if a change is made here, and if not, what do we do with these injured workers from the age of 65 to 67? As we all know, benefits under Community Services terminate at 65. Really, if someone is cut off from their Workers' Compensation benefits, there is nowhere else for them to turn to at 65, because there are no other government programs currently that will be able to assist with monthly benefits to replace the earnings that they have lost.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I raise that; I'm sure it's not the first time the government has heard of it. Hopefully we will get some indication as to whether it's a matter of discussion or whether there is some sort of a plan that is being put in place to deal with that matter when it does come up.

As far as the widows, obviously we're pleased to see that an historical wrong has been righted and I want to commend all of them for their continued advocacy to all members of the Legislature over a very long period of time. Merci.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, this legislation is a good piece of legislation. I know that it helps widows whose husbands have passed away from the Springhill Mine Disaster, the fishermen around the province who have died on the job, the paper mill in Point Tupper - it's in Richmond but an area that's very close to where I represent - and the Glace Bay mining explosion, I believe it was 1979.

Mr. Speaker, this is a matter that I've had discussions with the minister on and I'm happy to see him bring it forward, I commend him for that. I do know that what this legislation is about is really many women who have been affected by it, the situation they were put in was it was assumed that because they remarried, that another man would look after them, in a sense. We all know that's very sexist, to put it bluntly, but I guess that was

the thinking at the time. It's good to see that government can find ways to make things right that were once wrong.

We do know that an amendment was passed to fix the issue, starting from 1999 forward, but this piece of legislation fixes the issue from 1985 to 1999, that period that had not been addressed. We do know the period before 1985 can't be addressed because that is before, I believe, Section 15 in the Equality Provision in the Charter came into force.

Mr. Speaker, many of these widows suffered the loss of their spouses well before 1985 and for many years, up until now, have been dealing with the period from 1985 to 1999. It's good to see that is being addressed.

I'm happy to see the legislation come forward, I think it's the right thing to do. I do know there's a cost, but I do feel that in the grand scheme of things, it's the right thing to do and it's a reasonable approach to make it happen. I know that it's going to be there for the widows who are still living and I think that's a good thing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: If I recognize the minister it will be to close the debate.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Just a few words. I thank the members for the intervention. The member for Richmond brought up a good point about people being in no-person's land, if you will, in the future if they're caught in a period between 65 and 67. I would be remiss if I didn't say that there was a time when we used the clinical rating system and it allowed all members - if you were in receipt of a WCB pension, that you could carry with you for life and it was the last Liberal Government that changed that, that went to wage loss and the pension stopped at 65.

It's something that concerns us though, Mr. Speaker. It concerns us from that perspective and it concerns us - I'm sure at some point, no matter who is in government here, that there will be a challenge about why are we using 65 if we don't have mandatory retirement and that will become another issue of going from wage loss and a clinical rating system.

I hear what the member says, certainly it's on our desk and we're looking at it and we're trying to make sure that nobody in the transition period is hurt.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words I move third reading and take my place.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 54. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

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: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 57.

Bill No. 57 - Language Schools Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 57 for third reading.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to advise that the Official Opposition will very happily give their support to third reading of Bill No. 57, the Language Schools Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 57. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

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: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 32.

Bill No. 32 - Solemnization of Marriage Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: On behalf of the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, I move third reading of Bill No. 32.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise that the Liberal caucus, the Official Opposition will gladly be giving our support to third reading of Bill No. 32.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 32. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

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: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 37.

Bill No. 37 - Innovative Transportation Act.

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

HON. MAURICE SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill No. 37.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as well I'm pleased to advise that the Official Opposition Liberal caucus will be giving our support to the passage of Bill No. 37.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I too stand today on behalf of our caucus to show our support for this bill, a rather interesting one with some alternative options that may come about. We have seen, in the Town of Windsor in recent days, a Segway travelling around there. People are obviously interested in some Segway and God only knows what else might come along in the future too, as we think about it. Just to take a moment to say that we do support that and whatever other opportunity might exist within the current bill. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 37. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

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: Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

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

The motion is carried.

[3:05 p.m. The House resolved into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Mr. Alfie MacLeod in the Chair.]

[3:27 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Mr. Alfie MacLeod in the Chair.]

MR. SPEAKER: The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on Bills reports:

THE CLERK: That the Committee of the Whole House on Bills has met and considered the following bill:

Bill No. 51 - Financial Measures (2013) Act.

and the chairman has been instructed to recommend this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that this bill be read a third time on a future day.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, with the indulgence of the House, would you please revert to the order of business, Presenting Reports of Committees.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MS. MICHELE RAYMOND: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Private and Local Bills, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bill:

Bill No. 43 - Trustees of the Onslow Cemetery Company Act.

and the committee recommends this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, due to your judicious way of holding proceedings, that concludes our government's business for today.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now rise to meet from the hour of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. tomorrow. After the daily routine, we'll be doing Public Bills for Third Reading, Bill No. 51; Public Bills for Second Reading, Bill No. 76; Private Members' Public Bills, Bill No. 77; and Private and Local Bills in Committee of the Whole House on Bills, Bill No. 43.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now rise.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We have now reached the moment of interruption. Today's late debate under Rule 5(5) was submitted by the honourable member for Colchester North, and it reads:

"Therefore be it resolved that since the Premier stated in a CTV panel that the power rate Nova Scotians will pay is 8 cents per kilowatt hour, despite Emera saying no rate will be decided until 2017, that the NDP should introduce legislation that forces Nova Scotia Power, and not ratepayers, to be responsible for any costs above 8 cents."

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

POWER RATES: NSP RESPONSIBILITY - LEGISLATE

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to rise on this today. You know, the advantage to the intervening couple hours is that we've been able to speak to Emera, and also to review this misrepresentation - the inadvertent misrepresentation, I suspect - that the Premier made about Emera's comments in this article. I'll be able to go through that having looked into that.

As the House will be aware, yesterday - I believe the panel was probably recorded a few days earlier - CTV aired an Atlantic Premiers' panel. The Premier was concerned that I didn't quote his entire quote, so I'll do his entire quote here: "I saw what Emera predicted. They said the blended price per kilowatt hour would be somewhere in the vicinity of 8 cents a kilowatt hour, so it's a pretty significant savings over what we're seeing today." That was the entirety of his statement in response to that question. I tabled that earlier, and I'll table another copy shortly, but I'm going to continue to quote it.

You know, Mr. Speaker, when asked in Question Period today, the Premier referred to an article in The ChronicleHerald on January 25, 2013, saying that that's what they said. But that's not at all what they said - in fact, it's not even a quote from Emera. They say that the price of \$1.5 billion - which obviously doesn't include the interest, the rate of return, or anything else; that's the base price - works out to 8 cents a kilowatt hour. That's based on the 2017 energy price forecasts, and assumes Nova Scotia Power is getting one-third of its electricity from Labrador or other imports.

A couple of problems, Mr. Speaker. First of all, in the filing that happened on February 28th, a little over two months after this, Emera will only be taking 8 per cent of their energy - maybe that's where he's getting the eights confused - from the Muskrat Falls project. That's all they're contracted for: 8 per cent of the approximate load, to a maximum of 10 per cent, potentially. They will not be taking 30 per cent, and in fact, in IRs filed, they have no contract for any amount of energy beyond that. So right away, that number is irrelevant, because this number is based on more than three times the amount of energy that Emera, in their filing two months after this article, has agreed to. So it may - and I'm not even sure, but it may have actually been 8 cents when it was a 30 per cent mark, but it's not a 30 per cent mark now. It's 8 per cent to 10 per cent in the filing.

Second of all, when you read the documents that Emera filed - again, that I tabled earlier today, and unfortunately, I don't have an additional copy - it says that the final rate will be determined in 2017. So that's fine. I appreciate the fact that the Premier believes it will be 8 cents a kilowatt hour blended, and frankly, if it's 8 cents a kilowatt hour, that is wonderful. Because we're paying - I believe the residential rate is 13.47 cents, but it's 13-point-something, anyway. I mean, that would be wonderful.

But you know what? That's not what Emera is saying. Emera and Mr. Huskison and so forth are saying we can expect the rate to be higher than what it is now - in fact, a 1

per cent increase per year in each of the 35 years, on average. There'll be some years a bit more, some years a bit less. That's fine, but that's an average. I don't know what the compounded interest on that is, but that is going up, not going down. There would actually have to be about a 60 per cent decrease.

So here's the issue: the feeling is - and I don't think this is a terribly unreasonable request - the Premier, a few months back - I don't remember the exact time - made an agreement with Emera that he would do nothing to change the regulatory environment that would result in Emera having a loss as a result of regulatory changes. Fine. He felt that was important. I believe that that was then structured into the federal loan guarantee.

What we're saying is, if the Premier wants to go on television and tell the public it will be 8 cents, even though Emera says it will not, then legislate. Give the same guarantee to Nova Scotians. I don't really think that's too much to ask. The Premier says he believes it, and that's what he's staking his credibility on, so legislate it. He's got nothing to lose, and if it comes out at 8 per cent, or 8 cents, which I don't think anybody in the province other than the Premier believes, then he'll be able to say, see, I was right, and that's great. He has got nothing to lose in introducing legislation and giving ratepayers a guarantee. The only reason he wouldn't do it is if he didn't actually believe that number is achievable.

Mr. Speaker, this really comes to the crux of the issue, this isn't about whether there are strategic benefits to having a Maritime Link or Muskrat Falls or even Gull Island when that comes next down the pipe. It's not about that. There are strategic advantages in a lot of different things. There are strategic advantages in upgrading the intertie between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, which the Premier committed to do, I believe in his very first year in office, and it still hasn't happened.

There are strategic opportunities in a lot of projects but just because there is a strategic opportunity doesn't mean that a deal is the best deal for ratepayers. In fact, one of the experts hired by the board - I believe it was Levitan - noted that there could be a lot of benefits in Muskrat Falls but said this deal is actually not the best option for ratepayers and that a new deal should be structured.

It's not about whether the project has potential, the issue is whether the deal, as structured, benefits ratepayers and the evidence is stacking up that it doesn't. But if it is 8 cents, then listen, I'm right there. If it is 8 cents and the Premier will guarantee that ratepayers will pay 8 cents a kilowatt hour rather than the 13-some odd they're paying now, and the over 14 that they'll pay after the coming rate increases factor in, well that's fine. Then do you know what? That's great.

The coming ones, when we talk about the coming rate increases, we saw recently that there were underestimates in fuel costs and so forth, which are getting backed up, and that is backing up into an account that ratepayers will be responsible for at the end of the current stability agreement.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, if the Premier truly believes that this project, when blended in with wind and hydro and gas and whatever coal is left in the system at that time, the hydro we have down in the Mersey River and up in Wreck Cove, if he believes that when all that is combined in, ratepayers will open their bill and go, 8 cents a kilowatt hour, then I'm okay with that, that 8 cents for the 35 years. I want the Premier to put his credibility on the line and legislate it and give ratepayers the guarantee that he has given to Emera. From my perspective, he stands up and says that is what it is going to be and he believes it, then he has got absolutely nothing to lose because he is saying that Emera is on board with it, despite the fact that Emera, in their filings, say they are not. But that's okay, he says they are.

Mr. Speaker, this is about having the right and accurate information for Nova Scotians about this project. It is why we, among many, many others, have lobbied to have more time for the hearings and have that timeline set by the board as an independent, third party. It's why we said all of that information should come through.

The Premier's statements around an 8 cent rate are no different than the fact that the Premier stands up and says it's the lowest and fairest cost but won't actually give the board, the Consumer Advocate, the Small Business Advocate, the time to actually assess that question and determine whether the evidence actually backs that up.

The only conclusion you can come to, at the end of that, is that the Premier won't even stand behind the things that he is saying. I think it's important that he does. If he's going to give those kind of commitments to Nova Scotians, if he's going to make a promise of 8 cents, if he's going to make a promise that it's going to be the lowest and cheapest alternative, then allow that to be tested. Don't be scared of having that tested because if you believe it, then you're willing to stand up to the scrutiny, you're willing to put your name behind it and your credibility.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day I think there are a lot of Nova Scotians who would hope that it would be 8 cents and frankly, at the end of the day, the Premier has the opportunity to legislate that and prove it.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to take a few minutes this evening to join in the debate, one that has been had multiple times in this House and probably will for some time ahead, given the opportunity in the weeks, months, and who knows, years ahead, while this project unfolds in some particular fashion.

It's interesting that we have a resolution before us that is talking about 8 cents given the current price we're paying and given the fact that Nova Scotians just saw, in January, a 3 per cent increase and guaranteed another 3 per cent increase in their rates come January 2014. It would be interesting to ever see us at 8 cents, that would be a nice rebate, the

direction would be going the right way anyway, the rate would be going the right way if we could ever get back to 8 cents. I think people would be quite pleased to be paying that compared to what they are paying now. Not only individual households, as I've done many times, I've referred to the business community. One of their biggest expenses is also the power rates that they're paying, and certainly for the middle-sized businesses and even the small businesses for that matter, it's still a regular monthly bill that comes in and every time that goes up, it's more money out of their pockets and with the economy the way it has been, there has been less money coming in the door.

It has been making it very difficult for businesses and families in this province to survive when we see ongoing increases in the rate structure. If there were some way of getting it back, that would be wonderful, as I've said. It is interesting, this is the first time we've heard a figure of 8 cents. One of the things I've asked for many times in this Legislature, when talking about energy, Nova Scotia Power, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the deal that may happen at Muskrat Falls, or may not - most are assuming it will and some are still under the impression that it may never, given the ever-rising costs - one of the things that people would like to know is actually what will the cost be.

We've asked them many times, where will that come from? What will that cost be? Could we even get a close estimate of what it might be? We've never been able to get that. It seems like there is a lot more to this and perhaps when the honourable member from the government side gets up to speak, he'll enlighten us all that this was maybe taken out of context or something like that. But, I can tell you, if the Premier is going to stand before Nova Scotians and say that we expect 8 cents per kilowatt hour, I don't know that you need to legislate it or not, but I think that Nova Scotians would be quite happy.

But I just can't see that, given the situation we have in this province, where Emera and Nova Scotia Power have a base that they need to support, shall we call it, by way of the guaranteed income that they have to their shareholders. I can't imagine that those shareholders will ever want to see those rates go down. That's less money in their pockets.

Perhaps there's some other scheme here that would make all of that work. Perhaps when the honourable member gets on his feet, from the government side, he could explain in more detail what this really means. We certainly will look forward to hearing what that means and I doubt very much there will ever be legislation that will be introduced in this House that will force Nova Scotia Power to pay any cost overruns because they've been clear on that piece all the way along. They have made it very clear that any cost overruns that occur to them will be borne by the ratepayers. They've made that very clear, especially, pertaining to the project with Newfoundland and Labrador.

Now, maybe if the Newfoundland and Labrador project, at the end of the day, does not go ahead - we know that there is a review coming up, although we would have liked to have had more time, but there have been a number of reports put forward to say that perhaps this isn't the right deal. I've tabled those during Question Period this week, and so

have others, when we spoke to this very issue. Maybe it's not the most cost-effective deal for Nova Scotia.

So, we have to try to figure out what is the right deal and whether we can afford it or not. Now, 8 cents would lead Nova Scotians to believe, today, if that's what is being proposed, that's probably a pretty good deal if we could buy energy for 8 cents. If we could buy energy anywhere for 8 cents and retail it to the customers, that would be great. There have been multiple ideas put forward as to how that could happen as well and we all have a bit of a difference of opinion when it comes to how we could create an energy market that would best serve Nova Scotians by way of where we would purchase and how much.

It's measured right now by the hour. I think what the cost is and how much energy is being used and such is captured every 10 minutes. We have to look at all the alternatives but to say that 8 cents is a possible alternative is a very good alternative from what we hear from Nova Scotia Power. We know that people are very concerned about the 35-year deal, people are very concerned about that. A lot changes in 35 years.

We know that Newfoundland and Labrador was not happy at the end of the day when they signed a very long-term deal - they did not feel that they were treated fairly with the cheap electricity going into Quebec. Perhaps there is another way to write that if they felt that they were wrong. Maybe they should look at another deal and perhaps they should. I'm stating that maybe they should but perhaps they've looked at all that by way of other opportunities to still sell power to the Province of Quebec in a new deal. I'm sure when this one runs out - the 50-year deal runs out between Hydro-Québec and Newfoundland - there will be some interesting exchanges take place there as far as what could happen with potential sales of power and rerouting it because, let's face it, Quebec is still going to need to have power regardless of contract or not when that expires. So I'm sure they'll be working toward trying to renew that. They're getting it relatively cheap, we do know that.

Eight cents seems a bit unreasonable; it has been a long time since we've been at 8 cents in Nova Scotia. I can't tell you the exact date, but I know it has been quite a while. We've seen energy costs in this province go up by over 30 per cent just in four years. We're going to see again - as I said, 3 per cent more guaranteed already for January 2014. I would suggest if there is a plan, if there is something else that is out there, if there is a way that we're going to get to 8 cents, then people should come clean on this, they should be very clear as to what this exactly means and tell all Nova Scotians. We've been asking long enough on their behalf what will the cost be. If it's not 8 cents - if that was misconstrued by some people or others, or misunderstood, whatever the right terminology is you'd like to use.

Again, I'll state that when the honourable member gets up from the government side and tries to clarify it, I'm sure that will be the intent as it has been written for him, this issue of the 8 cents. Obviously they're talking about cost; somebody knows something more about what the cost will be. The reality is that the real cost, moving forward we

should lay that right out here today on the table, Mr. Speaker, and tell Nova Scotians all across this province - every ratepayer, business sector, small business sector, everyday homeowners who are paying for these high energy costs - what that will mean.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker - my time I'm sure is just about up - I'll take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MR. BRIAN SKABAR: It is my pleasure to stand in my place today and respond to this request for late debate on the Maritime Link and I'm pleased that such rich discussion will bring forth more research and analysis. There seems to me at this moment to be a couple or three things, in particular, that we're speaking of. We're speaking of renewable, clean, green energy, we're speaking of power rates, and we're speaking of a number of 8 cents per kilowatt hour.

Just for starters, a short time ago in The Halifax ChronicleHerald there was a front page article that listed three different jurisdictions in Canada, three different provinces, and did itemize Nova Scotia as being among the highest of those three. The lowest of those was for the Province of Manitoba. That article also acknowledged that the Province of Manitoba had the lowest electricity rates in Canada - and North America for that matter if I recall the article correctly and I think I do. That is because Manitoba Hydro 30 years ago did have the forethought to proceed full bore with hydroelectric power. I hear no dispute from anybody on that.

The other jurisdiction had twice as much, or was halfway between Manitoba rates and Nova Scotia rates and it had twice as much hydroelectric power that the Province of Nova Scotia has currently. It is to my mind, my thinking at the moment, indisputable that hydroelectric power is, in this country, the most economical, cleanest, greenest, dependable form of energy that we have in the country today - the best technology that there is.

Currently a number of highly qualified experts are preparing responses to the interveners' questions and their input will add further understanding of the analysis of the Maritime Link. The experts' answers will be filed and available to interveners on May 8th, according to the URB schedule. The process being undertaken by the URB is progressing as planned and as it was meant to. Many files of sophisticated evidence have been presented - evidence that compares a Maritime Link to all other options. The URB has comprehensive materials on all options, including the Maritime Link, and to investigating all the evidence thoroughly.

Whichever way you slice it, if we assume that hydroelectric power is the most efficient, cleanest, greenest, most dependable, and cheapest, as evidenced by the Manitoba example - and we also know that Hydro-Québec, by virtue of having built the hydroelectric

power stations in Labrador, is one of the more profitable companies in North America as a consequence of that - to the chagrin of many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, I understand. If that is also considered to be general knowledge, we have the opportunity and the good fortune to be able to buy into 20 per cent of the next great hydroelectric power project in North America. Why would anybody not want to do that if we had an opportunity?

In general, rates are rising by an average of 2 or 3 per cent a year. Of that, 1 or 2 per cent is due to the cost of adding more renewable energy. Now, this province has mandated that 25 per cent of its power supply come from renewable sources by 2015, increasing to 40 per cent by 2020. In addition, Ottawa introduced new greenhouse gas emission limits last year that will require Nova Scotia to scale back coal-fired generation by 2030.

In comparison, residential customers today do pay 13.79 cents per kilowatt hour, including fuel costs. Yes, I do acknowledge, much to our collective disappointment, that power rates have increased by a considerable measure. Power rates have increased as a direct consequence of the increase in the price of coal. How long do Nova Scotians expect us to be tied to the price of coal? Fluctuate as it will, we have no influence and we have no input on what price Nova Scotia Power pays for that fuel. We do, however, have input and influence on how much we'll pay for clean, green, dependable, renewable energy from the Maritime Link.

Now, let's just touch on the eight cents per kilowatt hour. I don't know exactly what the context of the interview was or how it came across or how it was interpreted by many of the people who heard it, but as an energy price, the \$1.5 billion works out to eight cents per kilowatt hour. That's the blended rate; that's what Emera said. That's based on 2017 energy price forecasts and assumes that Nova Scotia Power is getting one-third of its electricity from Labrador or other inputs.

The Opposition mentioned the difference between 10 per cent and 20 per cent and 30 per cent. Well, those are all valid figures, taken in context. Nova Scotia, through the Maritime Link, is purchasing 20 per cent equity in power we're getting from Emera. That amount of power - which we will own by virtue of purchasing it, by taking part in the Maritime Link - will supply Nova Scotia with 10 per cent of its power needs. We own that 10 per cent of the power.

In addition to that, the loop will be closed, and there will be power sent through the Maritime Link, through Nova Scotia, through New Brunswick, to American markets. A whole lot more power will be passing through those lines on the way to the United States, through Nova Scotia, through New Brunswick. We will have access to that power as well. When the time comes, when the necessity comes, we will have access to as much of that power as we might need. That could, in effect, work out to - and likely, as a matter of fact, will work out to - 30 per cent of Nova Scotia power needs.

So the 10 per cent is explainable, the 20 per cent is explainable, and the 30 per cent is explainable - as a matter of fact, not only explainable but quite obvious, to my way of thinking, to anyone who has actually had a look at the project and a look at what the numbers are.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to acknowledge that with a range of experts submitting their evidence on the Maritime Link proposal for consideration, there is no evidence that is considered absolutely indisputable. Many experts support the project, some do not, and experts on both sides have information they want to share. However, the important detail to remember is that the URB will have a chance to review all the information and make its decision. That is why there is an objective review process.

Mr. Speaker, as part of this detailed analysis, the URB will review the costs of all options as part of an objective, transparent process. It will determine whether the Maritime Link is the best option for ratepayers and, as I said earlier, we are pleased that it's unfolding as it should.

Mr. Speaker, in 25 years from now, people will be looking back at 2013, at the dialogue we had regarding the Maritime Link, that we should or shouldn't proceed with it, and they will be saying to themselves, my gosh, what were they thinking? Of course they should have done it; it's the best thing that could be done at the time.

I'm proud to be part of the government that brought in that legacy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Time has expired for the late debate. I want to thank all members for their participation in tonight's debate.

The motion is carried.

[The House rose at 3:56 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1173**

By: Mr. Geoff MacLellan (Glace Bay)

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

Whereas the 2013 Glace Bay Sport and Volunteer Hall of Fame will induct deserving teams and individuals into the prestigious community hall on Saturday, May 11, 2013, during a ceremony held at the Bayplex; and

Whereas the 1968 Olands' Bay Byes will be inducted in the team category for their historic Maritime Senior B championship and tremendous performance during the regular season; and

Whereas the team consisted of many legendary athletes, including Buddy Bonner, Bob Seward, Gary Warne, Joe "Gobbler" MacDonald, Vic Slade, Jackie Ferguson, Donald "Ducky" Barrett, Butch Hoffman, Alex Brown, Ian Wilson, John "Ginger" MacLeod, Kenny Hoffman, Abie Libbus, Mick McIntyre, Melvin White, Charles "Chuck" Jamieson, Francis Bonnar, Barry Verbeski, Sonny Simmons, Jimmy Hoffman, Charles "Chickie" Slade, Harvey Kelloway, and Billy "Corny" Richardson;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House join me in congratulating the Bay Byes on their Maritime title and we thank the team members for their decades of giving back as coaches, builders, and organizers to sport in Cape Breton.

RESOLUTION NO. 1174

By: Mr. Harold Theriault (Digby-Annapolis)

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

Whereas with just a few crops of grapes, Bear River Vineyards produced an impressive crop of award-winning wines at this year's Finger Lakes International Wine Competition; and

Whereas without importing a single grape or drop of juice, vineyard owners Peg and Chris Hawes won silver for their 2012 Gamay Noir, bronze medals for their 2012 Pinot Gris and 2012 Riesling, and their 2011 "1161" Signature Red Blend; and

Whereas this is the fourth year in a row the Hawes have won medals for their wines and made 100 per cent from vinifera grapes grown on their own property;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bear River Vineyards on their accomplishments and wish them continued success with their vineyards.

RESOLUTION NO. 1175

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 annually, Global Pet Food outlets across the country hold a “Show Us Your Heart” valentine-themed event to raise money for animal charities; and

Whereas this year’s beneficiaries of the Global Pet Food’s initiative were Bide Awhile Shelter, Hope for Wildlife, and Greyhound Pets of Atlantic Canada; and

Whereas the Dartmouth location of Global Pets raised over \$5,000 during the 16-day campaign - the highest individual store result in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Global Pet Foods on their initiative and for raising over \$13,000 for HRM animal charities in this year’s event.

RESOLUTION NO. 1176

By: Hon. Leonard Preyra (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students, in each of 10 visual arts disciplines, as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas Dylan Fish, who will graduate this year with his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, is among the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award Grand Prize, nominated in the intermedia category for his jacquard weaving, *Party of Strangers*; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, Dylan Fish will be honoured, among his fellow nominees, at the Fourth Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, where nine finalists will receive a \$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive the \$5,000 purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Dylan Fish on being selected as a finalist for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award, and extend best wishes for a long and fulfilling career in our artistic and cultural communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 1177

By: Hon. Leonard Preyra (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students, in each of 10 visual arts disciplines, as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas Mary Ellen Oxby, who will graduate this year with her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, is among the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award Grand Prize, nominated in the photography category for her series of images, *Projections*, an exploration of mental illness; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, Mary Ellen Oxby will be honoured, among her fellow nominees, at the Fourth Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, where nine finalists will receive a \$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive the \$5,000 purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

RESOLUTION NO. 1178

By: Hon. Leonard Preyra (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students, in each of 10 visual arts disciplines, as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas Carrie Allison-Goodfellow, who will graduate this year with her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, is among the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award Grand Prize, nominated in the drawing category for her work, *The Place*; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, Carrie Allison-Goodfellow will be honoured, among her fellow nominees, at the Fourth Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, where nine finalists will receive a \$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive the \$5,000 purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Carrie Allison-Goodfellow on being selected as a finalist for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award, and extend best wishes for a long and fulfilling career in our artistic and cultural communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 1179

By: Hon. Leonard Preyra (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students, in each of 10 visual arts disciplines, as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas Duncan Ferguson, who will graduate this year with his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, is among the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award Grand Prize, nominated in the sculpture category for his two artworks, *Eyechart* and *Mallet*; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, Duncan Ferguson will be honoured, among his fellow nominees, at the Fourth Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, where nine finalists will receive a \$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive the \$5,000 purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Duncan Ferguson on being selected as a finalist for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award, and extend best wishes for a long and fulfilling career in our artistic and cultural communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 1180

By: Hon. Leonard Preyra (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students, in each of 10 visual arts disciplines, as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas Teto Elsiddique, who will graduate this year with his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, is among the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award Grand Prize, nominated in the painting category for his installation painting, *The Ramp*; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, Teto Elsiddique will be honoured, among his fellow nominees, at the Fourth Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, where nine finalists will receive a \$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive the \$5,000 purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Teto Elsiddique on being selected as a finalist for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award, and extend best wishes for a long and fulfilling career in our artistic and cultural communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 1181

By: Hon. Leonard Preyra (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students, in each of 10 visual arts disciplines, as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas Torrance Beamish, who will graduate this year with his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, is among the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award Grand Prize, nominated in the ceramics category for his series of lidded ceramic urns, *ProtoSanctum*; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, Torrance Beamish will be honoured, among his fellow nominees, at the Fourth Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, where nine finalists will receive a \$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive the \$5,000

purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Torrance Beamish on being selected as a finalist for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award, and extend best wishes for a long and fulfilling career in our artistic and cultural communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 1182

By: Hon. Leonard Preyra (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students, in each of 10 visual arts disciplines, as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas Danielle Marie (DM) Nowlan, who will graduate this year with her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, is among the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award Grand Prize, nominated in the jewelry and metalsmithing category for her series of *memento mori* brooches; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, DM Nowlan will be honoured, among her fellow nominees, at the Fourth Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, where nine finalists will receive a \$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive the \$5,000 purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate DM Nowlan on being selected as a finalist for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award, and extend best wishes for a long and fulfilling career in our artistic and cultural communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 1183

By: Hon. Leonard Preyra (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students, in each of 10 visual arts disciplines, as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas Tori Flemming, who will graduate this year with her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, is among the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award Grand Prize, nominated in the film category for her 16 mm black-and-white experimental film, *Lithe*; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, Tori Fleming will be honoured, among her fellow nominees, at the Fourth Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, where nine finalists will receive a \$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive the \$5,000 purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Tori Fleming on being selected as a finalist for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award, and extend best wishes for a long and fulfilling career in our artistic and cultural communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 1184

By: Hon. Leonard Preyra (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students, in each of 10 visual arts disciplines, as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas Stacy teBogt, who will graduate with her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 2014, is among the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award Grand Prize, nominated in the textiles category for her jacquard-woven textile hanging, *Birdback*; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, Stacy teBogt will be honoured, among her fellow nominees, at the Fourth Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, where nine finalists will receive a \$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive the \$5,000 purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Stacy teBogt on being selected as a finalist for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award, and extend best wishes for a long and fulfilling career in our artistic and cultural communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 1185

By: Hon. Leonard Preyra (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) Starfish Student Art Awards were established to recognize exceptional students, in each of 10 visual arts disciplines, as they embark on their careers; and

Whereas Merle Harley, who will graduate with her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 2014, is among the finalists for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award Grand Prize, nominated in the printmaking category for her series of three double-sided screen prints, *We Wear Our Red Coats with Pride/Our Coats are Red for a Reason*; and

Whereas on May 2, 2013, Merle Harley will be honoured, among her fellow nominees, at the Fourth Annual NSCAD Starfish Student Art Awards Gala, where nine finalists will receive a \$1,000 award and the grand prize winner will receive the \$5,000 purchase price of his or her artwork, which will become part of the university's permanent collection;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Merle Harley on being selected as a finalist for the 2013 NSCAD Starfish Student Art Award, and extend best wishes for a long and fulfilling career in our artistic and cultural communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 1186

By: Leo Glavine (Kings West)

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

Whereas there are close to 2,400 members and 100 4-H clubs in Nova Scotia and are part of an organization that has 80 countries world-wide with 4-H clubs; and

Whereas 4-H symbolizes the head, heart, home and health portrayed in the pledge, 4-H is about a program dedicated to the development of young people to help them become responsible members of society; and

Whereas for 100 years 4-H clubs have made a difference in the lives of many Nova Scotia youth in learning new skills, meeting new people, broadening interests, discovering their talents, and increasing pride in their community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature extend congratulations on the occasion of their 100th Anniversary and commend Kings County clubs for their role in youth development.