



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS**

**Speaker: Honourable Gordie Gosse**

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**Fifth Session**

**FRIDAY, MAY 3, 2013**

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, FRIDAY, MAY 3, 2013**

**Sixty-first General Assembly**

**Fifth Session**

**9:00 A.M.**

**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 today, I would like to bring the members' attention to the order paper. On the order paper today it says that Bill No. 51, the Financial Measures (2013) Act, is in Committee of the Whole House. Actually, it should state "for third reading." It shouldn't be in Committee of the Whole House, so I just wanted to bring that to your attention.

Now we'll start the daily routine.

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Law Amendments, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bill:

**Bill No. 55 - Protection of Animal Welfare and Security Act.**

and the committee recommends this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, with certain amendments.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Law Amendments, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bills:

**Bill No. 59 - Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation (Nova Scotia) Act.**

**Bill No. 66 - Mariners' Day Act.**

and the committee recommends these bills to the favourable consideration of the House, each without amendment.

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

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

**GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 78 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 3 of the Acts of 1987. The Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation (Nova Scotia) Act. (Hon. Charlie Parker)**

**Bill No. 79 - Entitled an Act Respecting Government Advertising. (Hon. Stephen McNeil)**

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

### NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

### RESOLUTION NO. 1187

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 39<sup>th</sup> Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony and Luncheon was held at the Westin Nova Scotia Hotel on April 15, 2013, recognizing volunteers from municipalities throughout the province; and

Whereas Odilon Boudreau was selected as Volunteer of the Year for the Municipality of Richmond for his work with Our Lady of Assumption Parish Council; and

Whereas Odilon is actively involved in the community with Our Lady of Assumption Church, including their cemetery, as well as the Strait-Richmond Palliative Care;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Odilon Boudreau for being selected as the Richmond County Volunteer of the Year, and thank him for his many years of service to his community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hants West.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1188**

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

Whereas the Battle of the Atlantic was the longest continuous military campaign in World War II, running from 1939 to 1945; and

Whereas for six years Canadian sailors and merchant marines faced harsh sea conditions and enemy U-boats, and overcame insurmountable odds to keep the shipping lanes open that provided vital supplies to forces in Great Britain and beyond; and

Whereas special events are planned for Halifax this weekend to commemorate the 68<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic, and recognize the sacrifices of the brave Canadian sailors and merchant marines during some of the most vicious fighting of the war;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly remember the bravery and sacrifice of the Canadian sailors and merchant marines who fought for our freedom during the Battle of the Atlantic.

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. 1189**

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

Whereas Parafia p.w. Narodzenia Najswietszej Maryi Panny (St. Mary's Polish Parish) in Whitney Pier is celebrating its centenary as the only Polish parish in Atlantic Canada and many events, ceremonies, and service projects are marking this milestone; and

Whereas the parish was founded 100 years ago by hard-working immigrants and has been diligently maintained by their descendants and by generations of newcomers, and on May 3, 1984, the parish was registered by the Province of Nova Scotia as a heritage property; and

Whereas the church's character-defining elements include not only the distinctive physical structure but its ongoing use as a living spiritual and cultural site, and St. Mary's Polish Parish is integral to the multicultural identity of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that this House congratulate St. Mary's Polish Parish on the occasion of its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and extend its best wishes to the parish in its life of faith and service and as the central point of Cape Breton's Polish community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Richmond.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1190**

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 824 Silver Dart Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron gathered on Saturday, April 13, 2013, to celebrate, recognize, and remember 40 years of history; and

Whereas the 824 Silver Dart Squadron helps cadets build self-esteem, leadership, and allows them to set goals, amongst other important skills; and

Whereas Captain Allison Martell has spent 21 years with the 824 Silver Dart Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron and has volunteered countless hours;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in commending Captain Allison Martell for her hard work and dedication with the 824 Silver Dart Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron, and thank her for her many years of service.

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.

### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

[9:16 a.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

[9:22 a.m. CHW on Bills rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and considered the following bill:

#### **Bill No. 43 - Trustees of Onslow Cemetery Company Act.**

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

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, I wonder if we could have unanimous consent of the House to go right to third reading of Bill No. 43.



MADAM SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

### **PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING**

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 43.

#### **Bill No. 43 - Trustees of Onslow Cemetery Company Act.**

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of Bill No. 43. Bill No. 43 has been a bill that transfers the decision making from the Governor in Council to a board of trustees, members of the company, and I move third reading of Bill No. 43.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 43. 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: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 51.

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

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Madam Speaker, I move that Bill No. 51, the Financial Measures (2013) Act be now read a third time and do pass. When this government came to office we committed to making life better and more affordable for Nova Scotian families. I can say with confidence that the Financial Measures (2013) Act builds on this commitment. We've worked hard to bring sanity back to the province's

finances. We've reined in spending while at the same time investing in areas that meant the most to Nova Scotians.

The budget measures contained within the FMA, Madam Speaker, represent lower taxes for seniors and businesses, and assurance that HST exemptions on essential family items remain in place. This government put in place exemptions for children's clothing, footwear and diapers, as well as feminine hygiene products. We increased the maximum HST rebate for first-time homebuyers and we took the provincial portion of the HST off basic electricity and home heat. These items, along with a number of exemptions already in place, are essential for Nova Scotian families. Not paying the provincial portion of the HST on these items has a real impact on households across our province. I know, because Nova Scotians have told me. Also included is firefighting equipment for municipalities and volunteer fire stations.

Madam Speaker, we want to ensure that Nova Scotians continue to benefit from these exemptions in the future. That's why the FMA requires a provincial referendum. If a government wishes to eliminate these exemptions, they'll have to make their case to the people of Nova Scotia who will then decide.

I know the Opposition has criticized this portion of the FMA but I also know that they have been less than clear, less than precise, less than forthright about their intentions for some of these exemptions. The member for Bedford-Birch Cove, perhaps, will stand in this debate on the FMA and be precise and clear about all of those exemptions and will be supporting this bill when it comes to a vote, Madam Speaker. This government believes that keeping the provincial portion of the HST off these items is too important for there to be any uncertainty.

Contained within the FMA are significant tax savings for our province's low-income seniors. Building on the GIS - the Guaranteed Income Supplement - refund program that the Premier put in place, we've introduced the new Age Amount Tax Credit. This \$1,000 non-refundable tax credit will increase the number of low-income seniors who do not pay provincial income tax and increase the number who see a greater portion of provincial income tax returned. In total, 29,000 seniors will receive more income tax relief. On top of this, Madam Speaker, we are also helping low-income seniors stay in their homes by increasing the maximum property tax to \$800; 4,000 seniors will benefit from this increase.

Madam Speaker, this government knows that small businesses are at the heart of our economy and that's why we've reduced the small business tax rate four years in a row - four years. This rate, which hadn't changed since the 1990s, will be 3 per cent as of January 1, 2014. When these reductions are fully implemented, the total impact will be \$33 million annually. That's \$33 million in savings for our province's small businesses. Savings they can reinvest to compete, grow, and hire.

Other measures contained in the FMA, Madam Speaker, are changes that provide clarity to the corporate capital tax. As well, the tobacco tax will increase by 2 cents on cigarettes, pre-proportioned sticks, fine cut, and other tobacco products. A portion of the increase in revenue from tobacco will be directed into our comprehensive tobacco control strategy. Additionally, the FMA will implement previously announced increases for fees that are found in legislation. These adjustments went into effect on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Finally, Madam Speaker, the FMA makes a change that allows the Nova Scotia Government Retired Employees Association to choose their own representative on their pension trustee board. Previously, the organization could recommend a representative, but their preferred candidate was not necessarily binding. This government has made significant and necessary pension reforms. We worked with stakeholders, employees, pensioners, unions, and we've achieved great results. We've modernized the Public Service Superannuation Plan, making it more affordable for taxpayers and more sustainable for members.

Budget 2013 was a milestone for our province. We are one of only a handful of provinces to introduce a balanced budget. And, Madam Speaker, I have to say, I sometimes stand here and I have to chuckle when I listen to the members of the Opposition talk about whether or not the budget is actually a balanced budget. They dismiss the accounting standards that quite often they themselves, as professionals who belong to these accounting groups, belong to.

Madam Speaker, we were able to introduce a balanced budget because we had a plan, a four-year plan. A plan that we worked extremely hard at implementing, staying the course, being disciplined in our spending, taking the province through some admittedly extremely difficult economic circumstances, particularly in areas like the pulp and paper industry and the forestry in terms of lumber and mills.

The work that has been done by my colleagues I want to acknowledge here with respect to departmental spending. To be able to bring departmental spending down, to limit the growth that previously had been at an unsustainable rate, that set us on a path to a structural deficit that looked like \$1.3 billion in unrealized spending, was just not tenable, and to have been able to address and turn the province around in a direction that will put us in a very good financial position and give us the ability to reinvest in those important areas of public services - children's health care, children's education, tax breaks for seniors, making life more affordable for people whose incomes are quite limited - is a fundamental value of this government, and was very much reflected in our plan. (Applause)

As I said, Madam Speaker, it hasn't been easy, and it hasn't always been painless, but it certainly has been worth it. Indeed, this budget does mark a milestone for our province, and I am very pleased to be able to move third reading of Bill No. 51, the Financial Measures (2013) Act. (Applause)

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was listening with great intent as the Finance Minister talked about Bill No. 51, the Financial Measures (2013) Act.

The Financial Measures (2013) Bill won't be supported by our caucus. There are some good things in the bill, and there are some things that aren't so good. This is really a motion of non-confidence in this NDP Government, and that's why we are not going to support the bill at this time in the way it is written.

The Premier indicated in Question Period the other day that it's an excellent track record of this government. Well, as soon as I hear that, it makes me wonder about the \$27 million from last year's budget that was conveniently forgotten during the Budget Debate. I wonder if this year it's \$27 million or if it's \$100 million or if it's \$300 million, or indeed, if it exists - who knows? There's no confidence in this government to ever indicate that there would be any balanced budget, and it's difficult to say.

The minister touted the HST off electricity. It sounds good, it sounds wonderful, it sounds really good. It really did happen. You know what? I'm going to congratulate the government for doing that, but then they turned around and put a charge on your power bills, which was higher than what you were paying for the GST, to finance Efficiency Nova Scotia, which prior to this NDP Government manipulating things and making it look like they took the tax off - indeed, they added another tax in the form of Efficiency Nova Scotia, that used to be paid for 100 per cent under general revenue.

So you tell me you give the people of Nova Scotia a better deal? Boys, I'm telling you, the people in Nova Scotia realize you have not given them a better deal, and they're very, very upset about this. Add that to the highest power rates in the country and the way this government has been working with Emera to make sure the power rates go up, and they've helped them to do this with Efficiency Nova Scotia.

You've seen the cost of this growing and growing. (Interruptions) Well, you can hassle me all you want over there, but I'm telling you, the people in the province don't understand what's going on. They understand - they're talking about it. (Interruptions)

All these guys in the background who are talking about this, it's going to be interesting when I come back next time to this Legislature and you're not here. It's going to be interesting.

When we go through things and we see what exactly this has done - they said all the wonderful things they've done, they've increased revenue in the province tremendously by putting fees up. A huge numbers of fees - 1,400 fees twice, twice, since they've been elected. Actually the minister . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. Order. If members have a disagreement, I would ask them to take it (Interruption) I said, order. The member has a disagreement with another member today, take it outside the Chamber, have a discussion. Do not, while someone is speaking, have a dialogue across the Chamber. (Interruption) I'm going to ask you - I'm going to say order one more time and that's it. Thank you. (Interruptions) Order.

The honourable member for Preston has the floor.

MR. COLWELL: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The government has been talking about the fantastic job of balancing the books. Basically what they've done is raise taxes tremendously, put the HST up by 2 per cent and I believe, from the numbers we got from the Finance Department, it is something like \$348 million, I can't remember the exact number this year - this year. That's out of the pockets of every Nova Scotian, \$348 million. Then you add the cost of the 1,400 fees - and those fees are supposed to be because of cost increases of actually performing the duties of collecting that money.

During the estimates, on the previous increase in these fees, the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations admitted that he was told to do this by the Finance Minister. When I asked him this year, he wouldn't answer of course because that was the same answer - because there's no way that the cost of registering these fees has gone up another 5.8 per cent this year. Another tax grab by this government - another tax grab.

If people here wonder, the members opposite in the NDP wonder why people are so upset with them when they go talk to them, no wonder. You go on the roads today and you see fewer people on the roads because they can't afford to travel anymore. They can't afford to do it - why? It's because this government has imposed so many taxes on them, so many taxes. (Interruption) I guess it's a laughing matter; I'll let people know (Interruptions) Well, you know, it's a laughing matter that you've actually made it so unaffordable for Nova Scotians that they can barely afford to live in the province.

We've seen a dismal record of this government in economic development - I mean, dismal record. The worst I've ever seen, and I've seen a lot of bad stuff over the years. I remember John Buchanan back years ago and all the mess we inherited and all the things that he spent money on, but boys, he got nothing on you guys - absolutely nothing. I see some land that was purchased for \$1,000 an acre that was worth nothing. The province could have taken it, they could have expropriated it. Instead you wrote a cheque to the company and they said, thank you very much guys, it was wonderful, we'll take our money to Quebec now and we had a great time here.

If I remember right - I kind of remember this right now - did they actually buy the pulp mill afterwards for \$8 million? They actually bought it. Well, in Newfoundland and Labrador they expropriated the pulp mill - you know what the cost was? They expropriated

in Newfoundland and Labrador from the same crowd of really good people that look after our provinces, these pulp mill owners, and in Newfoundland and Labrador it cost them \$150 million to do the environmental cleanup. And this government says there's no issue. Same technology, same company, and you paid \$8 million for an environmental disaster - \$8 million for it.

What's going to happen down the road when a new government comes along? And hopefully it is a new government soon - who knows what's going to happen during an election. They are going to be tagged with a huge cleanup bill for something they own that we shouldn't even have anything to do with and the company should be responsible for.

When you look at the mess that has been created by this government, it's unbelievable. There are so many things going on here, (Interruptions) well, the Fisheries and Aquaculture Minister should make some comments. I can remember a Fisheries Loan Board a little while ago - I don't want to talk about that here again, but I will, if you want to make some comments, not a problem. That was a questionable loan. (Interruptions) Well maybe I will talk about it then, maybe I will.

I remember back when this Fisheries and Aquaculture Minister sold a fishing boat and financed, through his own loan department, a boat, which was a question, you know. When we go through this whole thing (Interruptions) - well minister, get up and make some comments, we're anxious to hear it. When people get all upset about something, you know there is something wrong. The minister is pretty upset so there must be something wrong.

Now there have been some pretty interesting things to really help businesses in Nova Scotia. I'm going to talk about the small business tax that you reduced on small business. I think that's a good thing that you reduced the small business tax. I think that's a very positive thing that the government has done, but when you did all that, you did your math very well, like this government does - raise taxes on everything.

What you did at the same time, you reduced the threshold for corporate taxes from \$400,000 to \$350,000 - basically wiping out the 5 per cent you reduced it. It's just a numbers game and a playing game you do here. Increase the fees payable under the Corporations Registration Act, so that cost businesses more, that goes back to the government. The interest on an overpayment of Corporation Capital Tax can no longer be included in the refund payment. By the time you add all this stuff, businesses are worse off under this government than they were before.

It's pretty interesting, you know. It's just unbelievable what this government has done and they think is okay. It must makes you wonder where their head was when they came up with all this stuff.

Now I know they're playing games with the numbers and they really think they've done a good job. Well, you talk to Nova Scotians who are having a hard time feeding their family now . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order. I just want to remind the member that the use of "you" in speaking directly across the floor is unparliamentary and out of order and I would ask that the member offer all of his remarks to the Speaker. Thank you.

MR. COLWELL: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As we go through all this and we see what's going on, and there are so many things, it is going to take longer than an hour to go through all this stuff and my colleagues are going to continue, I'm sure, as we proceed with this, and we see just how bad this budget really is.

If you look at some of the things that have happened, some of the unbelievable projections that this government has made, they're talking about serious increases in revenues from personal income tax. Let's talk about that. Now I think the government is hoping that nobody really looks at the numbers and sees what's going on here. They're talking about a huge increase in personal income taxes. Well, we're going to talk about that, we're going to talk about the sneaky tax or the - I forget what else they call them. This government, when they were in Opposition, talked about so much and it was called bracket creep.

People are starting to understand what bracket creep is now. Bracket creep is when the cost of living goes up and the income tax brackets don't go up with it, like the federal income tax system does. I think we're one of the only provinces in the country that doesn't address bracket creep. And it makes a huge difference to people's personal income tax. So the more income tax is going to go up, unfortunately the government said employment increases by 0.2 per cent, 1,100 fewer jobs in 2013. That's 1,100 fewer jobs in 2013 in this province. So if you've got lower employment and also the employment is going to part-time employment instead of full-time employment, how do you expect your income tax to go up? It has to be through bracket creep.

As you look at all this stuff in the years this government has managed to slow the economy so badly that we've actually continued in the recession that the other progressive provinces and the rest of the provinces are coming out. We're lagging behind the rest of the country in everything you look at, everything. We're seeing our young people move out West and soon they're going to be moving to Newfoundland and Labrador to get employment. Newfoundland is going to be a lot more attractive to them because they're going to be able to fly home on the weekend; you can't fly home on a weekend from Alberta.

As you see all these bright young people disappear, you see these young people come back and hopefully they'll invest some money in Nova Scotia, buy a house or two and when you talk about home sales here and the great ships contract, and I've talked about

that here at length before that it is going to create the 11,500 jobs, I think it is. Well, according to Irving themselves it's going to be about 900 jobs, so I don't know where they get 11,500. They said that jobs were going to start right away. I did military work before and I can tell you they don't start right away, and I knew that to start with. Unfortunately, they've created false expectations by people in this province.

Just alone if they would have had the contract at the time finalized, which it wasn't. They didn't have the design of the ships done, that takes a couple of years, and they've got to build the infrastructure to do it. So before any real economic benefit for this is shown in their economy, which won't be 11,000 jobs, probably more like 1,000 as it comes forward, it's going to be interesting to say. In the meantime if the federal government doesn't decide that they're going to reduce the size of the contract, cancel the contract or move the contract to someplace else, it's going to be interesting.

So you see even with the ships contract, the steel is going to come from outside the province, all the power generation systems are going to come out of the province, all the propulsion systems are going to come out of the province, all of their electronics are coming from outside the province, and all the weapon systems are coming from outside of Nova Scotia. So there will be no jobs created in manufacturing or developing any of those products. You look at this thing and you talk about this, you really don't see any benefit. Then you see the reality that's starting to click in here, the reality is starting to click in - 36 per cent reduction in home sales in the metro area, over last year.

When you look at this whole thing you see exactly where this province is going, this province is going backwards, it's really going downhill, and if it continues under this government there is going to be no jobs for Nova Scotians and it's going to get worse and worse and worse as time goes on.

It's unbelievable that this government can actually stand up and say we're doing well. We're following behind the rest of the country in every way you can possibly imagine. Our population is reducing, we're seeing more and more people that are suffering, and I can tell you from seeing what I see in my community and the communities around me how much trouble people are having making ends meet. You put 2 per cent on the HST, bracket creep in income tax, put fees up for everything, I've had several calls about people that just are starting to realize these fee increases when they're going to register their car, now after two years ago when they registered, it has gone up almost \$50, and we're going from there.

We can talk about things, like the member in the background is talking about, we can also talk about the election activities, the illegal union donations that the NDP received. You want to talk about that, they got fined for it and we can go there, but I don't want to go through all that stuff but I gladly will. We see all this stuff, you see a desperate government trying to do desperate things to survive, and hopefully the people in this



province see the light and understand what has been done to them over the last number of years, the last four years.

HON. LEONARD PREYRA: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. The member on the floor at the moment was suggesting that the government was somehow incompetent in not expropriating the pulp and paper company, and he cited the AbitibiBowater case as something that we should emulate. I just wanted to draw his attention and correct the record on it, that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador announced yesterday that they're adding another \$72 million to that, adding that to the \$200 million they've already paid in costs and damages for expropriating that, and they said the government ought to have known how incompetent they were at the . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: I'm sorry, but this would not be a point of order.

The honourable member for Preston has the floor.

MR. COLWELL: Madam Speaker, we see what this government has done and the attempts that they make to try to justify the poor expenditure of funds that they have done. We look at revenues in this province, and the government is always trying to get more revenue instead of trying to really work at things and do things better. This year we see the cancellation of the MOU and the minister quotes all the time - well, it was in the contract, we can cancel it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Read it.

MR. COLWELL: I've read the MOU, and so has the Halifax Regional Municipality. This year they're going to pay \$8 million more to the province for education alone - \$8 million. That means the property tax owners and the Halifax Regional Municipality, all over the municipality, are going to pay \$8 million more in property taxes because this government tore up the MOU. They tore it up.

The list gets longer and longer, and as you see what's happening here and you see how they've downloaded the taxes on the taxpayers - the property tax owners, the people who own properties, who aren't all the owners in the province - and at the same time cut about another \$6 million this year out of education. So what they've done is they've taken money for education from the municipalities - and HRM is just one example, and all the other ones' numbers are probably just the same or somewhere near the same, depending on how much their tax base is - and they've cut money out of education, forced the municipalities to pay, in this case, in HRM, another \$8 million, and other municipalities all over the province more money.

They've cut money out of education, so where does that money go? That has to go into general revenue. Isn't that against the law? I'm not sure, but if you take extra money into the province, it goes into general revenue instead of into education. So if you'd added

\$8 million more to the budget because of a municipality here - and more than \$8 million, because all the municipalities are doing it - so when people out there understand, people have to understand that when their property taxes go up in the municipality this year, if they do, or next year or the year after, they can blame this government, this provincial NDP Government, for putting the property taxes up because of the MOU.

Then there are issues around the LED lights that this government forced the municipality to change. Now, it's a good idea to go to LED lights, there's no question about that - everybody agrees with that, the municipalities agree with that - but it's going to cost the municipalities in this province \$122 million to make the change. That's what it's going to cost, and those are numbers that come from UNSM - \$122 million forced on them by this government.

Lo and behold, they were so wise, this NDP Government, when they put all this in place, going to save all this energy cost by putting LED lights in. Nova Scotia Power must have figured they could put the price up on power again somehow, and we won't notice it because it's running LED lights. So instead of making it sensible for the municipalities to do it, they force it on them and they forced it on them to do quickly. They had to go to the URB and they've got stranded assets now that the municipalities, because of this government and the mishandling of this, have to pay Nova Scotia Power.

This is not well-known by people yet, but it's going to be - the municipalities are going to have to pay Nova Scotia Power for all those streetlights - the old ones - that they say they have that is a stranded asset that the municipalities are going to have to pay for. Another \$122 million that's going on the property tax bills of people in this province because of this government's mismanagement of how they did it. It's simply unbelievable how much this government has just sort of in a roundabout way downloaded on the municipalities and they say we're doing such a good job balancing the books.

Balancing the books on one part of the taxpayers, people that own properties. They're going to pay more tax because of this government's mishandling of how they've implemented these changes. The changes are good, but you have to do it in the proper way; it wasn't done properly, it was poor management. When you go through and you look at all the things that this government has done in the avenue of looking after Nova Scotia Power, I probably could say, and then the Premier must have some friends at Nova Scotia Power or knows somebody or knows something we don't know.

Yes, and there was a flight on Emera's jet with the Premier - interesting, very interesting. Madam Speaker, how much time do I have left?

MADAM SPEAKER: You have 35 minutes - a little shorter actually.

MR. COLWELL: That's unfortunately much too short a time. I need much more time to do this. We see so many things that are hard to believe that this government has

imposed on the backs of Nova Scotians. We see a lot of grumbling in the background, usually when people are yelling and worrying about something, they're concerned about what's being said. I think they should be. If I were a taxpayer out there, and was not a part of this Legislature, I'd be very upset. I've talked to a lot of people from all over different areas in the province. I can tell you, they're mad. They're not upset, they're mad, they're really mad.

They're mad at the way this government has addressed their financial affairs. We've seen the wait-times of hospitals get worse, we've seen costs go up in the health care system astronomically. And we talk about all the problems and it goes back to (Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Order. Order.

MR. COLWELL: Thank you. Okay, let's talk about something that we all know about. I'm going to talk about the Yarmouth ferry. Here we are, we've thrown away millions of dollars supporting a pulp mill on the South Shore of this province, millions of dollars thrown away on a pulp mill, money in this area. A little fee of \$3 million to keep that ferry going would have made a huge difference in the economy of this province.

In my area and along the Eastern Shore, almost every bed and breakfast, every small place, is closed. It has gone from about 8 or 10 per cent of the tourism in the province down to almost zero. When you look at that and when you talk to the operators, whom I know personally, they tell me they immediately got a 60 per cent reduction in bookings. This is a fact. If you look at what this government says, well it didn't make any difference, it was a bad deal to have the ferry, the whole nine yards, just strictly look at the tourism numbers.

Look at the tourism numbers now, they're down, way down. If we're going to get this economy to grow we have to have tourism grow. It used to be one of the biggest industries in the province, and thanks to the mishandling of the economy by this government, we've seen what has happened to tourism in this province - another wonderful NDP job development program. Eliminate the ferry, cut jobs in the tourism industry, and don't even worry about it. That's not important, it didn't really happen, it doesn't make any sense.

I can tell you, people who I talk to see this and they understand this, and why their young people are moving out of the province to find employment. There isn't employment here, there aren't opportunities here, and I feel sorry for the young people who have been dealt such a rotten deal from this government. The young people who voted for them last election are gone, and it makes you wonder, with the rhetoric and everything they say, how they can honestly believe that they're making a difference in this province. Yes, they're making a difference, all right - in the wrong darn direction.

People are hurting - they're hurting big time - and it's not going to change for many years to come, especially with the changes this government has made. It's take more money away from people, and give them less service. Education - the money was taken out of education - and then the government has the audacity to say, you know, we've got to put more money into education to train our people better - for what? So we can ship them to Alberta? Probably. Newfoundland and Labrador, soon.

What's going to happen is, they've taken money out of education, at the same time, as I've just said, and then they're going to train people better. But how can you do the two things at one time? You can't, you just can't. So when you see what's happening to young people - young people coming out of Grade 12 who can't read or write - I guess the system's working better. It must be working better. But I can tell you as a former employer, and seeing the people who come out of school, and seeing how poorly they're educated, and how poorly the system is working, we need more money in education, not less, if we're going to make all these things work.

As you work, and you go on, and you see what's really happening in this province, it's been a dismal failure. This government's been a dismal failure. History will show that; history will show it. And then you talk to businesses - you talk to businesses that are inspected for safety violations now. One time, or - I can give an example. A friend of mine used to have a bar. He's since gotten rid of it because the - and this is an issue that hasn't come up here yet - and he made lots of money running the bar. The fire marshal came into his place, and his exit sign was two inches off centre, and he got a fine for it, instead of the fire marshal coming along and saying, okay, your sign is off centre by two inches, move it over the inch that it's got to be, and fix it. The list goes on and on and on and on.

We have never talked about the fire marshal and what they're doing. The fire marshal's work is very important - very important. They've got to work with businesses, they've got to work with facilities, to make sure things are made safer, but don't penalize them immediately. And that's what's happened. You know, don't penalize them right away. If they refuse to do the work, then penalize them, and be very severe penalties at that point. But what they're doing now is they're just walking in, they find something wrong, they get a fine rather than working with the businesses or whatever the case may be to see if the thing can be rectified in a reasonable time period, and get it done. So that's really helping business in the province.

Members opposite think this is all a joke, and it's a big laugh. You talk to businesses out there and see what they say. I was recently to the meeting with the exporters and businesses Nova Scotia, and I can tell you, what I heard at that meeting was pretty interesting. It was what I expected. This government has done nothing to help business, and the stuff that they've done - they've cut the 5 per cent income tax thing, but the company can't make money anymore, so it doesn't do them any good. By the time they're done paying the fines and the other fees and all the taxes they've got to pay, other taxes besides that, they can't make any money anyway.

I've been quoted that it's somewhere between 10 to 40 per cent more expensive to do business in Nova Scotia than it is almost anywhere else in the country. So that asks the question: if it's that much more expensive, why would you run a business here? If you're going to run a manufacturing business, and you're going to export out of the province, which is really the kind of business we need to grow the economy and to put new money into the economy instead of just circulating it through government jobs.

You're going to have to have an environment for business to be competitive and unfortunately, this government has taken the environment that was there, which should have been improved on when they came to power, and made it a whole lot worse. So if anybody wonders why their child has gone to Alberta to work, and I say soon Newfoundland and Labrador because Newfoundland and Labrador - a funny thing, you know, one of the poorest provinces in the country now doesn't receive any transfer payments. Isn't that interesting? So they've got their economy going properly. This province still gets transfer payments and if this government continues the way it's going, we're going to get more transfer payments because the economy gets worse and the crappier job you do running things, the more money you get back from Ottawa and from the other provinces. It's going to be interesting to see how that all works.

As I was saying, people wonder why their young people are leaving. They are leaving because businesses can prosper outside of Nova Scotia. They can't prosper here. You look around here and you see the New Brunswick licence plates. They're not tourists, they're businesses operating in New Brunswick because it's cheaper to operate in New Brunswick than it is in Nova Scotia and they're coming back here for a week or a couple of weeks at a time, doing their business, going back to New Brunswick and the Government of New Brunswick is benefiting from all the taxes these companies pay, all the taxes. I think those companies are smart. Unfortunately, until something happens that it makes it worthwhile for companies to come to Nova Scotia, they're not going to come.

I've talked to several people I know in business and they keep telling me all the time that their former suppliers are now out of Moncton. They used to be in Burnside, they're out of Moncton because it's cheaper to operate in Moncton than it is in Burnside, thanks to this government. With the penalties they're putting on and all the things that they're doing and the taxes they are creating in roundabout and in direct ways, it's really hurting our economy.

You know when you get a company like Michelin that says in the Law Amendments Committee that it's not an environment for business and not a -

AN HON. MEMBER: They're expanding.

MR. COLWELL: Yeah, they're expanding because the province gave them money, another government - (Interruption) oh, I forget about the government handouts, thank you very much for reminding me - \$500 million. I think I see it in the air here somewhere, I

think it is blowing away somewhere. Oh, it blew away to Ontario. Some went to Quebec, some went to Ontario. Where else did it go? The money is gone.

You know when they talk about these things and they see - what they don't see, you don't see what's going on, you don't understand if you're going to have business in this province prosper, you've got to work with them. You've got to help the small businesses and make them the backbone of the province. And you get some big company come in and it's interesting, it must be fun for the businesses to come to Nova Scotia, the big companies, and say okay, what are we going to get? How much is the province going to give us? We should try for \$100 million, they give everyone else \$100 million. We'll be here for a year or so and we'll go away with Nova Scotia's business and their money. Nova Scotians, they don't really know what's going on in the business world.

This government has a really good track record of that. They've done an excellent job at it, giving our money away to big corporations. You know the more you think about some of the deals that were done, it's just simply unbelievable, absolutely unbelievable.

I forgot about Irving's grant loan, the \$300 million one (Interruption) \$264 million, was it? It's strange, you know, a company of that size, it can be debated whether it's a good thing or not.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. At this point I want to deal with something that has been left unresolved. Earlier in the proceedings I had addressed unparliamentary behaviour of the honourable member for Yarmouth. While addressing the remarks and the procedures, the member chose to leave the Chamber. At that time upon his exit, he challenged, again, the authority of the Speaker. I will now be addressing that action by asking that that member apologize to this Speaker and to this House for the blatant disregard for the Rules of Order and parliamentary behaviour in this Chamber.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Madam Speaker, my goal is never to act in an unparliamentary way so I apologize for anything I ever do that does that, but when a Speaker is addressing a situation and looking at me specifically like it's just -

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. Order. The ruling has been made. It has been determined that I have called it unparliamentary. I would now ask the member for Yarmouth leave the Chamber for the remainder of the day. I've given you many opportunities and I would ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to make sure that happens. Thank you.

MR. CHURCHILL: That's unfair treatment.

MADAM SPEAKER: Again, I will ask the member to leave. (Interruptions)

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, we certainly appreciate the tenor of the House from all sides may get carried away from time to time and I realize you are the final arbiter here. I also ask you to look at this in a greater way - because after your decision, it is my belief the Speaker's decision is final - to look at the comments made by the member as he was exiting. I would appreciate if you would do that.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you, I will certainly do that. If the member were present, I would certainly suggest he was not complying with my order and at this stage I would like to name him in offence of disorderly conduct and put the question to suspend the service of that member, under Rule 28, which will be such a suspension that will continue until the fifth day of the sitting after today, for unparliamentary behaviour, blatant disrespect for this Speaker and this Chamber, for unparliamentary actions and disorderly conduct.

The honourable House Leader for the Official Opposition.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Madam Speaker, I didn't hear everything that the Government House Leader said. However, I would like to point out, just for the information of the House that the member for Yarmouth, who I was just speaking to, is actually standing to apologize to the Speaker for flaunting, for any impression (Interruption) because I just spoke to him. (Interruption)

Madam Speaker, I'm sure the Government House Leader is well aware that the rules of the House are that the statements of a member may not be questioned in the House under Beauchesne and should he wish to question those, then maybe he will have to be suspended for five days as well. But I just wish to bring that to the attention of the House. As well . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: It's duly noted.

MR. YOUNGER: I think that it would be unprecedented for such a suspension.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you, it's duly noted. This Speaker has called a ruling on it, I remain with that ruling.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, while the member has made a point, the point was that certainly when you're at your place is the proper location, I believe, if you want to retract something, you would do it there.

MADAM SPEAKER: I have made the ruling.

The honourable member for Preston.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Madam Speaker, it's unfortunate that (Interruption) how much time do I have left?

MADAM SPEAKER: You have 17 minutes.

MR. COLWELL: Does that count the extra time that it took to make the ruling?

MADAM SPEAKER: You have 17 minutes.

MR. COLWELL: Did that include the extra time?

MADAM SPEAKER: You have until 10:36 a.m.

MR. COLWELL: When did we start?

MADAM SPEAKER: At 9:36 a.m.

MR. COLWELL: I would ask to extend my hour to take up time for that.

MADAM SPEAKER: You have until 10:36 a.m.

MR. COLWELL: Okay, thank you very much.

We were talking about - and there was a lot of disruption on all sides of the House (Interruption) Do I have the floor now, Madam Speaker?

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes.

MR COLWELL: Thank you.

When you see the record of this government, it's going to go down in history as probably one of the worst records when it comes to economic development and job creation ever, and there is no question about that when we see what has happened to families here - when we see how the taxes have been increased, and we see how all of these things are coming together. People are starting to finally realize that the price of gas when this government was elected was \$1 a litre; today it's roughly \$1.25, and it has been as high as almost \$1.50.

When you see the increases in HST this government has imposed on people; when you see the increases in the fees; when you see the power rates which have gone up 30 per cent - but I think when it's compounded it's way more than 30 per cent; when you see this government put the efficiency charge on the power bills, which more than replaced the



HST that this government took off the tax of the electricity bills - it's just a game that the government is playing, a game, it's like one of those shell games that you watch these guys, sharks that do, and this government has done the same thing, you know, we'll give you this but we're going to take more over here.

It's been outrageous - it has just been outrageous. People in this province are hurting, they're hurting very, very much and to see the cost of everything just escalating like there is no tomorrow and you see what's going on in this province it's a tragedy, it's absolutely a tragedy. When Bill No. 100 takes effect in this province, and it's going to be a while before that really takes effect, that's going to have a tremendous impact on our economy as well - a negative impact. They talk in this bill about having a referendum on parts of the bill. Nobody has said that any of these changes, like the HST on electricity is going to be taken off (Interruption) It is going to be put back on? We're going to see exactly (Interruptions)

Madam Speaker, do I have the floor?

MADAM SPEAKER: You do.

MR. COLWELL: Thank you.

We see exactly what's happening and it's all starting to play out now and people are hurting, they're hurting very, very badly and it's going to take a long time to fix that, a long time. You'll see a family now that can't send their kids to play hockey, you'll see a family that is having a hard time buying groceries, and you wonder why. It's a nickel here, a dime there, a little bit extra over here. All this stuff has been imposed on them by this government - 1,400 user fees, twice they've gone up, and they tout all these things. And even when they're presented with the facts - my honourable colleague, the member for Kings West pointed out to the Premier the other day some of the issues and the Premier had a paper in his hand that the member had given to him, tabled in this Legislature, tabled here in this Legislature. The Premier, with it in his hands, still denied it. He still denied it, it's unbelievable, and it questions the credibility of the whole government.

That's why this caucus is going to vote against this Financial Measures (2013) Bill, because we have no confidence in this government to be able to do what needs to be done to help the economy in this province. We have no confidence whatsoever. We have no confidence that there is ever hope that they will be able to run this province properly and, indeed, turn the economy around so we are a have province instead of a have-not province.

That's what has been happening and it's getting worse and worse. Some of these things, like you put the GST up 2 per cent, well, it doesn't bother anybody too much, 2 per cent, but it is a 25 per cent tax increase, a double-digit, 25 per cent tax increase across the board on everything we buy.

The members opposite were laughing earlier - yes, so what, who cares? But we bought a pulp mill. We bought some land and paid too much money for it. Well, that's okay. Those big companies deserve those little pats on the back and a little bit of cash in their pocket. We see these things running out all the time, you see this going on. It's a trend of this government. We talk about the \$27 million - I can't use the proper language that people are telling me about the \$27 million - but the \$27 million error, omission or all kinds of other things you'd like to do in last year's budget and it makes you wonder, what is it this year?

Indeed, I found some discrepancies in the Red Room during Budget Debate. I was asking the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations about some grants that had been given out to different organizations, and some good grants to organizations that probably deserved them and the process was put in place. I asked about a couple of things and the answer was, they didn't know what it was right away, it was weird. I can't remember the details of it but it's in the record, and come to find out it was operating money that was posted in the wrong place.

So if you think about the \$27 million the year before, and if they're posting information in wrong locations, it makes you wonder, why would we believe this government is going to have a balanced budget? Why would we believe any of the numbers they've got because those numbers are incorrect? It's only a minor thing but you do that 100, 200, 300 times, and it is a major thing. It would be well over \$27 million.

When you look at how it all works and you see the dismal job this government has done, the very, very poor job of creating an environment for business, creating an environment for growth, they've done just the opposite. The services that they said they were going to fix and they stormed in and said they were going to fix everything and help everybody, haven't been improved.

It's unbelievable. They spent more money, poorer service and more taxes. So what does that tell you? I would say if it was a manager running a business and doing that, running their business like that, they would be fired on the spot - on the spot they would be fired, they would be gone. There would be no question about it. Unfortunately governments don't get fired; they get kicked out by voters. Hopefully when the election comes this time, people will realize what has happened to them before it gets any worse and, indeed, remove this government from the position it is in and remember the long, hard lesson they learned from the tax increases and everything else they've done.

So as time goes on, as they're corresponding with their sons and daughters in Alberta and Newfoundland and Labrador, who moved there because there's no economy here or work, all because of some really fundamental mistakes that were made in order to help the economy grow and prosper, people will remember how great a job this government did and how bad it was.

The Yarmouth ferry is a prime example - will have no effect on Yarmouth at all, none at all. Well, it had an effect on the whole province, right from one end of this province to the other because it stopped tourism, basically stopped the whole flow of tourism, which we desperately need to bring real money into the province, money from outside of Nova Scotia that really makes the economy grow, and for \$3 million. Yet they bought a piece of land down on the South Shore for \$1,000 an acre. Well, I said here in this House, I've got a piece of property in Porters Lake, prime real estate, I'll sell it to the government tomorrow for \$1,000 an acre - do you want to buy it? For \$1,000 an acre tomorrow, and that's prime real estate, something you can develop, something you can work with.

This property they bought is just a handout, another government handout to another big company that said thanks for the cheque, see you later. When the truth is really known about how much money this government has put out - Madam Speaker, you just recently made a ruling on one of our members here and unfortunately the members on the other side are making comments and I was just wondering if they're in order as well.

MADAM SPEAKER: My orders were related to the member's action in relation to disorderly conduct and unparliamentary actions towards this Speaker. There is a certain element of opposition and banter within this room and I do not recognize that there is a problem at this point. I thank the member for drawing it to my attention but the member should carry on with his debate.

MR. COLWELL: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, I appreciate that. As the record goes forward with this government and we see what's actually happened, it's going to be hard for any of the members opposite to hold their heads high in the community. It's going to be very difficult for them to say look at what a great job we did as government and it's always nice to be able to do that. You see how badly people have been hurt in the economy. The Minister of Finance just talked about the pension reform and how that has changed, well I met with the retired pensioners from the government that used to have their pensions indexed - and a lot of these people make \$12,000 or \$14,000 a year pension and their pensions are no longer indexed - talk to them, ask them what they think about what your budget did and what your pension things did. Some of them, if I recall, might have been very active NDP supporters in the past; I'm not too sure that is going to be the case in the future, and if they don't support the NDP I don't blame them.

When you see exactly what's happening, how many people this government has managed to get upset with them, managed to hurt that the people haven't even realized yet and they're going to realize, they're realizing as time goes on. Realizing when they go to the grocery store that groceries are more expensive, everything they buy is more expensive and most of the part relates to this because if you put the fuel cost up and - when this government was in Opposition they had all these great ideas and somehow or other all the ideas have vanished and all they do now is say they're doing things, they do them and it's a negative impact on the economy, so as we move forward it's going to be quite a legacy this government is going to leave behind.

You talk about the many things that have happened and you see the downturn in the economy when every other province in Canada is improving. What is the reason for that? Well, it's quite interesting to see that there is some - I realize that the members opposite have a different opinion of this and it will be interesting to see when everything is done and history reports this. Just like the Premier the other day when he was presented with the facts and still argued that indeed he had the right numbers. It just makes you wonder how you can believe what you're saying but this government can believe what they're saying, and I truly believe that you might believe it, but it's not the facts, it's not the facts at all. We see what has happened here and it's going to go down in history as a very sad day for Nova Scotia.

We see all the fees going up, we see personal income tax going up with bracket creep that the former Minister of Finance called "the sneaky tax" and that has to be removed right away, and guess what? It wasn't even addressed in this budget, it wasn't addressed in the last budget; it wasn't addressed in the budget before. When you see employment is down by 1,100 fewer jobs in Nova Scotia - the economy hasn't grown, the economy has shrunk in Nova Scotia, and you see people leaving the province. The only people we're soon going to have in the province are going to be seniors and people in the province that no longer can add to the economy except if they've got a pension, and that's another issue.

If they have a pension - I have some friends who had very good federal government pensions and had a beautiful home here and just recently decided to move to Ontario. Do you know why? Six thousand dollars . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Because you were their MLA.

MR. COLWELL: Actually no, if - it was because of the member for Eastern Shore, one of your MLAs. (Interruption) The reason was because they save \$6,000 a year in personal income tax in Ontario, as compared to here.

Madam Speaker, with those few words - and I wish I had more time, we had a couple of interruptions, which I understand - I will take my seat and leave Nova Scotians to decide whether or not this government has done a proper job to represent them, and the people and their families in the community, with a better deal for today's families, which indeed is not a better deal for today's families, it is just the opposite. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Madam Speaker, I was listening to the Minister of Finance speak about this budget and I did hear her say the word "sanity". I have to say, where would we be today without the balanced budgets that that member was voting against, earlier, say in 2002-03 - a balanced budget that year?

Madam Speaker, there are many members in this House who didn't vote for that budget and when I think about sanity, I think, where would we be today had governments back then chose, as this government has in the past number of years, to let spending be added onto the debt and to increase taxes to cover the spending? We'd be in a lot more debt and that's what we have to be thinking about here. We are in debt \$1.67 billion more since this government has taken office. That equates to \$1,700 per person more debt on top of the debt already, to the tune of \$12,000 that every Nova Scotian owed, every man, woman and child owed before this government took office.

To me, Madam Speaker, sanity would suggest that we stop adding to the debt, especially at a rate of the highest amount of debt added per year of any administration in the history of the province, on average. You take \$1.67 billion and divide it by five and you'll come up with a figure that's more than the average debt added per year since this province had governments putting forth deficit budgets.

Madam Speaker, I have often heard members on the other side say well that's not our debt, it was added by governments before us. But I submit to you that this government had a choice, much like Premier Hamm did back in 2002-03 when his government balanced the budget for the first time in 40 years. He had a choice to rein in spending and balance the budget. Members opposite voted against that so why should it be any surprise to us today to see that they've added \$1.67 billion in debt since they've taken office?

There are consequences for that, Madam Speaker. This government had a choice. They chose to add that debt. The consequences are that we now have that much more debt to get out from under before we can start to turn the economy of this province around because I think we would all agree that where we should be going is to a province where we have more job opportunities so people can stay here instead of all the people we see leaving. I see a mass exodus of people from Inverness County. In fairness, that's going back many years and it's not just to do with government, it has to do with changes in the world.

It doesn't help when we have a government adding higher taxes on an economy and adding more debt. It makes us less competitive. It makes us less attractive for businesses to want to come to places like Inverness, despite the resources we have to offer, which includes people, Madam Speaker.

I want to make that point about the debt and I also want to make the point about the HST. How can we be expected to vote for this budget when we see that the government is taking - look at a family of four, this government has taken \$4,000 out of the pockets of a family of four since they've taken office? That's a lot of money out of the economy, Madam Speaker, when you start to think about that and it's a lot more pressure on family budgets for Nova Scotian families to balance their monthly budgets.

This government had a choice and instead of reining in spending, they chose to let it go. I'm going to give you one example. They made a promise to reduce the civil service by 1,000 people, which could have been easily achieved. We have 600 people leaving every year of their own accord. That's told to us by the Public Service Commission, and I don't think the government members would dispute that. There's no harm that would come to those people - some of them are retiring from government, some are taking jobs elsewhere. This government had a choice to reduce and they made a promise to reduce the size of government by 1,000 people, but they chose not to.

This year we see them saving \$35 million by eliminating positions that weren't even there to begin with. What am I talking about there? You can turn to Page 1.14 - I've memorized it - in the Estimates and Supplementary Detail, or you can look at the number of FTEs in government. If you go back in the documents for the last number of years, you will see this government using a figure of about 10,700 people that they say they need to operate government every year. But every year, at the end of that year, they would say, we only used 10,000 people.

What would they do? Instead of budgeting 10,000 for the next year, they would budget 10,700 again. They did that every year until this year. Why? Because they needed to make the budget look a little bit better. They needed to rein in some of that expenditure, and in this case it was expenditure that wasn't there. They had to do it this year because we're getting close to an election. They had to try to say they had a balanced budget.

They failed to tell you, oh, we took money out of people's pockets (Interruption) The member wanted me to say that again: because they failed to balance the budget, really. If you look at 350 people - they did it by about that number of people - that's about \$35 million. There's another \$35 million, and maybe we'll see that next year, if we're still here. I think the government can technically wait until they introduce another budget before they go to the polls.

I want to make that point: this government did things like that with the budgets the past number of years to make things look worse than they actually were. Why? To justify higher taxes. Why? To add debt onto our province's books. I've questioned ministers in Budget Estimates, and I still haven't gotten a straight answer on that one. It can't be explained. I think the only reason it can't be explained is because it's as I've just said it is.

That's another reason why we can't vote for this budget. We've seen numbers being used in the past which I don't believe are accurate - "manipulating" is a word that was just mentioned - maybe that's unparliamentary. (Interruptions) Madam Speaker, I'll let you rule on that. I'm not going to rule on myself. We're not allowed to do that in here.

As I was saying, I think another thing the minister said - she talked about HST exemptions, and specifically on power rates. That's a 10 per cent return into the pockets of people who are paying the power bills, but sadly, what she didn't say was that power rates

have gone up 40 per cent in this province since the minister's government took office. That is 15 per cent above the national average. So what good is the savings in HST on people's power bills when their actual rates for power usage have gone up by 40 per cent in the last four years?

Now we have lost that HST tax revenue for the province, and people have had no material benefit for that because they're paying more for their power - much more than the tax savings. I know that's a point that the members of the government don't like to hear, because they're obviously not retorting it right now. They don't want to hear about that, because it's true.

If we want to look at what's causing the increase in power rates, it's quite obvious. Look at the input costs of the types of energy that are used by Nova Scotia Power to generate electricity. You start looking at the costs - I've asked the Minister of Energy during estimates if he could provide information on the cost. He was very kind, and he provided the cost per kilowatt hour for all the renewable sources of energy, but he refused to provide the cost for energy sources such as coal, which this government is using - 58 per cent of the energy generated in this province is generated through the burning of coal, which this government is advocating and using.

We could not get a number out of the minister on the cost for coal. All we hear is that the price has gone up. Now I've tabled charts in here - they are easy to do, you can print them off on the Internet - and look at the price of coal and see how it has actually decreased in the last couple of years. Madam Speaker, I think that tells us there are other things at play here other than the price of fossil fuels that are driving up the cost of power. Obviously the only other thing can be the aggressive move towards renewables, which this government is mandating.

We like to pick on Nova Scotia Power, and there are certainly reasons why we should do that, but let's recognize that it's ultimately government that's controlling Nova Scotia Power. Somebody said to me the other day, the CEO of Nova Scotia Power has a real easy job, he's well compensated. His only real job is to pick up the phone and call the government and ask how much fossil fuel he can burn this coming year and then he just fills in the blanks with the rest of the renewable energy that's mandated by the government.

Madam Speaker, power rates have gone up and all we need to do is look at the pure numbers of it all, look at the cost per kilowatt hour of the energy inputs. We're not against renewable energy but we believe that we should make sure that it is actually reducing emissions. There are studies that I've seen that show that emissions have actually gone up in this province, even with the addition of renewables, because it leads to inefficient burning of fossil fuels. So if we're not achieving that goal, why don't we re-evaluate, especially because if we see power rates going up 40 per cent, what good is that doing for our economy? It's certainly not making life more affordable, which this government promised when they went to the polls in 2009 and what they were elected upon.

If the minister wants to talk about how kind she has been to the public of Nova Scotia by reducing the provincial portion of the HST in power rates, won't she also come forward and apologize for her government's mismanagement of power rates? We're paying 40 per cent more today than Nova Scotians were before this government came to office - 15 per cent above the national average, so obviously we're doing something in this part of the country that's not as good as other parts of the country.

Madam Speaker, these decisions have consequences. We're talking about the budget today and of course that's how I got off on this because we're talking about HST. When I think about power rates I think of the significant effect it has on the economy. We look at this budget and we see nothing about jobs in this budget and if we look at power rates, I think of the paper mill in the Strait area, an area I represent. They were using, at one point in time, 15 per cent of the power in the province, a significant amount. We know if they're using that much power, it's the number-one cost, that should be a concern to government.

I've heard members even from the Strait area on the government side talk about how they really believe in what their government is doing with respect to power rates, well don't they understand that people in their own constituencies who depend on jobs at that paper mill will suffer if that paper mill is made uncompetitive by this government's aggressive move towards renewable energy targets, targets that may not, in fact, be working, Madam Speaker, from the information I've seen, so that point needs to be made.

This budget is not about jobs, and decisions around power rates are leading to reduced jobs and pressure on companies, which causes their business models to be compromised and ultimately can put them out of business.

We heard the minister talk about small-business tax reductions. Madam Speaker, I'm supportive of that, that is a good move for government because these are the risk-takers in our economy, they are the real job creators. I'm all for helping to make things easier for them so they can do what they do best, which is create jobs, but I do think about this government's habit of wanting to pick winners and losers in the economy. I think about IBM, I heard the Premier talk about IBM, that we weren't supportive of payroll tax rebates they received. Well the reason we weren't supportive is because other companies weren't eligible for that same type of assistance.

I sat at a dinner here in Halifax, it was a luncheon and it had to do with the telecom industry. I had a gentleman there who is a Nova Scotian, owns a small business, has had a number of successes in recent years, I believe he had over 30 people hired in his company. He was very upset that this government gave that assistance to IBM. As I recall, I believe the contract was also sole-sourced to them.

That was unfair to him, Madam Speaker. So the minister should be careful about trumpeting about all she's done for small business, when we see that her government has a



habit of trying to pick winners and losers - and small businesses in this province don't like it when their government chooses them to be the loser, or when their government chooses to make decisions that keep them from getting business that they should have a right to bid on, or when a government gives money to their competitors, making them less competitive. So I don't think small business is that happy with this government.

I also think about another example: we see the interest-bearing loan to Irving. It really amused me, because at first it was a forgivable loan, which sounds so nice and kind, being forgivable, but we know that a "forgivable loan" means that you don't have to pay it back. Wouldn't we all like one of those, Madam Speaker, to have a loan that we never had to pay back? I've been to the bank for loans in the past, and I've never been offered a forgivable loan. It would be nice. There are many small businesses in this province that have taken out loans to run their businesses. Did they ever get forgivable terms like that? I don't think so. (Interruption) Well, the member opposite says they have to meet targets. It's easy to meet targets when you have a government-secured source of revenue - a federal government source of revenue to build ships, and there's nobody else competing against you.

But my point is that when the government and Irving saw the forgivable loan was becoming a bit of a media issue for them, they decided to call it an "interest-bearing loan," because they wanted to say, well, we have to pay interest on this. Well, Madam Speaker, I wouldn't mind an interest-bearing loan. If I didn't have to pay it back, I'd be happy to take out a loan and only have to pay the interest on it. That would be quite lucrative for me. So I know that businesses in this province see that as special treatment.

I know there are lots of small businesses that are going to benefit from that shipbuilding contract. My point is that they would have benefited from it anyway, and I think Irving is benefiting from winning the contract, because they deserved to win it. They won it fair and square, because the federal government didn't use politics to award that tender. Irving won that fair and square. The point I'm making, Madam Speaker, is that when this government makes decisions like that, they are picking winners and losers, and small businesses out there want to be treated fairly. They want to decide themselves who gets to win, and they're doing that every day, competing against each other. They don't need a government coming in and choosing one to win over another. It's not fair.

I also want to talk about pension reforms. Recently I've seen where we're going to see the solvency term increase from 10 years to 15 years. The question I would ask is, haven't we learned anything from the NewPage pensioners' situation? All of the organizations have come forward and said - not all of them, but the ones that have been asking for this - many of them have come forward and said that their organizations face the possibility of going out of business or discontinuing operations because they don't have the money to put up into the pension plan every year, and instead of having that amount paid off over 10 years, they now need 15. Well, not long ago, we used to be five years, and to me that seems more prudent. Now with the stock market crash in 2008, there was a move afoot

to increase it to 10. I think we should start looking at moving it back toward five. Now some of those organizations will say, well, why is he saying that? We can't afford that.

Well, that's exactly what employers like NewPage said when they lobbied to have it 10 years, and look what happened to their pensioners. Now pensioners who might be backstopped by the taxpayer, if they're working at universities and they're dependent on a significant amount of government funding, well, they may be okay. But organizations that are private sector, to give them 15 years, I think that's really hiding a problem.

We may have more pensioners. The reason I'm making this point is that we may have more pensioners in this province who have to go through what the NewPage pensioners have gone through: working their whole life being promised and expecting to receive a guaranteed pension amount, only to see it reduced by upward of 40 per cent. So I don't think it's responsible, and I think it's something that seems to be floating through, and nobody's really commenting on it. That's why I'm making comment on it today. I think we should be learning from what happened with the situation at NewPage not so long ago, and we should be thinking about that.

I think that there's a role. If we're going to have defined benefit pensions there is a role for government to regulate them and to make sure that government is looking out for the interest of the employees, because we can't be dependent just on an employer to do that - and from what we've seen in the NewPage situation we can't, obviously, I guess we can't depend on the government to watch it either because we saw a number of problems there. A number of decisions were made and the regulator basically just - the office threw up their hands and said, well, we didn't watch that, or we didn't feel that we should be watching that. I don't really think there was an excuse given in many cases, and anybody who wants to look at that can go back and look at the session we had at Public Accounts on that.

Madam Speaker, what happened to the structural deficit that this government used to talk about? It seemed to be so significant and now it's just gone, which makes us wonder if it was really there to begin with, or if this government came to office with the same choices every other government comes to office with - controlling expenditure or just letting it all go.

I know they quote experts on that, and I don't have a problem with government spending money in economies when there are downturns, but the fact is if you look across the country hundreds of thousands of jobs have been created since this government has taken office, the economy has been in a recovery. Some of these experts, I think, if they look back at what has happened since, must feel a little bit foolish if they were talking about a structural deficit and it's gone so quickly, if it was such a problem to begin with.

One of the main reasons this government, many of the members who are here who voted against the budget in 2009 that was tabled by the previous Progressive Conservative Government, said that they didn't like the fact the government had prepaid universities. If

you look at that prepayment it was about \$400,000, which is about 5 per cent over and above the budget. I don't think 5 per cent is a real structural deficit, Madam Speaker, I think it is something that can be reined in without adding \$1.67 billion in debt, without taking an extra \$1,000 in HST out of everybody's pockets and without - putting the \$1.67 billion debt in perspective - adding another \$1,700 to the amount owing by every Nova Scotian.

My point about the universities is this government, I believe, has paid two of the universities, prepaid them, in this budget so they don't have that expense next year. So, Madam Speaker, they're doing the very thing that they voted against in 2009.

How can we support this budget in good conscience when we know that it brings the cost of higher taxes, when it brings the cost of debts added for future generations to pay, and when it brings the cost of jobs that we don't have in an economy that's being mismanaged? How can we support this budget when it brings the cost of higher power rates due to this government's aggressive move towards renewable energy? If we're making achievements in reducing emissions, why don't we have a look at that and why don't we have an independent study on that to prove it's actually happening? If we're asking Nova Scotians to make the sacrifices, why don't we show them that it's actually working? And if it's not, maybe we need to reevaluate what we're doing, because this government said it was going to make life more affordable for people.

Well I would say, with what? More money coming out in taxes from people's pockets, higher power bills? And I mentioned 40 per cent higher since this government took office, 15 per cent higher than the national average since then. Is life more affordable because we're seeing people lose their jobs because this government is not listening to the needs of small business, and one of those big needs is lower power rates? If you talk to the Canadian Independent Federation of Business, lower power rates is one of their biggest concerns; another one is the need to strengthen our domestic economy so people have money in their pockets to spend - and they don't have that when they're paying out an extra \$4,000 for a family of four since this government took office.

This economy needs more money going to the small-business owners of the province because they are paying it to people who are working for them - that's what this province needs. This budget doesn't do that, Madam Speaker, we can't support it.

I encourage the members to think about - I see some of them doing ads for Buy Local. Why don't they think about that? Why don't they think about people in their own areas who would have more money to spend locally if they weren't adding to the debt and increasing the taxes that people have to pay?

Life is not more affordable. This government has failed their 2009 election promise to do that. I guess they have achieved something, and it's something that they've railed against: the fiscal mismanagement of the people who came before them. We often see them

pointing across at both the Progressive Conservatives and the Liberals for their past fiscal mismanagement. The very thing they're railing against, they are doing themselves right now - \$1.67 billion in debt in five years, which is more debt per year, on average, than any administration in the history of the province.

Well, I'm referring to five years because after this year, that's five. I want to be fair to you. If we did it over four, it would be even higher, so I'm being kind to you. I'm being honest - that's \$1.67 billion over five years.

Madam Speaker, the very thing they're railing against, they're doing themselves. They need to have a look at that. As my old friend Cyril Reddy used to say, they need to be a Saul on the way to Damascus. They need to have a turnaround here. They need to understand what they're doing.

There is no sanity in spending money that we don't have today and money that we don't have tomorrow. We look back at the deficit budgets in the past, and have we ever paid them in the future? It's a very poor record of doing that - and that's of any government, any Party, because we've all been on the government side at this point. There is no sanity in spending money that we don't have today and money that we're not going to have tomorrow, at least not until we have a government that can work with the job creators, the small businesses in the province, to turn the economy around. For that reason, we cannot support this budget. It saddens me to see how high the provincial debt has grown under this government.

I thought we were turning a corner, to borrow a phrase from the government side, when Premier Hamm started the balanced budgets in 2002-03. We started to see the overall debt of the province flatline; we started to see it go the other way. Now, when it flatlined at \$12 billion, instead of it starting to go down, it went up, and now it's about \$13.7 billion. That's almost \$14,000 for every man, woman, and child in this province.

We don't have to pay it today, Madam Speaker, and we probably won't. We can't, unless everybody forked over that amount of money. It's just going to hang over our heads. That's why we can't support this budget, because we don't see this government making an honest commitment toward reining in spending, lowering taxes, and making the economy more competitive. Do I have a minute left?

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. You have more than a minute, but I'm going to interrupt for a moment. Thank you.

Regarding my decision of disorderly conduct and unparliamentary behaviour by the member for Yarmouth, I've been advised by the Clerk that the proper procedure would have been by a motion and a vote in the House for a five-day suspension. Therefore, at this moment no suspension of five days is in order for the member for Yarmouth.

I have two options here. One is to proceed with the motion and have a vote, or to not have a vote and proceed with my original order of a one-day suspension. In light of the unparliamentary behaviour and disrespect of this Speaker, I am prepared to revert to my original order of a one-day suspension for the remainder of this day for the member for Yarmouth.

I will remind all members of this House that adherence to the Parliamentary Rules of Order and respect for the Speaker by all members of the House is of the utmost importance for the work that is done in this Nova Scotia House of Assembly. I ask that all members be mindful of this in the days ahead.

I would now proceed with the remainder of the debate on the Financial Measures (2013) Bill. Thank you.

The honourable member for Inverness has the floor.

MR. MACMASTER: Madam Speaker, I'm going to finish up here just by saying that we will not be supporting this budget because we refuse to stand by and watch this government steer our province away from its rightful place: a place where it should be amongst the competitive, job-creating jurisdictions in the world. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak now on third reading for Bill No. 51, the Financial Measures (2013) Act.

We've had a number of speakers here this morning and I believe there have been some good points raised around the veracity of the projections in the budget, whether or not the budget can be safely called balanced, which we don't believe it is. There have been a lot of reasons why that has been said, I've said it here before and I guess today I have the opportunity to say it again.

I'm pleased to know there are several readings on each bill and that we can continue the discussion around the economic indicators for the province, around the current state of our economy, job creation, personal income tax, the impact of HST on our residents, as well as the overestimation of HST in the budget before us. By way of context, the Financial Measures (2013) Bill, as members know but I don't know that everybody knows, goes hand in hand with the budget. They are really sister bills that come through together. You have measures in the budget that need to be enacted in law and this Financial Measures (2013) Bill can be used to change all kinds of different Acts. It's an omnibus bill in that you can use it to reference different Acts that need changes.

What we see in this Financial Measures (2013) Bill is the enactment of all of the fee increases that required legislative change. The member for Preston spoke about the 1,400

user fees that have been raised twice in the time that this NDP Government has been in power. Most recently, the last day of March, the last business day, we had a tabling of a document showing all of the fee increases for the coming year. Many of them, I believe, took effect on April 1<sup>st</sup>, the beginning of the next fiscal year.

The fee of almost 6 per cent was used for the majority of those fee increases. That was the figure that was chosen to represent a cost of living increase that had taken place over the last couple of years. That doesn't account for those fee increases. A fee increase by definition has to be related to the cost of providing a service. The government does provide a multitude of services, obviously there are 1,400 different times and situations where the public need to get a permit, or receive a document, or transfer property, or get married, or register a death. All of those interactions with government require some paperwork, some assistance and therefore have a fee attached.

But, what is missing in this Financial Measures (2013) Bill, what has been consistently missing in every budget brought in by the NDP, is any justification for those fee increases. Other than taking an arbitrary cost of living increase and attaching it to every service provided, that's not justifiable, that's not legitimate, it isn't verifiable and it is in complete contravention of what the government, when they were in Opposition, called for. They challenged the past governments time and time again, saying why don't you justify these fees? How can you add a new fee without a justification and so on?

I mentioned previously there are some fees that have been added into the current batch of fees that were announced that didn't even exist before. There had not been a fee for some of those land transactions and legal fees that now - I know the lawyers are going to be just passing these on, it was a law office that brought them to our attention - one of them had gone from zero to \$100. That's certainly more than a 5.8 per cent increase.

We know that buried in the 1,400 there are going to be some that are brand new fees, some that are much more than 6 per cent and all of which have come with no justification. Right off the bat, the section in this FMA that enacts all of those fee increases - I don't believe they are justifiable and we don't support them. In discussion at Committee of the Whole House I introduced amendments or spoke to different clauses and I called for all of the areas related to fee increases to be defeated. The government voted in favour of each and every one of those fee increases here, as we held a vote on different clauses.

The Opposition Liberals, the Official Opposition, opposed each of those on the grounds that they are not explained, that they are in fact taxes and not fees. In the past the former Minister of Finance and, I believe it was the Premier, the current Premier of our province, had called that kind of increase of fees nothing more than a tax grab; that was really what it amounted to. I think the total amount that was collected as a result of all these fee increases was in the range of about \$11 million, something like that.

I know in the scheme of the whole budget the Finance Minister might say that's material, it's not all that much, but we know darn well that is a lot of money, that every dollar that's collected is needed to provide services and that we have to be accountable for every dollar. So \$11 million is a lot of money because it's coming directly out of the pockets of Nova Scotians and that's all outside of the tax regime. It's not part of the taxes. It's something that every Nova Scotian will see when they renew their drivers licence, renew their car registration, register the birth of their children, a death in the family, or look for documents that they need for any number of reasons.

Again, I understand costs go up, Madam Speaker, but the fact is that there needs to be an explanation and the government departments have that, surely they can justify what they're doing. I mentioned before that government's way of conducting business is more and more over the Internet so if we're doing everything over the Internet now, right down to registering our cars, why can't we see a decrease in fees? Why don't we actually recognize that it costs less because once you set up the platform, all of the computer side of it, then really there is not much of a cost. I think we should not be supporting this, absolutely, we should not support these fee increases that are buried in the Financial Measures (2013) Bill.

The second part of the Financial Measures (2013) Bill that I took exception to and our Party took exception to here in Law Amendments, and here at Committee of the Whole House, was the provision that lowers our threshold for small-business taxes. Madam Speaker, often when we're talking about financial issues, financial numbers and so on, it's always a little confusing. You would think lowering of anything would be a good thing. Lowering of taxes is a good thing, but lowering a threshold has a completely different meaning and different outcome. If you lower the threshold for the small-business tax down to \$350,000, as has been done in this Financial Measures (2013) Bill, you are throwing more small businesses into the corporation tax level. It means that at the \$350,000 level of income they are thrown into the corporation tax bracket and that bracket is 16 per cent.

Now in the same Financial Measures (2013) Bill we see the enactment of a small decrease in the taxes for small business. They go down from three and a half to three per cent, and that has been a plan to slowly reduce them a half a percentage point a year and now we're down to three per cent, business looks forward to that, people like that but the part of the story that the Finance Minister didn't tell the chamber of commerce, that was sort of buried in the whole story, was that at the same time as one hand was reducing the tax rate for small business, the other hand was taking more of those small businesses, throwing them into a higher tax bracket and treating them as corporations.

That's quite a difference and the government themselves said this little decrease in small-businesses tax is revenue neutral so they won't collect anything more, but some businesses are going to pay more. That's just it. They made up for the decreasing tax by putting some companies into a high tax rate. Good for government, it's revenue neutral,

bad for business because it's only half the story that was brought out in the government's own press releases and hoopla around doing something good for business.

In the opening remarks of the Finance Minister, it was interesting to note that she was talking about being clear and precise and forthright. Those are three words used in the minister's introduction to the third reading today and she was calling upon the Opposition to be clear and forthright and precise. I would challenge the minister and all members of the government that it goes both ways. You can't provide half the story and not tell the other half of the true picture and then expect that that is considered forthright. In fact what that does is undermine the trust in what information we receive from government and that's exactly how we feel in the Opposition. The Official Opposition Liberals don't believe that we can trust the information given to us by government.

We've seen a number of circumstances where that has been the case. This is only one that I mention, just one out of the whole gamut of things. I can go on at some length about several others and I'm sure I'll have the opportunity today because should I decide to, I can stand in my place for an hour and go through a litany of issues and times that the government has not told the whole story, they've told half a story or they've put the spin on it and we know there has been no better government for spin than this particular government that we've had for the last four years.

The spin has been very positive always, very optimistic always. But when the actual reality in your homes, in your neighbourhoods, in your businesses, do not back up any of that optimism and spin, then you get a time when people no longer listen. They don't trust the government, they don't listen. They think it's all hype and no substance. That's what we've seen, endless ads on television about jobs and jobs here and jobs are coming. We all pray that jobs are coming and that there's a time of economic prosperity, but if you sound that alarm and herald it again and again and the jobs aren't there and the jobs aren't in sight and the shipbuilding contract doesn't even have any - they talk about cutting steel, the steel doesn't begin to be cut until 2015, I think is the most recent I've heard.

The jobs are some way out, they're still several years away and yet these ads on television show all these people in hardhats having a marvellous time working. We know most of those hardhats and most of those workers from Nova Scotia are out West - they're up north, they're in Fort Mac and other even more remote places in Alberta. We've heard and we've seen articles in the paper about that whole lifestyle that has begun now in Nova Scotia where families are split and one member or the parents are working in Alberta and coming back and forth. It's particularly prominent in Cape Breton. We know there's millions of dollars coming back into the economy of Cape Breton from - they are residents, I was going to call them non-residents but they really are technically Nova Scotian, they are residents of Nova Scotia but all of their income and all of their work time is spent out West.



That's a travesty, it's going back in time to a time when there was no work and people had to travel the world to earn a living. I know that because they have a love of Nova Scotia, many of those families have made that sacrifice and they're willing to stay and to keep at least their family here, own a home here, try and maintain a life here in the hopes that there will be an opportunity down the road, a chance to bring their skills back to the province.

The reality is, and what I'm trying to point out, Madam Speaker, is that the reality is that on the ground and in our communities, whether it is here in Halifax, in Cape Breton, the South Shore, anywhere you go in the province, people aren't feeling the optimism that the government is trying to instill in them through these ads.

Madam Speaker, just recently we saw, and I believe it was just April 2013, the CFIB Business Barometer came out. I talked earlier about CFIB and their pre-budget consultations. I should say that CFIB is the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, I believe they represent more than 6,000 small businesses in Nova Scotia and they certainly work across the country as well. They do something that is quite useful, I think, to government and to members of the House, they do a regular survey of their members about how they feel about the economy, whether they feel like they'll make some major purchases of equipment or do anything that's going to be costly. Are they going to take on more staff? Do they expect to expand? All of those questions are surveyed on a regular basis to see how they feel. Then they measure us against the rest of the country to see how the rest of the country feels and where we stand.

Madam Speaker, we are so consistently low in terms of business optimism, it's really more than a pity because if the business owners don't feel a sense that there are going to be better times around the corner and if they don't feel that optimism, they will not be in a position to invest. That can be investments in productivity, investment in equipment, investments in more people. They just can't do it. I know we've said before that most small business owners would love to expand. They are in many small communities in the province. They know their employees well, it's not like a big corporation, they know the people working for them, they want to hire more people and play a bigger role in their communities.

The Business Barometer which just came in in April, it was only actually last week that I think we saw it, showed that they had a lot of concern, and I'm just going to read this part of it, Madam Speaker, "Nova Scotia has had the biggest dive in business optimism of any province in April." Its index now stands at 53.8, the lowest in the country - so 53.8 per cent, the lowest business optimism in the country. New Brunswick is at 58 per cent, and I heard the Minister of Finance saying how bad their financial situation is in New Brunswick - well, they're about five points higher in business optimism than we are. And Alberta and British Columbia are 65 per cent and 67 per cent in this index and, again, the point from CFIB - and it's a sad one for us to hear and listen to today - is that Nova Scotia had the biggest dive in business optimism of any province in April.

Madam Speaker, here we are at budget season, April, the month that we bring in a new budget for our province and we can know without a doubt that businesses in Nova Scotia do not share the optimism that might be the wish of the NDP, they don't see the last four years as having been a positive four years for our province. As has been mentioned before by other members, the small business sector wonder what support there is for them when they see millions of dollars going out the door to big, big corporations, international, multinational corporations getting a lot of government support, being bailed out - in fact, being bailed out and then hightailing it out of our province.

Let's look at Bowater, taking money that was intended to keep them open another five years and closing within five or six months of that announcement. What a travesty for the province. Even the people in the area, in Queens and around Liverpool, felt that it was only at best a stop-gap measure, to put millions of dollars into the plant there. The level of employment had fallen significantly from the highs of years ago, down to, I think it's less than 200 jobs were there even at the time when the money was given. Nevertheless, it was the livelihood for many people, but they had seen a constant erosion of the employment in the mill at Bowater anyway, the Bowater mill at Brooklyn. At any rate they saw it not as a long-term solution, but as a short-term measure that might help the county in that area to look at options and to have a little time to recover and have a way forward.

I think, actually, they're more optimistic now because it's basically that the worst has happened, the mill has closed and now they need to redefine the economy of that area - and that's certainly the challenge across the province, in every corner of the province.

I know there is a task force now looking at the rural economy and that's important because we need to find ways to find real optimism, real areas of expertise that can be developed, that are the assets that our province has. We have all chosen to live here, we all hope that our children will stay, that there will be an opportunity for them to contribute in our province. Our province has a tremendous history and it may not have been, certainly not in the last 100 years, a boom province, but we've made a province that has a lot of quality of life, a lot of things they can offer the people who choose to live here and come here.

I often speak about immigrants, I think they're a big part of what we need to attract - and we do need those jobs if they're going to come here, but they want to live in Nova Scotia because they see us as a wonderful size in terms of our towns and cities, even our biggest city, Halifax, for many immigrants is seen as a wonderful size of place to live. For that reason, we have assets we can sell, that we attract people from around the world, and I believe when you look at things like the Creative City movement we have here in the HRM and in some of our other towns, some of the right elements to attract a young workforce, a technologically-adept workforce. It really doesn't matter, with technology, for many industries where they live, they can live in any location because they're doing so much by the Internet and via the digital world.

We have things like a wonderful IT company in Lunenburg that is set up to do gaming and create sports games. We have some really good, positive stories out there and they attract a young workforce because what a great lifestyle to live in Lunenburg, to sail, to fish, and to enjoy the woods and the countryside. People love that and young people want recreation and they want entertainment, and all of those things are available.

On that Creative City movement that was written about by Richard Florida, who lives in Ontario now, it has a number of indices that help us know what assets we have to attract the industry of the future and the young people to work in those industries. We have some real benefits, but people want honesty, they want to have a forthright conversation with government, they want clear and precise information - and that's not what we've been getting from the government, it's not what's reflected in the Financial Measures (2013) Bill or in the budget that was passed last week. I will reiterate that the Opposition, and certainly the Official Opposition Liberals, voted against that budget, and again, with this Financial Measures (2013) Bill, because they are hand in hand, really, the budget and the Financial Measures (2013) Bill. We will not be supporting the Financial Measures (2013) Bill.

The Minister of Finance asked clearly about some of the measures that are positive for people that are in this bill, and I want to speak to those measures, because there are some good things. There's always some good things in a budget and in an FMA like this. We saw it in the years that I sat here when it was a Progressive Conservative minority government, and in those days, the budget passing or not passing would trigger an election, if there was a vote of non-confidence. We also saw those years where the NDP would vote against a budget that had good measures for people. They did it because it was a motion of non-confidence. They were saying to the government, we don't like your government, we don't like what you're doing. So the NDP would stand and vote against a budget that had some good measures in it.

That is what happens in this House, we have to look overall and say, do we have confidence in the government? If we vote for your budget, then we are saying to the government that it is a great budget, that we think the government's doing a great job. Well, we don't think either one of those things, and therefore, it's a matter of principle that we'll oppose this budget, because we do not have confidence in the direction of this province and the direction it has taken under the NDP.

Madam Speaker, it's almost alarming to people who are in - especially people who have been staunch supporters of the NDP - to see some of the measures that have come into play in the last four years. I shared the interest, maybe even excitement, that some people had about seeing what would happen with the first NDP Government in the province. Would they do something different? Would they have a different direction? What was going to happen? Everybody thought it was time for a change. I'll grant you that.

A change came, but it has been a tremendous disappointment to the people of Nova Scotia, and I think that there are so many reasons we can point to. Let's look at social assistance, for example, under Community Services. Again, I've been an MLA for 10 years, so for six years of that time we had a Progressive Conservative Government, and for the last four years, we've had an NDP Government. I've never had so many calls from people that have said, we're being harassed, we're being sent to the doctor every second day for notes, we have to document a thousand things. The cost of the medical system must be huge - all the doctors' visits that are required to constantly verify that a person has a disease and needs a special diet, that it's justifiable to give them an extra \$30 - or whatever it is a month - to supplement the very low rates of support that we give to people on community assistance.

People are feeling like everything is being scrutinized. People are having their bus passes revoked. How can a person look for work if they don't have a bus pass in a city like Halifax? How can you get around? You can't. I know members in the House here probably share with me that we know people who are on assistance, or they're very, very low income, and they take taxis sometimes. I said to them, you can't afford taxis, that's too much - out of your whole income, that's a big share of income to take a taxi from Clayton Park to go downtown for any reason, to go to a hospital appointment or to go to a job interview. It's just too much. But they don't have bus passes. They don't have support. We still don't pay for a telephone for people on social assistance, and that was raised years ago. I mean, it's come up from poverty advocates, that surely, at a minimum, you need a telephone number if you're job hunting. You have to be able to give a number along with your address.

These things have not been addressed for the poorest of the poor during the time that the NDP have been in government. In fact, people are being squeezed. And honestly, Madam Speaker, I'm not a bleeding heart. I just listen to people. I hear their stories, and it has been a much more difficult time in the last four years than it was prior to that, for people on assistance or people who are looking for assistance, people who are looking for some help.

That has been a real surprise to me. I never expected the NDP to pander to that group, but I thought that they would support them and provide some of those necessary supports. I think the NDP have governed looking for votes. They've looked for the middle ground, and they've looked - not to speak to their traditional base, but to try to seek votes in a different category, maybe in the middle class and on a middle ground. That's what I would say. So they've abandoned people who relied on them, and I think that that has been a great shock.

I want to remind members of the 2009 election. I know as I went door to door in 2009, the 2009 election, we heard at door after door, I'm a member of a union and my union is telling me I have to vote for the NDP, that this is their time. The union was identifying that, whether it was NSGEU, CUPE, auto workers, any number of unions, the

whole Federation of Labour had lined up and said it's our time. We can get the NDP elected.

I don't think the labour movement is thrilled either. I don't think they've seen some of their priorities moved forward through this last four years. That's what I'm hearing, that a lot of people who have been labour supporters are no longer there. The member for Preston spoke about the retired NSGEU workers, I think they're called Nova Scotia Government Retired Employees Association, they were absolutely shocked when changes came to the Pension Act, which took away their indexing, which had been a given from the time they joined the service - many of them, 30 and 40 years ago. People live a long time into retirement and a lot of them have been retired much longer.

What we're seeing is people who had chosen jobs in the public sector, knowing that they would probably earn less - in the past that was the case, it may not be today - but in the past if you chose a public sector job, you chose it because of security, of things like your pension benefits. You didn't choose it because you were going to earn more money. These people worked their whole careers with the idea they were the kind of people who wanted the security and the stability of being good public servants and giving to the province while they knew the reward would be in their retirement years. That's when they would make - at least have a living amount of money to live on.

As another member mentioned - I believe it might have been the member for Preston in his hour-long discussion today - he actually spoke about the Nova Scotia Government Retired Employees Association and said how very disappointed they were because these are not people who have huge incomes. A few people might have been deputy ministers and retired with a big pension but the majority of them are people who've worked on the roads, people who have worked in offices, admin assistants and so on. Their pensions may only be \$12,000, \$14,000, \$15,000 a year. Now they get no indexing to keep pace with the cost of living. That is something I would challenge any member of the government, nobody in the union would ever have thought that would be the motion and the move that would have happened under an NDP Government.

Had the NDP been in Opposition, there would have been a huge outcry. There would have been great gnashing of teeth and so on because in Opposition the NDP were a very effective, noisy bunch that could raise Cain if they chose to and certainly got outraged very easily. In fact, I will go so far as to say they were sanctimonious. They held the entire high ground, oh, yes, the moral high ground on every issue. They defended the underdog on every issue. The whole idea of balance, I think not. I think that the current NDP have had four years in government to show that they would respond to the people who care, the people that they previously spoke to, the people whose votes they previously courted and I think they've let them down.

I think that in the next election I won't be hearing from the union members that they felt an obligation to vote for the NDP. I think I'll be hearing, we gave them a chance, they

had their time, we were disappointed. We didn't see the kind of moral high ground that they previously spoke about. We didn't see them act on the years of discussions and issues they had set up when they were in Opposition. The NDP had created principles, values, things they were aiming for but they didn't live them when they got to government. The record will show it.

People can disagree with me on the other side of the House and that is what we're here for, some respectful debate. Whether they admit it or not, the record shows what was done. The record shows that people have been pushed off social assistance, squeezed on social assistance. The unions have not been supported at least with retired members. Maybe there's some help to current ones, I'm not sure, but I think there has been a disappointment there as well.

When I look at the women's groups and so on, they've had a little bit more funding, but there was only a big response in light of a national tragedy, really. That's when we're seeing a response today, an announcement downstairs on sexual assault, the start of Sexual Assault Month and some action taking place. I know the members will remember in Opposition, we did stand side by side on calling for a domestic violence study and that we would have a domestic violence strategy put in place, that we would work with community groups to put that in place. That was not allowed under the Progressive Conservatives, they squashed that bill on third reading. They didn't allow the bill to go forward, which I had presented, but the government put forth their own government-mandated, government-controlled study.

The NDP have done really much the same as the Progressive Conservatives in bringing that domestic violence strategy forward and once the initial consultation was done with the committee that included individual organizations, like the women's shelters and women's centres and advocates for second-stage housing, once that committee had done their first report, they were not consulted any further. Then everything went into the bowels of the government and into the venue of different departments and there was no more consultation.

The community felt shut out of that again, to their great surprise, Madam Speaker, because they believed that the NDP were going to be the kind of government that actually brought them to the table and listened to them and would incorporate their thoughts that they knew best from being on the front line with these issues. The reaction has been as much as the Progressive Conservatives - more insular, more closed, less open - yet the Speech from the Throne was full of consultation and endless strategies. What has gone on here is four years with very little action, very few improvements.

Madam Speaker, I wanted to talk a little bit about some of the positive taxes that are in this FMA - the Financial Measures (2013) Bill. There is some respite, some help on children's clothing, about feminine hygiene products not being taxed, and a couple of others. I do have them in here so I'm going to just have a look - the rebate for the first time

homebuyers is put in here, something about rebates for computers and vehicles for persons with specified disabilities, firefighting equipment for volunteer fire departments and municipalities, building materials used to repair, improve or restore heritage projects or properties. Those weren't mentioned as much by the minister but they are in that section, I think it is Clause 19 of the bill.

Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Liberal Party and members of the Liberal Party have never said that we don't support this. In fact each and every one of these individual taxes or rebates or supports is positive. Improvements to children's dental care, that's positive. There are some good things that we want to see that make our life in Nova Scotia better but we have to look at that and balance what the NDP's record is. The NDP's record is raising HST by 2 cents, which was actually a 25 per cent increase, bringing in around \$350 million more every year into the province.

That would be one thing, Madam Speaker, when you have your consultation and do your budget discussions around the province but that cycle of budget consultations followed an election where the Premier of Nova Scotia said that he would not raise taxes, said that he could balance the budget every year that he was in government, that immediately he would balance the budget.

These statements were made absolutely without caveat, just made blankly. I will not raise taxes, I will balance the budget - that was what he said to the TV cameras, to the people of Nova Scotia in 2009. We have not seen balanced budgets in the four years here in this Legislature and this year's budget is not balanced by any true accounting measure because, for one reason alone, even if I don't go into my concern about revenue estimates and things that might be a little bit more obscure or difficult to bring into the conversation, let's just look at one item and that item is the prepayment to the universities, which was raised as well by the critic in the Progressive Conservative caucus.

The prepayment to universities amounted to \$34 million. It paid two universities for their costs for this year, for the academic year coming up, but it paid them last year. It paid them in the previous fiscal year, it raised our deficit last year by \$34 million and it allowed - at least on paper - a balanced budget for this year, a balanced budget which was very important for the NDP narrative, hoping to show that they were in control of the finances of the province.

It is not verifiable. It is not true because of the prepayment in the previous year. If everything was properly accounted for in the year in which it occurred, in the year in which it was going to be spent, then the budget is not balanced. So, on that one figure alone the \$34 million overturns the very small, razor-thin surplus shown in the budget this year. This is another reason why there is no way the Official Opposition is going to support this FMA because we're not going to stand by and ignore things that we don't believe are forthright, clear, and precise, which are the three words that the Finance Minister called upon all of us

to maintain, that all of us should look at those things. As I say, we definitely disagree with that.

Madam Speaker, on the positive taxes, there was no need to add a referendum for any changes in these positive taxes, that was no more than a political game and a ploy that the government put in there hoping to jam the Opposition. Well, it does no such thing because really the Opposition has no intention of overturning those tax improvements, that's just the fact of the matter. We've never said we would, it would not be the right thing to do, we wouldn't do it. Once a tax has been decreased, we know that it's not the right thing to change it again, that would be wrong. So that can be laid to rest today, I want to make sure that's clear to everybody. If the minister thinks that we have not been precise, I want to be precise: I have no intention of seeing any of those taxes reversed in the future. The referendum was utterly unnecessary in this bill.

Another reason that you can legislate things like a balanced budget, we've discussed that here with an Opposition bill the other day, a Progressive Conservative bill to bring in balanced-budget legislation. We all agree that it isn't really binding because the first thing that the NDP Government did upon being elected, after promising balanced budgets, was to repeal the balanced-budget legislation because they couldn't keep the balanced budget that year, and the law said they had to. So there is an obvious answer to that - repeal the legislation then your hands aren't tied anymore. Any government can do that and every government, I realize, has to look at the circumstances, has to adjust to different economic factors, has to try to govern within the economic reality that they are dealt, the cards that they are dealt.

I'm willing to say that the NDP were dealt a bad hand. We had a big recession in 2008, there was a repeat of it again in 2010, more problems. There was big spending required to match federal contributions to do infrastructure improvements and that was important; we were trying to stay off a deeper recession, or a deeper problem. Again, it's only right to recognize that when the minister speaks of the difficult times that the government's gone through, that is true and I hope that he minister will recognize that we agree there has been a difficult time in the last couple of years - 2008 being before the NDP came in, but nevertheless there was that bump and then another difficult bump.

Nova Scotia Power, Madam Speaker, is an area I'd like to speak about before my time elapses, and I might just ask you how long I have to go.

MADAM SPEAKER: 22 minutes.

MS. WHALEN: I just want to make a couple of points that the public feels that we can't win when it comes to Nova Scotia Power. The member for Preston spoke about stranded assets and by going to a more energy-efficient and a better environmental regime of having LED lights, we've downloaded the cost onto the municipalities, that's true, that cost will be passed back to property owners. But worse than that the fact that these light



fixtures that Nova Scotia Power owned were not fully depreciated and still had a useful life means that now they are considered stranded assets and the ratepayers of Nova Scotia Power will be paying them for the loss of their use.

That's what a stranded asset is. You own something, be it a coal-fired power plant that's no longer useful because it's been legislated out of existence, or something like that, sometimes it is an enormous cost like a power plant. Yet the company can say that still had a useful life of 20 or 30 years and we need to be compensated for that. They call those stranded assets and they get to take back from the ratepayer to compensate themselves for that.

No wonder Nova Scotia Power ratepayers feel like they can't win, we can't win. If there is less power used then the ratepayers have to make up the difference, if there is more power used we have to pay extra. There is just no win in this, even in conservation there is no win. We're having a hard time dealing with them and there is no sense that the government has taken them on in any way, shape, or form. They have been apologists for Nova Scotia Power, they have supported all of Nova Scotia Power's endeavours and things that are enormously profitable to Nova Scotia Power, and they have not stood in their places and stood up for Nova Scotians, and that is something else that I believe people are really feeling very misled and very confused about in this day and age; well perhaps not so confused, they know where they stand now.

Madam Speaker, those are just some of the things that are affecting Nova Scotians, some of the reasons why we will not show confidence in the government as it stands today, in the NDP Government and we will not be in a position to vote for the FMA. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: If I recognize the Minister of Finance it will be to close debate.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Madam Speaker, I now move third reading and I would request a recorded vote.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 51.

A recorded vote has been called for.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: I realize the procedure here is to ring the bells, but there's a public function going on downstairs, is there a way around this? If not, then we just call a recess. If you want to ring the bells, ring the bells. (Interruption) Okay, thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: We will recess, in recognition of agreement in the House.  
(Interruption) Okay, it is not agreed.

Ring the bells. Call in the members.

[11:47 a.m.]

[The Division bells were rung.]

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. Are the whips satisfied? We will now proceed with a recorded vote.

I want to remind members that during the vote it's important that members keep the chatter down. The Clerks have had some difficulty hearing the votes, so say it loud and be sure of which way you are voting so we can make sure the records reflect accurately.

[The Clerk calls the roll.]

[12:38 p.m.]

**YEAS**

Mr. Landry  
Ms. More  
Mr. Smith  
Ms. Peterson-Rafuse  
Mr. Corbett  
Ms. Maureen MacDonald  
Mr. Wilson  
Mr. Paris  
Ms. Jennex  
Mr. Belliveau  
Mr. Boudreau  
Ms. Conrad  
Mr. Preyra  
Mr. Parker  
Mr. MacKinnon  
Ms. Raymond  
Mr. Epstein  
Mr. Estabrooks  
Mr. Prest  
Mr. Ramey  
Mr. Skabar  
Mr. Whynott

**NAYS**

Ms. Whalen  
Mr. McNeil  
Mr. Samson  
Mr. d'Entremont  
Mr. Porter  
Mr. MacMaster  
Ms. Regan  
Ms. Casey  
Mr. Colwell  
Mr. Zinck  
Mr. MacLellan

Mr. Morton  
Ms. Birdsall  
Mr. Burrill

THE CLERK: For, 25. Against, 11.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise, to meet from the hour of 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Monday. After the daily routine we will be doing Bill Nos. 70, 76 and 78. If time permits, we'll do Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet on Monday at 4:00 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned until Monday. I hope you all have an enjoyable weekend.

[The House rose at 12:42 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 1191**

By: Mr. Zach Churchill (Yarmouth)

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

Whereas a former athlete himself and now an avid golfer who currently writes a Yarmouth Links golf column for the Yarmouth Vanguard, Alain Meuse became a columnist for the Yarmouth Vanguard in the mid-1960s; and

Whereas Alain Meuse's weekly column, Sportingly Speaking, chronicled the efforts and accomplishments of Yarmouth's athletes, and he continued to write sports articles even after becoming editor of the Yarmouth Vanguard and the Sou'wester; and

Whereas on May 4<sup>th</sup>, Alain Meuse will be inducted into the Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame for 2013;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alain Meuse for his induction in the Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame, and thank him for his contributions to our local sports media.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1192**

By: Mr. Zach Churchill (Yarmouth)

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

Whereas the Yarmouth Mariners 2002 Bantam A hockey team, consisting of Julien Boudreau, Brendon Smith, Shawn Muise, Adam Gallagher, Christian Boudreau, Alex Burton, Elliott Fevens, Rene Spinney, Ryan Forrest, Adam Hazelton, Brian Fells, Nathaniel d'Entremont, Kristin d'Entremont, Jeff Clarke, Kyle Murphy, Real Leblanc, and George d'Entremont, under the guidance of coach Chris Newell, assistant coaches Brian Comeau and Gary Surette, and manager Alan Clarke, enjoyed a successful 2001-02 season; and

Whereas the Yarmouth Mariners 2002 Bantam A hockey team won the provincial championship in Port Hawkesbury, with many team members winning individual awards at the tournament; and

Whereas on May 4<sup>th</sup>, the Yarmouth Mariners 2002 Bantam A hockey team will be inducted into the Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame for 2013;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Yarmouth Mariners 2002 Bantam A hockey team on being inducted into the Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame, and thank them for a very exciting and memorable season of hockey.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1193**

By: Mr. Zach Churchill (Yarmouth)

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

Whereas Karen White was a competitive swimmer who enjoyed much success at the provincial and Maritime levels and set a provincial record in the 200-yard butterfly in 1973 with a time of 3:03.8; and

Whereas Karen also swam competitively at the University of Guelph, earning an Intercollegiate Recognition Award in 1976; and

Whereas on May 4<sup>th</sup>, Karen White will be inducted into the Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame for 2013;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Karen on her many impressive achievements in the sport of swimming, and for her induction into the Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1194**

By: Mr. Zach Churchill (Yarmouth)

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

Whereas for many years, Yarmouth's Curtis Falls has been an integral part of the sport baseball in our community, beginning in 1990 as a rookie for the Yarmouth Gateways; and

Whereas Curtis Falls' achievements included being a member of the Nova Scotia Youth Selects, winning the Midget Atlantic Championship, playing for Team Nova Scotia at the Canada Games, being offered a minor league contract with the Florida Marlins, attending the National Baseball Institute, being invited to the men's Canadian National baseball team, and playing with the Lethbridge Mounties in the Pioneer League; and

Whereas on May 4<sup>th</sup>, Curtis Falls will be inducted into The Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame for 2013;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Curtis Falls on his many impressive achievements and contributions to the sport of baseball and for his induction in The Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1195**

By: Mr. Zach Churchill (Yarmouth)

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

Whereas many members of the 1977-78 Juvenile C Hockey team had played hockey together since the age of eight; and

Whereas the 1977-78 Juvenile C Hockey team consisting of Greg Nestor, Kevin Moore, David Clayton, Gary Smith, Andrew Waston, Erryl Hines, Allan Nickerson, David Jeffrey, Scott Wilson, Curt Goudey, Phil Moore, Richie Hubbard, Michael Moore, Paul Jacquard, Bruce Rogers, Elroy d'Entremont, Jon Gallagher, and Tom Fuller, under the guidance of coach Tim Barry and assistant coach Gary Moore, enjoyed a successful season of hockey culminating in winning a provincial championship; and

Whereas on May 4<sup>th</sup>, the 1977-78 Juvenile C Hockey team will be inducted into The Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame for 2013;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the 1977-78 Juvenile C Hockey team on its induction in The Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame, and thank them for an exciting and memorable season of hockey.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1196**

By: Ms. Diana Whalen (Halifax Clayton Park)

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

Whereas Alma Brown Dunbar, a native of Newfoundland and dynamic and cherished member of St. Peter's Birch Cove Anglican Church, celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on April 4<sup>th</sup>; and

Whereas friends at St. Peter's Birch Cove have organized a tea party on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013, to mark this milestone and toast Alma who has been a member of the parish since the laying of the cornerstone in 1951; and

Whereas Alma enjoyed a successful forty-year career at Eaton's and has always found time to volunteer, assisting the Canadian Cancer Society, the IDOE, Ronald McDonald House, the Shriners, and many other organizations;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this Legislative Assembly recognize the tremendous contribution that Alma Brown Dunbar has made to the lives of others through her church and community work, and offer her our heartfelt congratulations on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.