



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordie Gosse

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Fifth Session

TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2013

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2013

Sixty-first General Assembly

Fifth Session

12:00 NOON

SPEAKER

Hon. Gordie Gosse

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Before we start the daily routine, the subject matter for late debate has been chosen, which I will now read:

Therefore be it resolved that by breaking the MOU, the NDP has forced HRM to pay \$8 million more in education cost pressures and that the NDP is downloading education costs to all municipalities and further cutting from our classrooms and putting quality of education at risk.

It was submitted by the honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

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

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition, the operative clause reads:

“Therefore, your petitioners call upon the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to use its powers to assure the citizens of Western Nova Scotia have access by motorized vehicles, such as ATVs, snowmobiles, trail bikes, etc, to all crown lands including the property acquired from Bower [sic] Mersey, for public recreational purposes. This includes hunting, fishing, driving ATVs, snowmobiling, camping, hiking, biking, etc.”

Mr. Speaker, there are 433 signatures on this petition, and I have affixed mine.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 1243

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

Whereas many Nova Scotians across the province were saddened by the news of the passing of Ms. Rose Marie Abraham; and

Whereas Ms. Abraham was born in Belliveau Cove, Digby County, and met her husband 58 years ago, the Honourable Alan R. Abraham, in Halifax and stood by his side as he served as Nova Scotia's 27th Lieutenant Governor from 1984 to 1989; and

Whereas Ms. Abraham was a proud Acadian who was recognized by the community for her public service, as well as by other communities across the province for her charity work with organizations around Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join together to recognize the passing of Rose Marie Abraham and celebrate the great contributions she made to our province over the course of her life.

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 Justice.

RESOLUTION NO. 1244

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

Whereas May 5th to May 11th is Emergency Preparedness Week in Canada, a time to highlight the importance of being ready for 72 hours in an emergency; and

Whereas the Emergency Management Office works with federal, municipal, and provincial colleagues, as well as critical infrastructure and other partners, to prepare for emergencies, and encourages Nova Scotians to assemble a household emergency kit; and

Whereas increased awareness and participation means a safer Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly recognize Emergency Preparedness Week in Canada, and encourage their constituents to prepare for an emergency by making a plan and developing an emergency kit.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

RESOLUTION NO. 1245

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

Whereas health-promoting schools recognize that children and youth learn best through participatory and active experiences that connect movement and content that is relevant and meaningful; and

Whereas dance energizes the body, mind and spirit, and reveals our history, culture, how we feel, what we believe, and the impact we make on the health of self and others; and

Whereas throughout Dare to Dance Week, from April 22nd to April 29th, and on International Dance Day, April 29th, schools across the province - in particular the entire school population of Annapolis East Elementary School - participated in and explored this art form that deepens human experiences and creates healthy communities;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize the contribution of dance to students' physical, social, spiritual, and mental health, and extend congratulations to our schools and especially to volunteer Cindy Perry, the staff, and students of Annapolis East Elementary School for their outstanding work in fostering dance as an outlet for personal expression.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 83 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008. The Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. (Hon. John MacDonell)

Bill No. 84 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2001. The District of Barrington Health Professionals Assistance Act. (Hon. Sterling Belliveau)

Bill No. 85 - Entitled an Act to Ensure Fair Practices in Telecommunications in Nova Scotia. (Hon. Keith Colwell)

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. 1246

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 Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps 235 Arrow will celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the corps on the weekend of May 24th to May 26th; and

Whereas the weekend will include numerous events that will bring together current and past cadets; and

Whereas the weekend will include the annual ceremonial review and the awards banquet, where current cadets will be recognized for their achievements during the past year;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps 235 Arrow on celebrating their 40th Anniversary, and recognize current and former cadets, along with their leadership, for marking this important milestone.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 1247

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

Attendu que la Radio Halifax Métro CKRH 98.5 FM est la seule radio communautaire francophone de la municipalité d'Halifax qui a pour mandat de promouvoir la culture francophone dans la région d'Halifax et ses alentours; et

Attendu que cette radio communautaire est en onde depuis octobre 2007 et offre une variété musicale à ses auditeurs qui comptent plus de 12 000 francophones et plus de 44 000 personnes bilingues et francophiles de la région d'Halifax; et

Attendu que du 3 au 11 mai 2013, la Radio Halifax Métro CKRH invite ses auditeurs à participer à leur radiothon annuel et à faire un don pour les appuyer;

Par conséquent, qu'il soit résolu que tous les membres de cette Assemblée félicitent la Radio Métro CKRH sur leurs réussites, encouragent tous à faire un don et souhaitent cette radio communautaire le meilleur à l'avenir.

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

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

Whereas Radio Halifax Métro CKRH 98.5 FM is the only francophone community radio in the Halifax Regional Municipality, and its mandate is to promote the French culture in HRM and surrounding areas; and

Whereas this community radio has been on air since October 2007 and offers a variety of music to all its listeners that includes more than 12,000 francophones and more than 44,000 bilingual and francophiles in HRM; and

Whereas from May 3rd to May 11th, Radio Halifax Métro CKRH is inviting its listeners to participate in their annual radiothon and to make a donation in support of the radio;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Radio Métro CKRH on their accomplishments over the years, encourage everyone to make a donation, and wish this community radio all the best in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1248

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

Whereas last week in the Legislature my colleagues and I had the privilege of hearing the Liberal caucus' stance on a number of issues that are important to Nova Scotians; and

Whereas we learned in particular where the Liberals really stand on the Irving Shipbuilding contract and Ships Start Here when my Liberal colleague for Preston said, ". . .when you look at this whole thing you see exactly where this province is going, this province is going backwards . . ."; and

Whereas I, for one, am glad that the Liberal caucus has gone on the record stating their stance, as it is important for Nova Scotians to know the Liberals believe that the creation of thousands and thousands of jobs over the next several decades is "going backwards";

Therefore be it resolved that the Liberal caucus outline for Nova Scotians what exactly they would consider "going forward" if it is not encouraging employers to hire Nova Scotians and supporting game-changing federal projects.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1249

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

Whereas teachers guide students to help them develop and grow into responsible, engaged citizens; and

Whereas the benefits of a good teacher are lasting and far-reaching; and

Whereas teachers in Nova Scotia are among the most dedicated to their profession and to making an impact on young lives every day;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge teachers on this National Teacher Day and thank them for their service and support to our students.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 1250

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

Whereas Sandra Linklater of Howie Centre and daughter of the member for Cape Breton West, was recently named Coach of the Year for Junior High Girls Basketball; and

Whereas Sandra Linklater puts in many extra hours of her time to work with her team and is a very dedicated teacher; and

Whereas Sandra is a teacher at Eskasoni Elementary and Middle School;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sandra Linklater on being named Coach of the Year and thank her for all the extra time she devotes to her team.

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 Cumberland North.

RESOLUTION NO. 1251

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

Whereas the member for Preston has been a member of this Legislative Assembly since 1993, holding several Cabinet positions long ago when the Liberals were last in power; and

Whereas the member for Preston has enough government experience and competence to understand that as elected officials our positions should be guided and advised by the stakeholders, the people of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas despite the fact that several nationally respected environmental groups, including the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and the Ecology Action Centre, fully supported and congratulated this government for the purchase of the Bowater lands as an incredible opportunity “both from a conservation perspective and a sustainable forestry

perspective”, the member for Preston chose to disregard their expertise and instead state that the land that was purchased was “worth nothing”;

Therefore be it resolved that the Liberal caucus explain to the people of the South Shore and these well-respected organizations why they refuse to acknowledge their expert advice and support the protection of these environmentally important lands.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1252

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

Whereas the rising cost of electricity affects all households across the province; and

Whereas it is the responsibility of members of the Legislature, regardless of political Party, to work to support affordability for all Nova Scotians; and

Whereas the Legislature has not held a vote solely on the issue of keeping the HST off electricity bills and it is important for all members to show where they stand on this issue;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly support keeping the provincial portion of the HST off electricity bills in Nova Scotia and commit to not putting it back on in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

A recorded vote is being called for.

Ring the bells. Call in the members.

[12:21 p.m.]

[The Division bells were rung.]

MR. SPEAKER: Are the Whips satisfied?

I would ask that while we take the recorded vote, if the members could keep the noise down in the Chamber so we can record the vote accurately, please, and make sure that we have the right numbers. And I will now read:

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly support keeping the provincial portion of the HST off electricity bills in Nova Scotia and commit to not putting it back on in the future.”

[The Clerk calls the roll.]

[12:43 p.m.]

YEAS

Mr. Landry
Ms. More
Mr. Smith
Ms. Peterson-Rafuse
Mr. Corbett
Mr. Dexter
Ms. Maureen MacDonald
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Paris
Ms. Jennex
Mr. MacDonell
Mr. Belliveau
Mr. Boudreau
Ms. Zann
Mr. Preyra
Mr. Parker
Mr. MacKinnon
Ms. Raymond
Mr. Estabrooks

NAYS

Mr. Prest
Mr. Ramey
Mr. Skabar
Mr. Whynott
Mr. Morton
Ms. Birdsall
Mr. Burrill
Mr. Manning MacDonald
Mr. Gaudet
Mr. Glavine
Ms. Whalen
Mr. McNeil
Mr. Samson
Mr. d'Entremont
Mr. Baillie
Mr. Bain
Mr. Porter
Mr. MacMaster
Mr. MacLeod
Mr. Orrell
Mr. Younger
Ms. Regan
Ms. Casey
Mr. Colwell
Mr. Zinck
Mr. Theriault
Mr. MacLellan
Mr. Churchill

THE CLERK: For, 47. Against, 0.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 1253

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

Whereas May 6th to 12th is National Nursing Week in Canada; and

Whereas this is an important chance for Canadians to honour the work of our nurses and the important role they play in administering health care in an increasingly complex and diverse way; and

Whereas nurses demonstrate the ability to improve primary health care, and their contributions are resulting in better health, better care, and better value for all Canadians;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House honour National Nursing Week in support of one of our most precious resources, and support the vital work they do every day in our 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.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville.

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence I would like to make an introduction, please.

MR. SPEAKER: Certainly.

MR. WHYNOTT: Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery with us today I have two guests. One is Jenna Chisholm, a Grade 11 student from Millwood High School. She is doing 100 hours with me in my office as a co-op student, and I would ask the House to give her a warm welcome. (Applause)

Also in the east gallery, we have with us today Fred Gallop, a citizen from Beaver Bank. He is with an organization formerly known as Anchor Industries Society, which have recently changed their name to Building Futures Employment Society. He is chairman of the building committee, and they're moving forward with a plan to expand their facility. I would ask the House to also give him a warm welcome, please. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville.

RESOLUTION NO. 1254

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

Whereas last week in the Legislature my colleagues and I were shocked to hear what the Liberal caucus really thinks about Nova Scotians; and

Whereas one of the longest-standing Liberal members, the honourable member for Preston, went on the record in this House stating, “Nova Scotians, they don’t really know what’s going on in the business world”; and

Whereas the Liberals vastly underestimate the intelligence and the ability of Nova Scotians and should be ashamed to have made such comments in this House;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House remind the Liberals that the people of Nova Scotia are innovative, intelligent, and endlessly capable individuals who have built this wonderful province and who do not deserve to be insulted by the Liberals.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, may I do an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. MCNEIL: I just want to draw the attention of the House to the west gallery, where I have a constituent of mine here, Sherri Boutilier. Sherri is here to take in the proceedings of the House, and she’s going to meet with the Minister of Community Services after Question Period. I would ask Sherri to stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1255

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

Whereas after fighting a long illness, Rose Marie Abraham passed away in the company of her husband, children and grandchildren; and

Whereas Ms. Abraham served Nova Scotians with her husband as the Vice Regal couple for Nova Scotia from 1984 to 1989 and was patron for over 75 charitable organizations during this time; and

Whereas Ms. Rose Marie Abraham was an important person in the Acadian community of this province, a kind, gracious person and will be missed by her family, friends and by the Province of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House take this time to remember the life of Rose Marie Abraham, celebrate her service to her province and give condolences to her family and friends.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1256

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

Whereas today is National Child and Youth Mental Health Day; and

Whereas as part of the greater Mental Health Week, the goal of this day is to raise awareness in acknowledgement of the thousands of children in need of mental health support; and

Whereas this year's theme is "I Care About You", something every child and young person needs to know when they are suffering with issues of mental health and seeking help;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge today as National Child and Youth Mental Health Day and work together to make sure families and young people across this province have somewhere to turn when struggling with mental health issues.

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 Lunenburg.

RESOLUTION NO. 1257

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

Whereas under the questionable leadership of the Liberal Party, the Liberal caucus has stood, excluding one member, for the past 29 days in this House of Assembly and laid out their vision for the province; and

Whereas the member for Preston stated that the province should have expropriated the Bowater lands as was done in Newfoundland at AbitibiBowater; and

Whereas the Newfoundland and Labrador Government just admitted that the expropriation costs for that mill have climbed another \$72 million and the Newfoundland Liberal Leader, Dwight Ball, criticized the government for the exploitation mess pointing out the final tally since 2008 was not yet complete;

Therefore be it resolved that the Liberal caucus explain why they think such a failed idea and a costly idea would be good for Nova Scotians.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Preston.

RESOLUTION NO. 1258

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

Whereas for five years, the Premier used taxpayer dollars in order to pay his own barrister fees; and

Whereas this use of taxpayer dollars by the Premier amounted to \$10,642.67 of taxpayers' money so that the Premier could retain his own status; and

Whereas the Premier kept using taxpayers' money to pay his barrister fees to retain his status until such time as he was discovered, eventually racking up \$10,642.67 in fees which benefited the Premier;

Therefore be it resolved that the Premier did use thousands of dollars out of the pockets of taxpayers over the course of many years in order that the Premier could retain his own status and the member for Lunenburg urge the Premier to apologize to all Nova Scotians for using their money for his advantage.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 1259

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

Attendu que Natalie Surette-d'Entremont a commencé son nouveau poste comme Coordinatrice de vie active de la Municipalité d'Argyle à Tuskent le 2 janvier 2013; et

Attendu que Madame Surette-d'Entremont développe de nouveaux programmes et incitations afin d'encourager plus de participation dans la variété planifiées à l'année longue pour les personnes de tout âge de la Municipalité; et

Attendu que Madame Surette-d'Entremont, originaire de l'Ile-des-Surettes n'est pas une nouvelle venue à la Municipalité, ayant travaillé pour le département des loisirs de 1987 à 1994 avant d'avoir travaillé pour dix-huit ans à Nakile Home for Special Care comme directrice d'activités;

Par conséquent, qu'il soit résolu que tous les membres de cette Assemblée félicitent Madame Natalie Surette-d'Entremont sur son nouveau poste et lui souhaitent le meilleur succès à l'avenir.

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

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

Whereas Natalie Surette-d'Entremont began her new post as Active Living Coordinator for the Municipality of Argyle, in Tuskent, on January 2, 2013; and

Whereas Ms. Surette-d'Entremont is developing new programs and incentives to encourage more participation in a variety of activities for people of all ages and in any season; and

Whereas Ms. Surette-d'Entremont, a native of Surettes Island, is no stranger to the municipality, having worked in the recreation department from 1987 to 1994 before joining the Nakile Home for Special Care for 18 years as the activities coordinator;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Natalie Surette-d'Entremont on her new post, and wish her much success in her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We seem to be having a lot of chatter in here this afternoon and I've having a difficult time hearing the resolutions, so I'd ask all the honourable members to please take their conversations outside the Chamber so that I can hear the resolutions. Thank you.

The honourable member for Richmond.

RESOLUTION NO. 1260

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

Whereas Shamrock Players put on a performance during an Irish Dinner Theatre held at the Rocky Bay Irish Club on April 6, 2013; and

Whereas the sold-out show was held as a fundraiser for the Friends of Notre Dame de l'Assumption in Arichat, which is raising money to put a roof on the cathedral; and

Whereas the Shamrock Players consist of Gail Hearn, Tommy Kehoe, Al Kehoe, Pat Kehoe, Michelle Stone, Gene Kehoe, Nancy Kehoe, Sarah Mauger, Arlene Samson, Michelle Hearn, and Ann England;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate the members of the Shamrock Players for their wonderful and funny performance, which they did free of charge in order to raise money for the new roof of Our Lady of Assumption Cathedral.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Kings West.

RESOLUTION NO. 1261

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

Whereas tomorrow walkers will gather at the Grand Parade, as well as another 109 organized walks throughout the province, to mark the 5th Anniversary of the Heart and Stroke Walkabout; and

Whereas the goal of the Heart and Stroke Walkabout is to facilitate an increase in the percentage of Nova Scotians who walk at least 30 to 60 minutes most days of the week; and

Whereas the Walkabout Web site has achieved sustained and continuous growth with 1,746,767,089 steps being logged, which highlights the program's success in increasing activity levels among Nova Scotians through walking;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Legislature acknowledge the 5th Anniversary of the Heart and Stroke Walkabout, and extend our appreciation to everyone involved, organizers and participants alike, for introducing and encouraging Nova Scotians to both the joys and immense health benefits that can be achieved simply by walking.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton South.

RESOLUTION NO. 1262

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

Whereas for five years the Premier used taxpayers' dollars in order to pay for his own barristers fees; and

Whereas this use of taxpayers' dollars by the Premier amounted to \$10,642.67 of taxpayers' money so that the Premier could retain his own status; and

Whereas the Premier kept using taxpayers' money to pay his barristers fees and retain his status until such time as he was discovered, eventually racking up \$10,642.67 in fees which benefited the Premier;

Therefore be it resolved that the Premier did use thousands of dollars out of the pockets of taxpayers over the course of many years in order that the Premier could retain his own status, and that the member for Cape Breton Centre urge the Premier to apologize to all Nova Scotians for using their money for his advantage.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Preston.

RESOLUTION NO. 1263

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

Whereas Billy Stick Food Limited, owned and operated by Bill Toulany, is a successful export business in Lake Echo, which some may say is the original home of the donair and has been labelled as the best donair in Canada; and

Whereas Bill Toulany is a wholesale distributor of hamburger and donair meat products throughout Nova Scotia and beyond, and provides delivery, cash-and-carry pickup, and employs several local community people; and

Whereas Mr. Toulany's donair stick food is made with a secret family blend of spices that earned the Toulany family top honours repeatedly;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House congratulate Bill Toulany for contributing to Nova Scotia's economy, and wish him many more years of success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

RESOLUTION NO. 1264

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

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

Whereas Marjorie Petite will be inducted in the Volunteer category for her decades of selfless service to community initiatives that benefit those in need; and

Whereas Marjorie has served as a nursing school teacher for an amazing 44 years and counting, is a member of the Town House Board of Directors, is a long-time volunteer for St. Mary's Church, the local credit union, and the Glace Bay Hospital, and was awarded the Anne Holland Memorial Award and Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for her dedication to volunteerism;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House join me in congratulating Marjorie and the Petite family for their generations of community involvement, and we look forward to their continued contribution to making Glace Bay a better place.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 1265

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

Whereas John's Lunch, a restaurant in the Woodside area of Dartmouth, has been in business since 1969; and

Whereas *Canadian Living Magazine* annually publishes a Canadian Best Awards, featuring the best places for Canadian delicacies from coast to coast to coast; and

Whereas John's Lunch and co-owner Fotis Fatouros were recognized by *Canadian Living Magazine* for making the best fish and chips in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize John's Lunch co-owner Fotis Fatouros and his staff on this well-earned accolade and their commitment to providing hearty fare for more than 40 years.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The time now is 1:04 p.m.; we will finish at 2:04 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM. - DSTN: EMPLOYEES - NUMBER

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, in 2010 the Premier gave Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering \$60 million and took a 49 per cent stake in the company. Since that time the orders at DSTN steel towers never materialized. Now, three years and \$60 million later, DSTN has hardly lived up to the 500 jobs the Premier had bragged about and promised.

Mr. Speaker, after \$60 million, will the Premier tell Nova Scotians exactly how many people are currently employed at DSTN in Trenton?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, fortunately this is a government that is focused on, in fact, creating employment and creating jobs. We have transitioned what was the old plant in Trenton to a new one. I'm proud to say that they have received a new contract to build additional towers. (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker, it's insulting for the member for Cape Breton South - I know he hasn't been in the House much, but the reality is that here we are focused on creating jobs in Nova Scotia and that's what the investment in DSTN is doing.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, those jobs must be somewhere else in Daewoo's operation, because they're sure not here in Nova Scotia. In 2010, the Premier told Nova Scotians this \$60 million would result in 500 new jobs at this plant. In fact, the Premier insisted that DSTN would produce between 200 and 250 wind turbines per year. Since that time, we've seen DSTN has produced only 20 turbines, and all we have seen in employment have been layoffs instead of job growth. The wind business is unfolding so poorly that DSTN is now expanding into Halifax and away from wind, into oil and gas, heavy industrial fabrication, and shipbuilding. DSTN will now be competing with companies that aren't subsidized by taxpayers to the tune of \$60 million.

So my question to the Premier is, why is the Premier using public money to compete against private businesses yet again?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm amazed that the Leader of the Official Opposition can stand up and try to justify the fact that they have no economic development policy whatsoever by criticizing the work and the jobs of ordinary Nova Scotians who rely on companies like DSTN for their livelihood, to support their families. There's more than 100 people working at DSTN now, they have a new contract, yes they are expanding, yes they're expanding their work, and we're happy to see them doing it.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, this caucus has stood with Nova Scotia workers while that government has been taking public money, while that government has been taking public money to give to corporations to spend everywhere else but here in Nova Scotia. Those 500 jobs that the Premier talked about two years ago are now 100 - going in the

wrong direction. When is he going to stand up for Nova Scotia workers and stop sending our money offshore and create jobs here, and not somewhere else?

THE PREMIER: You know, Mr. Speaker, I think the Liberals have to be responsible for more accidents in Nova Scotia than any other group because they signal left and then they turn right. That's the Liberal Party. Nobody could have been responsible for more corporate welfare anywhere in this country than the Liberal Party. They did it consistently with the federal government; they did it here in the Province of Nova Scotia time and time and time again. We are investing in real jobs. We are investing in jobs in rural communities, right around the province, to ensure that Nova Scotians and young Nova Scotians have a place that they can work, strong rural communities, and we understand that the Leader of the Liberal Party is against that.

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

PREM. - NEW GLASGOW ECONOMY: STATUS - EXPLAIN

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Conference Board of Canada actually studied 46 mid-sized municipalities across Canada, and one of them, very interestingly, was the New Glasgow area. They reported, and I will table this for the Premier, the Conference Board says that New Glasgow's economy shrank every year since 2009. I'll table that for the benefit of the Premier. Glad to hear he's investing in jobs somewhere, but it's not in the New Glasgow area. Meanwhile, the same report says that across the Northumberland Strait, the economy of Charlottetown has grown in real terms every year from 2005 to 2012. Even Summerside has expanded every year. But in the case of New Glasgow and area, their economy has shrunk every year since 2009.

Mr. Speaker, I'll ask the Premier, despite all his massive taxpayer investments, why has the economy of New Glasgow gone into reverse every year since 2009?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Conference Board report actually said that Halifax is growing, they pointed out, for example, that Cape Breton's economy - this is one that I'm sure they will be interested to hear - Cape Breton's economy has grown every year since 2005, with employment in 2012 largely the same that it was in the mid-2000s.

I noted also the comments in the paper today from the Conference Board, they said it was likely that the economies in some parts in the province hit that cycle at a different time but, Mr. Speaker, these are the same people who have opposed the investment in DSTN, the investment in Northern, the investments in those communities that actually strengthen and create jobs, they oppose.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, yes, Halifax is growing. I guess that's why the Premier gave the Irvings all that money to build a parking garage down on the waterfront here, but the question was about New Glasgow. (Interruptions) We'd certainly support

investments that actually created jobs, but the Conference Board report clearly says that in the New Glasgow area, “the region has shed almost 6,000 jobs since 2008.” That’s a pretty poor investment when you manage to lose 6,000 jobs in exchange for all that money.

New Glasgow includes some pretty important employers, Mr. Speaker, like Michelin, like Northern Pulp, like the Sobeys, and many others. But they clearly lost confidence in the Premier’s ability to manage the economy, because as a region, they have shed 6,000 jobs - \$200 million in jobsHere, minus 6,000 jobs.

So I’ll ask the Premier, how did he manage to spend \$200 million and lose 6,000 jobs in the New Glasgow area?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, there’s no question that all the provinces are subject to the general economic trends in not only North America but the world. There has been a very difficult recession world-wide.

We invested, for example, in Port Hawkesbury to make sure that that asset is up and running today and that the 1,000 people associated with it are still working. I can tell you this: the work that is done in that plant in Port Hawkesbury has ramifications right down through Pictou County. When those are put under threat, that is exactly what happens: you see declines in employment.

That employment, thankfully, is coming back. People are going back to work because that asset has now become one of the most productive in North America, if not the most productive in North America. If the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party had his way, those people would be on the welfare line.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I will tell you what has had ramifications all through Pictou County - in fact, all across rural Nova Scotia - and that is a government whose policies are to charge the highest HST in the whole country; to allow their power rates to skyrocket, which causes jobs to go backward; and put in place extreme labour laws like first contract, which scared the heck out of companies like Michelin and Sobeys.

They can laugh, Mr. Speaker, but minus 6,000 jobs is a serious problem, and it has happened since 2009, under their watch. What is so interesting - I’ll tell you who has done well in Nova Scotia under the NDP. Yesterday Credit Suisse reported that the Maritime Link will boost the earnings of Emera by \$70 million, starting the very first year.

So I’ll ask the Premier, why is he giving Emera such a big boost while they all laugh at the loss of 6,000 jobs in New Glasgow?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the power rates, the privatization of Nova Scotia Power, and the creation of Emera all happened as a result of the policies of Liberal and Progressive Conservative Governments. What we are doing is making sure we get off

fossil fuels. The rates increase in 2009 was based on the rules put in place by the Progressive Conservative Government.

The reason why we have higher power rates is the Progressive Conservative Government's fault. The HST is where it is because they left behind a \$1.4 billion deficit. We sorted it out. They should know now that the HST is going back to 13 per cent because we're turning a corner and we are creating more jobs and we are creating a better future for Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay.

ERDT - DSTN: SUBSIDY - SAGACITY

MR. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, 60 million tax dollars went to DSTN with the promise of 250 turbines per year and 500 jobs. Three years later, this promise has failed to materialize. A recent Conference Board of Canada study points out that since 2009, New Glasgow's economy shrank every year and the region shed 6,000 jobs. In fact, things are so unimpressive at DSTN that they had to look to other industries in order to stay afloat. It's easy to stay afloat when you're using tax dollars to subsidize your operations. Every entrepreneur in Nova Scotia would certainly like that opportunity.

My question is, with such disappointing results from the \$60 million to DSTN, does the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism still think this was a wise use of taxpayers' dollars?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, DSTN was an investment in the future of Nova Scotia. What DSTN does and continues to do is: they have hired a manager; they are opening up an office here in Halifax; they just recently landed a contract to produce more towers for another company; they are diversifying; they are looking at shipbuilding; they are looking at other ways of investments and making money.

We believe - I believe - in DSTN. I believe they have a future here in the Province of Nova Scotia.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, in The ChronicleHerald on Thursday and as just said by the minister, the company is quoted as saying, "Hiring is currently underway for the company's new expanded sales team in Halifax to advance its business development plan." In fact, DSTN is expanding into oil and gas, heavy industrial fabrication and shipbuilding. This means they will be competing with businesses that have not received a \$60 million subsidy from the government, yet again the minister is using taxpayer dollars to go head to head with Nova Scotia businesses for contracts.

My question is, will the minister tell Nova Scotian businesses if they are going to have to compete against their own tax dollars to win shipbuilding contracts?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I really don't understand the question because this is about creating jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia. DSTN is competing globally and we are going to do everything that we can to help them compete, to help them create good jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, this is a question of economic development decisions and direction by this minister, by this government. We gave a company \$60 million and took a 49 per cent stake in that company to build wind turbines. Now it looks as though they are going to abandon that plan and go into another sector, with tax dollars supporting their operational costs. It is certainly something we should be asking, on behalf of the taxpayers in this province.

Instead of 250 turbines per year we have a total of 20. Employment is below one-fifth of what was promised. Now DSTN is in the midst of a business diversification strategy. So after investing \$60 million on behalf of taxpayers and taking almost a 50 per cent ownership of DSTN, we have a company that hasn't come close to targets on production or employment. Will the minister tell Nova Scotians if the government will be investing further in DSTN and will we eventually become the majority owners of this company?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, DSTN is doing the right thing. They have an additional contract to build towers, one of the solid reasons why they came to Nova Scotia. They are investing in Nova Scotia. They are creating more jobs, good jobs, here in the Province of Nova Scotia, for Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

PREM.: MAR. LINK - OWNERSHIP

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Last week, I raised the issue with him of the market analyst pointing out that Emera's profits will certainly increase substantially as a result of the way the Maritime Link deal has been structured with the support of the NDP Government.

It appears that the Premier is more concerned with Emera's profits than he is with ratepayers and so as all the increased profit for Emera comes as a result of ratepayers shouldering the project risk, this is profit which could instead have been used to keep rates lower. At the end of the day ratepayers will pay for 35 years and they won't own the very thing they're paying the full cost of - the Link. Why does the Premier believe that ratepayers shouldn't own the Link after they pay the entire mortgage for 35 years?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the contract calls for the people of Nova Scotia to receive stable energy rates for the entire period of the contract. This means that Nova Scotians will get the lowest, fairest rates available from that project. It will be a stable

energy price. It will be an economic development bonus for Nova Scotia. We will be able to attract more employment and more jobs into the area.

As the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador pointed out when she was here just a short time ago, the number-one criticism in Newfoundland and Labrador is that Nova Scotians are getting free power. They have to point out that this is a mutually-beneficial project for both Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, there will be economic development benefits in Newfoundland and Labrador; I'm not so sure about Nova Scotia. All of the information tabled before the board at the moment shows that the rates would be cheaper. In fact, the Energy Minister himself said the other day that it would be cheaper if we went with a made-in-Nova Scotia solution, and I'll table that. So let's go to that.

The other day, the Premier tried to claim ratepayers would pay 8 cents a kilowatt hour by misrepresenting an article from The ChronicleHerald. I'll table that, and I'll table Emera's response to that the other day, where they say that that's assuming that Nova Scotia would get 20 to 30 per cent of their energy from the Link, and also that it's not the actual rate and takes all the savings that are accumulated by every other renewable energy project in the province and applies it to the Link. Only then, and only if we get 30 per cent of the energy, would the Maritime Link portion be 8 cents.

Would the Premier please tell us the per kilowatt rate residential customers will pay on their bill after the Link comes on-line?

THE PREMIER: It is shocking that the member for Dartmouth East would - I mean, they so want this to fail, they so want this not to be a good thing for Nova Scotia, that they will try to put the most negative and pessimistic kind of construction on everything. What I tabled the other day were not my words. They were the words, as he pointed out, of an editorial from The ChronicleHerald.

Mr. Speaker, what we want are the lowest and fairest rates for Nova Scotians. I'm not sure what the members of the Liberal Party want; I'm not sure what the member for Dartmouth East wants. What we want is a strong partnership between the Atlantic Provinces that delivers the best local power for all of our region, because we believe that what benefits Newfoundland and Labrador and what benefits New Brunswick will also benefit Nova Scotians. We are trying to build a stronger economy. We are trying to recognize the potential of Atlantic Canada, and we're proud of that.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, most Nova Scotians would not consider Newfoundland and Labrador local, but I guess when you get to fly Emera's private jet there it gets a lot closer. Here's the thing: the other day . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: They're not part of the Maritimes?

MR. YOUNGER: Actually, they're not part of the Maritimes. They're part of Atlantic Canada. Mr. Speaker, once again, we see why education cuts are so damaging to Nova Scotia.

The Premier was talking about an 8 cent blended rate. Well, his own Minister of Energy said in Hansard on May 3rd that wind in Nova Scotia is 7.5 cents, and I'll table that. Even the Minister of Energy agrees with the evidence before the board that says wind in Nova Scotia would be cheaper than the Maritime Link.

Given that the Energy Minister is now supporting the evidence against the Link at the board by quoting an energy rate for wind here which is cheaper than what he is quoting for the Maritime Link, why is the Premier so opposed to an energy future made in Nova Scotia - which is in the Maritimes, incidentally - rather than tying Nova Scotia to 35 years of energy from Newfoundland and Labrador with no guarantees afterward?

THE PREMIER: I really think that the member for Dartmouth East believes that he can get away with simply distorting everything he says, and that somehow people in Nova Scotia will believe it. What he is referring to - the 7.5 per cent - is about Pubnico Point. Pubnico Point is now one of the cheaper conveyors of energy in the province, but when it was built, it was 3.5 cents more expensive. The advantage of Pubnico Point, of course - which is the exact advantage of the Maritime Link and the exact advantage of new wind that comes on - is that it is stable over the long term, and that it provides cheaper rates over the long term. So unwittingly, which is an apt description, unwittingly the member for Dartmouth East has just proven the exact point, why the investments should be made in infrastructure like the Maritime Link.

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

ERDT - NEW GLASGOW ECONOMY: JOB LOSSES - MLA CONCERNS

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, the study on mid-size cities released by the Conference Board of Canada points to devastation across the rural economy. In the 2011 census New Glasgow had a population of 9,562. According to the CBC report, New Glasgow has lost almost 6,000 jobs - and I'll table that report. The impact of poor NDP choices can be felt across the province.

My question to the Minister of ERDT is, can the minister tell the House if the member representing New Glasgow, who also sits in the Cabinet, has ever come forward with concerns about severe job losses? If so, why has nothing been done in response?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, what we've done in the Province of Nova Scotia - in 2012 we had more people employed in Nova Scotia prior to the recession. Last Canadian statistics show one province in all of Canada is moving forward, that is Nova Scotia. That's where we are and that's where we will continue to stay.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, a Halifax ChronicleHerald article says, “Economic growth that occurs while the population is flat or declining is a positive . . . but what we’re seeing in New Glasgow is the opposite.” They are still suffering from 2009 and they are still losing jobs and we still see economic output slowing there.

New Glasgow’s economy shrank every year since 2009 and the region has shed almost 6,000 jobs. My question to the minister is, will the minister finally admit that his jobs plan is a failure in New Glasgow?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, we have a plan that is working. After 20 years of decline, 20 years of the worst economic development in Canadian history, we are finally turning the corner.

Mr. Speaker, now I know that there are some members in this House who find that very hard to believe because they’re simply not used to it. Well do you know what? As long as this government is in place, my comment is, get used to it.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, we’ll let the people of Nova Scotia need to know if we need to get used to it or not. Cape Breton’s unemployment in 2012 was about the same as it was in the mid-2000s. Truro avoided significant decline during the recession but economic growth was modest between 2005 and 2012. The NDP have left rural Nova Scotia to crumble. We see our young people moving away and the ones who remain are largely unemployed. With people between 15 and 24, the unemployment rate is 17.8 per cent. I’ll table that as well, Mr. Speaker.

Our caucus has brought these issues up time and time again for four years, with no answers, no real plans and no results. My question to the minister is, have the members from Truro or other members representing Cape Breton Centre or Cape Breton Nova, come to you to ask for their help in respective areas? If so, why did you ignore them?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, what we’ve done in the Province of Nova Scotia in four years is, I think, quite amazing. We’ve taken a province that was dead last and we managed to start to turn things around. We’re on the verge of some of the greatest economic opportunities in a lifetime.

When I think of the Irving Shipbuilding contract - 11,500 jobs; when I think of what’s going on with the Maritime Link, not only about economic development but lowest energy rates possible; when I think of the investments that this government has made in Michelin, there’s a future for Michelin workers in the Province of Nova Scotia; when I think of what this government has done when it comes to the Cooke Aquaculture, securing good jobs and future jobs for Nova Scotians from one end of the province to the other; when I think of Port Hawkesbury NewPage, the saving and maintaining of 1,400 direct and indirect jobs - those are the kinds of investments that Nova Scotia needs. We are NDP, our priority is people.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

ENVIRON. - FRACKING WASTE WATER: N.S. FACILITIES - ACCEPTANCE

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment. Why does the NDP allow Nova Scotia facilities to accept fracking waste water from other jurisdictions in Canada?

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, I know he has raised this question a number of times. First of all, I want to tell you that with fracking, we understand the concerns of Nova Scotians and that's why we are in the process of conducting a thorough review which will be completed in 2014. We understand the sensitivity around this issue and that's why we're committed to protecting the environment and making sure that industry and companies follow the conditions on the approvals. Thank you.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the question was about the disposal of fracking waste water and importing it. It wasn't at all about what he just talked about. We know that fracking waste water has been imported for treatment from New Brunswick, possibly other places, at least 10 million litres so far - maybe more but 10 million that is known of - there's a lot of talk about the economy today, it seems the NDP want an economy based on hazardous waste treatment in Nova Scotia, I guess.

Now the minister seems more concerned with protecting the company rather than answering questions. On April 22nd during Environment Estimates, he said, "I am protecting the company and there is privileged information." I will table that section of the Environment estimates debate. At the time we asked him to get back and indicate why or what would be privileged since it didn't seem to be the case, so the minister has had time since estimates to consider his position, he changed his position on Otter Lake since estimates as you will see in the same transcript, so will the minister today release the test results for fracking waste water treated anywhere in Nova Scotia?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the member opposite and yes, we had engaged in the Budget Estimates and certainly we are there to respect the protocol regarding privileged information and we will respect that. I want to tell you and tell all members in this House that we take this issue very seriously and I want to echo again that there is a thorough review and this government, we have never allowed a permit for fracking - unlike the opposite Parties, the PCs that actually allowed this and the Liberals ask the questions. We inherit a mess, the Opposition ask the questions and we'll clean it up, as usual.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the minister's answer is, we're the NDP and we're not as bad as the Tories? That'll really make Nova Scotians happy about this. The fact is, the minister was asked - the minister talks about privileged information yet other

jurisdictions have released this very information so it appears to only be privileged in Nova Scotia.

In May 2011 the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection actually asked the state's treatment plants to stop processing fracking waste water - I can wait Mr. Speaker, until they're quiet - asked the state's treatment plants to voluntarily stop processing fracking waste water. This was because it was found the treatment plants actually can't process the material and that watersheds and areas around were seeing high bromide levels. It's this minister who is responsible for the industrial permit that Atlantic Industrial operates and it's this minister that permitted fracking waste from outside Nova Scotia be treated in this province. Not any other Party, not any other minister. Will the minister immediately prohibit future importation of fracking waste from outside Nova Scotia and if not permanently, at least until the fracking review is complete?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite - I'm amazed at the member opposite. I spent my lifetime on the water. He made reference to Otter Lake and the conditions there and I make reference to my lifetime on the water because I watched the Bay of Fundy change every six hours. The change in direction.

The member opposite, when it comes to Otter Lake, talks about changes to approval that the former government, the Liberals at the time, introduced. There was a resolution in this House asking for all support to maintain those conditions, which we have done. We honoured what the public in that community wanted, unlike the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, who has changed more in the last two weeks than the tides in the Bay of Fundy. Thank you for the question.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - ABERDEEN HOSP.: FOOD BUDGET - REDUCTIONS

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as Nova Scotians we owe a huge debt of gratitude to our veterans who have served this country. It was these veterans who made the sacrifices for the free society we enjoy today. They deserve our respect. The least we can do for our veterans is to give them the living conditions and the care they have earned and so clearly deserve. This care includes healthy fresh food, not frozen TV dinners.

My question is for the Minister of Seniors. Can she explain why, when this government goes looking for savings, the first place they look is the food budget for our veterans at Aberdeen Hospital, in Pictou County?

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: This is a question that relates to the Department of Health and Wellness so I'm going to pass it along to the minister.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Veterans hold a very close, very important place in our hearts. All MLAs would agree, Mr. Speaker, that's why we work extremely hard to ensure that they have access to the services they have.

With the question that the member asked, what has happened in the district health authorities is that they went forward and heard the concerns of the residents, heard the concerns of their family members, heard the concerns of the community and put together an organization or a group - a task force, to look at recommendations and how you could improve services for our seniors. They did just that and I look forward to them implementing all of the recommendations from that task force that reviewed the food services for our veterans in Pictou County.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, a good quality of life should include healthy, wholesome, non-frozen foods. This food should be offered to our veterans as well. Veterans occupy a special status in our society and they should not be disrespected by denying them the food they deserve. Can the minister justify forcing a health authority to save \$70,000 by feeding veterans TV dinners, instead of cutting its wasteful \$1.4 million subsidy to food outlets in Halifax hospitals?

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I respect the member opposite, I really do, but he's not indicating exactly forthright what's going on. They're not served TV dinners. I want to make that very clear today in this House - they are not being served TV dinners. That's why the district health authority, when they made recent changes, they went out into the community, they asked for input from the community. They had people from the Legion, concerned siblings and children of veterans who were actually living at the facility, to see what they could do to improve conditions. Out of that were recommendations that the district health authority has accepted and they will implement all those recommendations from a group of individuals, from all sides, who were concerned with the food of the veterans. What they want to ensure is that they get the healthy food that they need and the respect that they deserve.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, at a special meeting of the Veterans Affairs Committee just a week ago, one of the gentlemen whose father-in-law is a member of the veterans' wing was there and said his father-in-law had been fed a type of fish. The man had been a fisherman all his life and yet he could not recognize the fish that he was fed through this new program. So if quality of life is so important, how come even he couldn't recognize the food that was being feed to him? Is that the way we treat our seniors and our veterans in this province? I certainly hope not.

The government has strained our health authority budgets to the point where they're forced to compromise the nutrition and the enjoyable qualities of food veterans are used to getting, and they used to get. Can the minister give Pictou County veterans the respect they have earned and deserve, and instruct the Pictou County Health Authority to immediately reinstate nutritious meals that are prepared on-site?

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I think through my career here as an MLA I've shown nothing but respect to our veterans, and I think all members of this House have done that. What the member opposite is saying, he's not forthright with Nova Scotians and I take my job seriously as Minister of Health and Wellness. We've worked with district health authorities across the province to ensure that we have a sustainable health care system, so that we don't have to do the cuts that we've seen in the 1990s, so that we can ensure that services are provided, especially to our veterans.

So I'm going to continue to work with the district health authorities, I'm going to continue to work with all those who had input in the review of the food, to ensure that they get the respect they deserve as seniors and as veterans.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

NAT. RES. - HELICOPTER: LOG BOOK - TABLE

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources.

The Department of Natural Resources currently has a helicopter within its fleet of assets that can be periodically used by staff or Cabinet members, or I guess any departmental staff, for matters pertinent to the department.

Now, of course, throughout their time in Opposition the NDP were very critical of the previous government and their use, so my question for the minister is, in the interest of ensuring the appropriate use of this helicopter, would the minister please table in the House, by 12:00 noon tomorrow, the log book for the Department of Natural Resources helicopter, including the flights and, of course, the passengers who would be in that log, for the past four years?

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Mr. Speaker, certainly we're fortunate in Nova Scotia to have a very qualified helicopter fleet. We have five helicopters that serve our province through the Department of Natural Resources. They're there for need in firefighting primarily, but certainly have other duties as well.

Certainly during estimates I didn't hear this question from the honourable member, but I'll endeavour to get the information as soon as it's available.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that from the minister. I wonder, would he list the helicopter and airplane flights that were chartered for staff and ministerial use in the Province of Nova Scotia over that same period of time?

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, of course the province does not own any airplanes so there are no air flights to file or get information for, but again, on the helicopters, I'll endeavour to get that information.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the question was for aircraft that have been chartered - aircraft or helicopters that would not be owned by the government but have been chartered for flights by ministers, political staff, and the departments within the Province of Nova Scotia.

MR. PARKER: Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously the honourable member is running out of questions because that certainly does not fall under the purview of the Department of Natural Resources, but I'll get the helicopter information for the honourable member.

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

**LBR. & ADVANCED EDUC. - APPRENTICESHIP REGS.:
RED TAPE - REMOVE**

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

The current provincial regulations on apprenticeship are needlessly limiting opportunities for young trade workers trying to break into their fields and start their careers. Even with federal and provincial grants and tax credits, it's the extra red tape at the provincial level that's holding them back from being hired.

My question through you to the minister is, will the minister remove the red tape restraining these young tradespeople from working?

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, we'll sure try, because all that red tape was put in by his government. Thank you.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, let me be clear, the effective journeyman-apprentice ratio is to reduce the number of people who work in a trade, and according to a recent report of the C.D. Howe Institute ". . . the trades in provinces with the strictest journeyman-apprentice ratios have lower levels of young workers . . . suggesting that these regulations may be acting as barriers to entry." And that's exactly what's happening in this province - and I'll table that.

My question through you to the minister is, why is the government choosing high salaries of the lucky few who find work, while saying tough luck to the majority of young workers who are being held back by this red tape?

MR. CORBETT: It's a timely question if not totally inaccurate, Mr. Speaker. But I'm going to tell you something. You know, ratios, we inherited ratios. It was that group over there that put them in. So what we are doing though, so we'll be perfectly clear, is we are working on apprenticeship training now, and we're working with workers and with labour to find out what are the best ratios to use. We're not going to rely on their 1960 model. We're going to use a new model.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, one of the problems there is, if it is workers and labour, we're leaving the employer out. You know, recently there has been encouragement by the federal government for young workers to enter the trades. Now is the opportunity for this government to stand up for young Nova Scotians looking to begin their careers and modernize this legislation. The minister says we're working on it. For two years they've been working on it.

So my question to the minister is, will the minister finally update the regulations on apprenticeship so young Nova Scotians can put their valuable skills to use?

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, he is right, I misspoke. I meant to say workers and employers. You know, these are people from all across the province who are, as we speak, as we're in this House today, working on these issues, an issue that they - deliberately I would suggest - ignored. And they're saying these things today. We are working forward with this. We would want their help to help move this forward. We have Merit contractors working with us. We have unionized contractors working with us. We have workers from all the trades, whether they have to be put in place or not. But we do, we've been working on it. Those guys ignored it. What part of that don't they get?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

HEALTH & WELLNESS - EMC: STRIKE PLAN - CONTINGENCY

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, years of tumultuous negotiations under the former Progressive Conservative Government have left paramedics in this province frustrated. Two years after the most current agreement between paramedics and EMC has expired, this ugly history could very well repeat itself. The paramedics we have heard from are angry, and this anger is shared equally amongst all parties involved in the negotiating process, including government. The first contract was rejected by a vote of 98 per cent, and many paramedics are telling us the new contract being voted on right now is not much different than the previous contract rejected.

Could the minister please tell us whether he has been actively working with EMC on a contingency plan in the event of a strike - yes or no?

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I know both sides have worked extremely hard to try to come to an agreement that can be ratified by the paramedics. I'm not going to

negotiate any contract on the floor of the Legislature. I believe in collective bargaining. We've said that so many times here in the Legislature. I think there's a process in place for them to try to resolve and come to an agreement, and I look forward to the paramedics and EMC doing that.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, emergency services on our roads and in our homes, paramedic services in nursing homes and emergency departments, and yes, even in our Collaborative Emergency Centres are not immune should paramedics decide to strike. Nova Scotians deserve to know what will unfold should the most recent contract be rejected. Voting is happening now, and the results of this vote could be known as early as week's end.

Could the minister indicate the details of his contingency plan, or will binding arbitration serve as this government's contingency plan?

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, from what I understand, the voting isn't taking place today. They were working on trying to get a handle on that. We have a large province. I know the union themselves need to facilitate that, and I am confident that both sides will be able to work through this. That's why we have collective bargaining. That's why there is a process in place and I look forward to that process coming to, I think, a positive ending. I look forward to continuing to support our men and women who are paramedics across this province, in whatever environment they choose to work in.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West on a new question.

ERDT - HIGH-SPEED INTERNET: RURAL N.S. - ACCESS PROVIDE

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the original promise of high-speed Internet for all Nova Scotians was to be completed by 2010. At the present time, there are still hundreds in the southwestern part of the province who do not have high-speed access - in fact, a couple of hundred in the member for Digby-Annapolis' riding alone. Access to high-speed Internet is an important service. Really, it's a rural and economic development issue, and here we are, over three years later, with hundreds of Nova Scotians without access.

Three years later, will the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism explain why we are still waiting to make sure that rural Nova Scotia has this technology available to these thousand Nova Scotians, and why the penalties for late completion of this service were waived?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question - a very important one. My first response to the member opposite is, first of all, when it comes to broadband, it was a project that was underestimated, in my opinion. The government and the suppliers, the service delivery agents of the day, didn't fully grasp the magnitude of the problem.

Having said that, we are working on solutions. We are attempting to make sure that all Nova Scotians have access to broadband. Right now, it's fair to say that we are one of the most connected jurisdictions in the world - we are at 99 per cent. We recognize that in the world of fairness, there are less than 800 people who do not have connectivity. We are working, and the member would know that there has been a pilot program taking place up in the Valley to see if we can provide those remaining families, individuals, and organizations with high-speed Internet.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask the minister about that very pilot project. Eastlink currently has that project in place where they are providing high-speed access direct from satellite to home, and the project is proving to be very successful. However, in order to be able to fully embrace this technology, government needs to change the original contract. This will allow them greater flexibility to ensure that all Nova Scotians will have access to high-speed Internet service.

My question to the minister is, when will government make the necessary change to the contract and allow providers the flexibility to complete the high-speed initiative as promised?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, with respect to that test, the results and analyses have not come through to my desk yet. We are not going to make any determination until I receive the full contents of what that testing revealed and what the analysis is.

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

TIR - CABOT TRAIL: VICTORIA CO. SECTION - PAVING

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, the renowned Cabot Trail is noted throughout the world for its beauty and its people. Over the past number of years, reconstruction of the Victoria County portion of the Cabot Trail has taken place - reconstruction, I must note, that was started by the PC Government in 2007. My question to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal is, does his department plan on paving a portion of the Victoria County section of the Cabot Trail this year?

HON. MAURICE SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, because it is a question that I think he's asked earlier, directly to departmental staff. I understand the answer has been given to him.

We have been paving on the Cabot Trail consistently for the last number of years. In the five-year plan we've indicated what we're going to be doing. This year we will be paving on the Cabot Trail, unfortunately not in Victoria County, but in Inverness County. We intend to maintain our efforts to improve the Cabot Trail. We know full well what a valued asset that is, not only to Cape Breton but to the province. Our work is going

forward. Last year we did a significant portion in Victoria County. In fairness I thought this year we should do some work in Inverness County, thank you.

MR. BAIN: Without getting into an argument with the member for Inverness on who deserves it more we'll just move on. Mr. Speaker, the 2012-13 five-year capital plan said that a section of the Cabot Trail in Victoria County from Little River southerly for 6.3 kilometres would be done. In the 2013-14 five-year plan it's not there. The government has been trumpeting the five-year plan so the people will know the projects that are taking place. My question for the minister would be why was that section in the 2012-13 five-year plan but not in the 2013-14 five-year plan?

MR. SMITH: Again, it's an important question because I understand that he is concerned about his constituents and what they're looking forward to having. That portion of the road that he's talking about will be done next year. The reason - and I should tell the member so that they'll know this, this isn't just one layer of preservation pavement, this is a total reconstruction of that road and it's very, very expensive to do that kind of work.

As I said, a large portion of our efforts are being spent on the Cabot Trail, it was a fairness issue to me. I intend to get that work done, it will get done next year. From my point of view, last year the paving plan started in Victoria County, we had paving on the Cabot Trail as well in Victoria County - I determined that going forward that road will get done, it will get done next year, and we're going to Inverness this year.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I think the minister is trying to get an argument going between the member for Inverness and myself. But I have to say that I appreciate what the minister has said about the additional paving that was done in Bay St. Lawrence and the White Point area, 27 kilometres to be exact, and it's very much appreciated by the people that live there. But we also have to keep in mind that those same people who live North of Smokey travel that road, most people every day of the week, to get to Englishtown ferry if they have a doctor's appointment in Baddeck, or whatever the case might be. I still can't understand why it went from being in the plan one year to it not being in it the next, so what good does the five-year capital plan actually do for those that want to know what's going to be taking place?

MR. SMITH: The five-year plan is a plan that we put forward, this year was our fourth edition. Last year we got 97 per cent of the work done that we intended to do; I can't indicate more than that. It is a plan, and sometimes when you have plans you make some alternative changes. It's not as if we've taken this off the list or told the people in that area that we're not going to get the work done, Mr. Speaker - that work will get done. As I said, for me I looked at going forward, it was time that another area other than Victoria County got some attention and I decided on Inverness. I like Cape Breton, I like the Cabot Trail, work is being done on the Cabot Trail. We can't do it all in one year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

ERDT - RURAL COMMUNITIES: PLAN - DATA PRESENT

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, the data is clearly showing that province-wide our economy is at a standstill and when you look specifically at rural areas our rural communities are actually in a recession. Yet we have a Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism who stands up and a Premier who stands up and says that they have a plan and the plan is working. I'd like the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism to present the data that would suggest that his plan is working.

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I think the proof is in the pudding when I hear Statistics Canada blow our horn and how well we are doing with respect to job creation in the Province of Nova Scotia compared to the rest of Canada. I think that's a testimony in itself.

When I look at going across rural Nova Scotia and I look at the investments that we were able to make in Shelburne Shipyard, Mr. Speaker; when I look at the investments that we were able to make and the member that is asking the question - in Tri-Star in Yarmouth, helping them to expand; when I look at the investments that we made in Theriault & Son shipyard in Meteghan, I think this is another; when I look at the investments that we made in the Marine Centre in Yarmouth, and how we enabled them and the municipality to host the world junior championships, which they are hosting again this year, we remain at the table with them.

MR. CHURCHILL: See, Mr. Speaker, this is the problem. While the minister can list off a bunch of commitments and so-called investments, he can't point to one single economic piece of data that would indicate that his plan is actually working for Nova Scotians. If you look at the number, if you look at the actual data since this government took over in 2009, there has been a 6 per cent increase in unemployment for southwestern Nova Scotia alone. Currently in that region there are 7,400 people who are unemployed.

According to the government's own employment projections in their budget, that will be 1,100 fewer jobs in the coming year, Mr. Speaker. So my question, again, to the minister, are these pieces of information acceptable to him or will he finally admit that his job isn't working for Nova Scotians?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, what I think I'm hearing the member say is that he wouldn't invest in Tri-Star Industries. What I think I hear the member opposite saying is that he wouldn't invest in the community of Meteghan, in Theriault & Son. All those investments that we've made in the southwest region, what I'm hearing the member say is that we shouldn't have done.

I would think that it's somewhat contagious because I also think that the member may think that the investments that we made in Port Hawkesbury-NewPage, that we shouldn't have worried and saved those 1,400 jobs and seen the mill turn around to what it

is today, Mr. Speaker. I'm hearing that Shelburne Shipyard - I can remember when we made the investment in Shelburne Shipyard, some members opposite saying, what we were doing, investing in Shelburne Shipyard?

Mr. Speaker, the Shelburne Shipyard has bounced back and has continued to bounce back. Those are economic investments.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, anybody watching this debate knows that I didn't say any of those things. In fact what I'm saying is, looking at the data, the unemployment rate in southwestern Nova Scotia currently stands at 13.2 per cent. That is unacceptable. That is what I'm saying and I'm saying that this minister's investments and so-called plan isn't working and all the data would show that.

My question to the minister is, does he think a 13.2 per cent unemployment rate is acceptable or will he admit that his plan . . .

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 82.

Bill No. 82 - Provincial Flag Act.

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

MR. JIM BOUDREAU: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today. Before I speak to the bill, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. BOUDREAU: Thank you. Today we have Regan Parker, an 11-year-old Grade 5 student from Canso, Nova Scotia. Regan attends Fanning Education Centre and recently she was working on a project for the Heritage Fair and as she reported: "When I

was researching my Heritage Fair Project on Provincial Shields I found an important piece of information that I was surprised about. Nova Scotia's flag wasn't an official flag because it used the armorial banner. New Brunswick, PEI and British Columbia all use their armorial bearings for their flags - that are official. My mom and I thought we should contact our MLA, Jim Boudreau to see if it was still unofficial."

After conducting research and consulting with the library and legal counsel it was deemed our flag has not been awarded official status by the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

I'm very pleased to have Regan, her mom Sheri, brother Coleton, and proud grandfather David Lewis, from Canso, here today to see the results of her research, Private Members Bill No. 82, an Act Respecting the Official Flag of Nova Scotia.

I ask them to please rise so they can receive the warm welcome of the House of Assembly. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

MR. JIM BOUDREAU: Mr. Speaker, I could spend a lot of time speaking on this bill because this bill has long history associated with it. Nova Scotia has a long history and if we look back, dating back to 1625, our armorial bearings that we refer to and see in the Nova Scotia flag were first used and granted by King Charles, King of Scotland. So this has a long, long history.

Rather than spend a lot of time talking about the history, I just want to point out a couple of items that relate to this flag. My research has indicated Nova Scotia has never actually authorized a provincial flag, and in essence it sort of pretended that this flag or the grant of arms basically creates a flag available to the public. But if you look at the history, that's not entirely true.

There are arguments that although the symbols of the flag date back to 1625, it's very clear that the Government of Nova Scotia has avoided any such authorization, and although that may be related to the concern of keeping our flag as the oldest flag in the country, it certainly does not have any official representation through the Legislature.

One thing is clear that the banner, the armorial banner that we talk about, is the banner of authority. It does not necessarily refer to the flag for recognizing the public - although we assume that, it's not necessarily the case. In some of my research, a noted author, Alistair Fraser, indicated that it was his hope that the Government of Nova Scotia

would one day pass the necessary legislation to officially give to the public that which it has coveted so very long. (Applause)

There is a long history here and this bill, I would like to refer to the last part of the bill which says “The flag, bearing the 1625 Armorial Bearings for the Province and described in the Schedule to this Act, is confirmed as the official flag of the Province.”

That way I believe that we can still continue to brag about the fact that we have the oldest flag in the country and therefore this should not have any effect for those purists who like the fact that Nova Scotia has had a flag for a long time. It’s just that we have not recognized it, and therefore, this Act will do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I move second reading of Bill No. 82.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 82. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 80.

Bill No. 80 - Members’ Retiring Allowances Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Premier.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 80 be now read for a second time.

Nova Scotians have expected the people who represent them in this House to conduct themselves appropriately and to a high standard. Amendments to the Members’ Retiring Allowances Act reflect that expectation. Members of the House of Assembly who willfully break the law will not be allowed to use a loophole in the system to protect their pensions.

Nova Scotians told us loud and clear that a sitting MLA who breaks the law and the trust of the public should not be allowed to keep their pension. This government stands up with these Nova Scotians and today is making the Legislature more accountable to the people we work for.

The bill will close a loophole that allows a sitting MLA to resign or retire during the Legislature before their trial, thereby protecting their pension. In addition, a member who

owes a debt to the province - money to the people of Nova Scotia - will be responsible to repay that debt. The bill makes all MLAs accountable for their conduct while representing Nova Scotians. This government promised action, and today we are keeping that commitment. It's the right thing to do for all Nova Scotians. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 80. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 81.

Bill No. 81 - Builders' Lien Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 81, amendments to the Builders' Lien Act, be now read a second time.

It is my pleasure today to provide a brief overview about this bill. The amendments being proposed in this bill result from recommendations made by the Law Reform Commission of Nova Scotia in March of this year. The changes address three issues brought forward by the group representing the construction industry in Nova Scotia.

The first amendment proposes the progressive release of holdbacks to contractors as their work is completed. Currently, the owner of any project under construction is required to hold back 10 per cent of the project's full price for 60 days after most of the work has been done. The general contractor does the same - so anyone else who hires others to work on the project. This means the subcontractors are only paid 90 per cent of their bill until this project is done. So if you are the person pouring the foundation, your work is finished early. In the case of large commercial projects, you could wait years to be paid in full for your work.

I'm sure everyone can imagine that this can be financial hardship on Nova Scotia's subcontractors. They are small-business people; they have families and bills to pay. Every little bit helps. That's why I'm pleased to introduce this amendment, a progressive release of holdbacks, to allow subcontractors to be paid more promptly. This means subcontractors can apply to be paid the remaining amount they are owed out of the holdback, even though the project is not complete.

The second amendment will affect what is called a finishing holdback, Mr. Speaker. Right now when a building is substantially completed, which means it's being used for its intended purpose, contractors must still hold back a full 2.5 per cent of the total value of the project until the finishing work is done. The problem is that the work that is left to be done is often far less in value than the amount of the finishing holdback, so this ties up more money than is necessary.

This bill proposes a change to the amount of the finishing holdback and allows contractors to hold back 10 per cent of the value of the work remaining to be done, rather than 2.5 per cent of the total contract price. This change will bring Nova Scotia in line with the common practice in other provinces.

Finally, the bill introduces the requirements of full public notice of substantial completion of a project. Over the next few months we will work with the industry to make the public notice provision as easy and as effective as possible. As mentioned earlier, the amendments brought forth today have been recommended by the Law Reform Commission and supported by the industry. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as the Justice Critic for the Official Opposition, the Liberal caucus, I'm pleased to see Bill No. 81 come forward and certainly want to recognize the work done by the Law Reform Commission, which has been a very valuable tool to the Province of Nova Scotia in being able to bring forward changes to Nova Scotian legislation.

Certainly, during my 15 years in this House we have seen many bills that have been brought forward based on recommendations of the Law Reform Commission. With this change, we are hopeful that it is going to assist with small businesses throughout Nova Scotia. (Interruption) Didn't he want a bill rushed today or something? I knew he was in a rush, but I've only been up for two minutes now; he could have waited a little bit longer. (Laughter)

We all have small contractors in our ridings who have been affected by not getting paid after performing work on projects. It has been a source of frustration because many of them don't have a huge cash flow to start off with and when they carry out work they expect to be paid in a timely fashion.

Hopefully these changes are going to assist with that. I know that we've heard stories, even this session in the House, regarding small businesses that are suffering due to the fact they were not paid. In one case I think of, an economic development organization, which went under and did not pay its bills, so that's an example again of where Nova Scotia companies have been hurt by - through no fault of their own, they carried out their part of

the bargain. They performed the work, unfortunately they were not paid either any money or the full amount they were owed.

Obviously, we are hoping this is going to assist in that regard and hopefully in the future that businesses and subcontractors are going to be able to be paid in a more timely fashion, based on the changes brought forward here. We're certainly looking forward to any presentations there might be at the Law Amendments Committee, whether there are any concerns that come from this legislation, but certainly at this stage, the Liberal caucus is pleased to give its support for this bill to proceed through second reading and on to the Law Amendments Committee. Merci.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, we will be supporting this legislation. We want to thank the Law Reform Commission for the work they've done on it. I know it's something that the stakeholders and the construction industry are in favour of and we are supportive of them and of this legislation. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their comments. I move second reading of Bill No. 81.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 81. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, with the permission of the House, I ask for unanimous consent for second reading of Bill No. 83.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 83.

Bill No. 83 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 83, an Act to Amend Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008, the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter be now read a second time.

I'm pleased to rise today to speak to second reading of Bill No. 83, an Act to Amend Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008, the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. The Halifax Regional Municipality was granted its own charter in 2009 to better respond to its unique needs as the largest municipality in Atlantic Canada. These amendments are consistent with the spirit and intent of the original Charter.

Current and future residents of Halifax Regional Municipality will benefit from these legislative changes. The change is aimed to increase affordable housing, give flexibility to municipal planning and result in community improvements. HRM needs more flexibility, better tools and the appropriate legislative framework for municipal planning in order to better serve people. These changes support them being able to better plan for the future needs of residents in terms of housing, services and amenities.

The changes will give the municipality increased authority to use bonus zoning and planning tools throughout the Halifax peninsula and Dartmouth within the circumferential highway. Currently these tools are limited to use in the downtown Halifax core. I wanted to touch on some of the main highlights of the bill before getting into more detail.

We are enabling Halifax Regional Municipality to permit bonus zoning in a larger area of the municipality known as the centre plan area. This area includes the central area of HRM on both sides of Halifax Harbour, excluding the HRM by Design downtown plan area. Where bonus zoning is permitted in the centre plan area, it must include a provision for affordable housing. This legislation authorizes HRM to make requirements in addition to affordable housing for bonus zoning in the centre plan area. The amended legislation authorizes HRM to accept money in lieu of any contribution for bonus zoning but HRM must use the monies for the purpose for which it was accepted.

I want to thank Halifax Regional Municipality for working with us as we drafted this bill to give them the authority to expand the use of bonus zoning outside of the downtown to a wider geographic area. Every time I come into the downtown core I'm encouraged to see the number of cranes in the city's skyline. I think the sight of cranes is a positive sign of development and economic activity in HRM and HRM will continue to grow as Nova Scotia begins to build the next fleet of combat ships and with future development in our offshore in the years ahead.

These legislative changes will help the province and city adapt and plan with all residents in mind. Incentive or bonus zoning is a strategic planning tool used by municipal governments to secure community benefits for its citizens in exchange for allowing developers to increase the size of a project. For example, bonus zoning could allow the municipality to approve additional density for a development in exchange for something that benefits the public good.

Affordable housing is an example of a public good that HRM will require a development to include as part of a project. This will be done in conjunction with Nova Scotia Housing. In addition to affordable housing, other examples of a public good could include public art, energy conservation, transportation or public open space. Similar amendments were introduced in December of last year but were not passed prior to the closing of the House. As a result of these amendments, HRM will have greater flexibility when discussing common planning issues with developers. Changes to the HRM Charter around incentive or bonus zoning were requested by the municipality to give them the tools to facilitate strategic development while increasing affordable housing.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier and the Minister of Community Services announced the province's first long-term housing strategy. Nova Scotians want a safe and affordable place to live and the new housing strategy has been developed with their needs in mind. Nova Scotia has never had a real plan to deal with the housing needs of Nova Scotians and this long-term housing strategy will address the changing environment and needs of Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, our housing strategy will change the landscape of our communities, encouraging young people to stay in their communities, help our seniors age at home, and put safe, independent living options in place for our most vulnerable citizens.

The new strategy isn't just about providing better housing options to economically-disadvantaged citizens; it is also about a stronger, more prosperous province. The amendments to the HRM Charter will help increase affordable housing in the municipality, resulting in savings to municipal taxpayers, and help ensure that more residents who need affordable housing have access to it.

Mr. Speaker, revitalizing communities and providing affordable housing cannot be successful if left exclusively to government. All levels of government, the private sector and the not-for-profit community, need to work together to move this housing strategy forward.

Mr. Speaker, Mayor Mike Savage welcomed the introduction of legislation that will help HRM meet targets for growth in the regional centre. The legislation allows them to encourage development and sustainable growth in the regional centre by creating clearer site regulations for developers and faster turnaround time for building applications. HRM

will use bonus zoning to increase affordable housing in the municipality. This approach to municipal planning aligns with the Halifax by Design in the downtown core of Halifax.

Mr. Speaker, this bill includes a definition for affordable housing and the ability to include requirements other than affordable housing for incentive or bonus zoning. I look forward to the debate and the passing of the bill and wait to hear what colleagues across the floor might have to say on the bill. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a few comments about this bill and I appreciate that the government has agreed to move it forward to second reading today. There have been a few versions of this bill over the past few weeks and month or two, as the minister well knows and I don't think we need to go down that road.

I know it was a deep concern to a lot of people that after the last session it didn't pass and HRM had to put some things on hold as a result, essentially because they didn't know what the structure of the bill would look like. Then there was a commitment at the time that it would be introduced on the first day. I don't know what happened but it obviously wasn't and here we are, a few weeks into the session but at least it seems like a possibility that this might move forward in some version.

I know that in speaking with many of the staff and councillors at HRM this afternoon - I mean there is one word that they have some concern about, which I'm sure they'll raise at Law Amendments Committee, but it's how the word "enforce" - I think it's in Clause 6 but it's in

HON. LEONARD PREYRA: This is second reading.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I'm quite well aware of what reading we're in, despite the fact that the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I think you can just get back on track. If you're off track, I'll let you know.

MR. YOUNGER: Thank you, and I appreciate - very good Mr. Speaker. I think with the speed that some of these things go through sometimes, it's important for the government to be aware of some concerns that could raise themselves at Law Amendments Committee, so they can consider them between now and then, and they'll accept them, reject them, whatever the case may be, but I know that is one concern.

I know that some of this will be done in regulations and like so many bills before - and you think to the Maritime Link Act where we said listen, we're glad but it's got to be done in regulation - this is a situation where it'll be about how those regulations are

structured, that it doesn't put a very costly burden on the taxpayers in HRM. That's what we need to be careful of and I hope that the minister will take that under advisement and work with HRM to craft those regulations.

I was on council when the charter was passed and then approved by this Legislature, and I think the minister was here as a member at the time and voted to support it too. At the time, that charter was created with the intent, much like the Toronto charter or some other cities where - and like the Halifax City Charter, when it was a city - that it could actually control more things. It wouldn't have to come to the Legislature so often, but it seems that the Legislature is still constantly dealing with charter amendments, so hopefully we can get to the point where the original intent of the charter can be dealt with and move forward.

I certainly support the provision of bonus density and bonusing for affordable housing. I think one of the challenges we have in the centre plan, which is of course the peninsula of Halifax and the area inside the Circumferential Highway in Dartmouth, is that getting people to live down in those areas is a land-cost issue, which obviously prices things out for some people, even in condos, and then there is an amenities issue. That's one of the things that governments at all levels will have to be looking at, at some point. If you're raising your family in downtown Halifax, you need access to things like playgrounds and art centres. You need that vibrancy. That vibrancy is there, but sometimes it's connected within a very narrow demographic. It's important that we bring people downtown, because otherwise it hollows out and you end up with some of the cities where it really hasn't worked.

Hopefully this will allow some of those residential projects to move forward, and it will allow people to move into residential projects so they can stay there as their income improves - they can move up through the development or move into neighbouring developments, and they can live in downtown from when they're students coming out of university to then staying there with their families and then retiring there in different sorts of housing. That's the thing the intent of that affordable housing bonus provision would provide, so that people don't get driven out by costs and then the waterfront either becomes a retirement community or it becomes a community just for people who can afford the inherent land cost that's included in the condos and some of the townhouses and so forth.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to see this move forward. I do very much hope that the regulations that govern how this is enforced and done will be worked on in co-operation with HRM. Otherwise, we will end up with a bonus density provision that won't be used because it will be too cumbersome and too expensive to be used. It's very important that this gets written in such a way that it can be used. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: It's my pleasure to get up and say a few words on this bill. My mother, Marie, lived in this city a number of years back, before she was married, and she always speaks fondly of Halifax. I know it has changed over the years, but of course that raises the importance of planning to make sure the city stays an attractive place to live and continues to draw people from around Atlantic Canada and the world.

I do know that we're probably expecting some people to come forward during Law Amendments Committee to give their comments on this bill, but we should note that the City of Halifax - the HRM - is supportive. We understand that developers appreciate the flexibility this zoning is going to give them, and we've heard the minister talk about how this will help people who are searching for affordable housing in the downtown core.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to hearing more during Law Amendments Committee, and we understand that this amendment is in spirit with the HRM Charter that was introduced in 2009, and that gives the city more freedom with its planning. We look forward to hearing more as this bill proceeds through the House. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the members opposite for their comments, and we look forward to the bill moving to Law Amendments. I just want the member for Dartmouth East to - his comment around the enforcement. This is an aspect of the bill that the HRM said they didn't want to be involved with, and thought the province should, so there has to be something in the bill in that regard if we're going to write regulation around that. I think we've tried to not make it too prescriptive at this stage, and we do look forward - it certainly would be our intention, as the regulations are drafted, that we would do that in conjunction with HRM. We have no intention of doing this on our own. We have had a lot of back and forth on this piece of legislation to this stage.

So I look forward to the bill moving through the process, Mr. Speaker, and move second reading of Bill No. 83. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion for second reading of Bill No. 83. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, with the concurrence of the House, would you please call the order of business, Private and Local Bills for Second Reading.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 84.

Bill No. 84 -District of Barrington Health Professionals Assistance Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I move second reading of Bill No. 84, an Act to Amend Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2001, the District of Barrington Health Professionals Assistance Act.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to give a few remarks and a little bit of history, because this bill has some importance to me. In my earlier life, I had the pleasure of being warden for the Municipality of Barrington in the years of 1998 to 2006, and when this particular bill was introduced, I can say that I was the warden of the Barrington Municipality. The incentive of this particular initial bill was to attract professionals and doctors and health care professionals to the area, particularly to the Municipality of Barrington. What this amendment will do, I just want to make sure our members of the House are familiar with what is actually being requested here.

The amendment will allow the bill to provide authority for the Municipality of the District of Barrington to make a grant to, and enter into an agreement with, a person who is studying in Canada or elsewhere to become a health professional. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I know the importance of making sure that we have health care services in our community, and I'm very proud of our commitment that this government has done, especially to keep the ERs open in Roseway Hospital, the construction of Bay Side Home and the expansion of that. It's something that's very truly important not only to the Barrington Municipality but the surrounding community and all the seniors and the members at large.

But, anyway, I just wanted to give a brief history of why this is important to this municipality. Mr. Speaker, the Barrington council is committed to making sure that these services are in their area, and I look forward to the engagement of my colleagues, members

opposite also, and this is about making life better for all Nova Scotians. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I do recall having been a member of the House when this previous bill was brought to us; in fact, if I'm not mistaken, Cecil O'Donnell would have been the member for Shelburne at the time, and it was under the majority Government of John Hamm, so it would have been somewhere between, I'd say, 1999 and 2003.

I remember the concerns that were raised at that time, Mr. Speaker, by myself and a number of members of our caucus. Our concern was that this was downloading on the municipalities in that they would now be looking to enter into agreements using ratepayers' money to bring health professionals to the area. The question that was raised at the time, which I believe is still valid today, is why is this being done for one municipality and not looking at possibly changing the Municipal Government Act to allow for this to be done? I don't think it's a secret that this is being done by other municipalities.

Barrington seems to be the only one that comes forward to ask for specific legislation to do this. Kudos to them for doing that because I believe the other municipal units are asking themselves whether the Municipal Government Act actually gives them authority to enter into these types of agreements. Barrington obviously is not taking any chances and is looking for specific legislative authority in order to be able to do this.

This does raise the concern, when you see municipalities asking for this type of legislation and using ratepayers' money to enter into agreements with health professionals, it begs the question, what is the Department of Health and Wellness doing? Once upon a time, previous governments ago, the Department of Health and Wellness did have a physician recruiter for the province who was actively working to recruit physicians to our province and in communities throughout our province.

It would be interesting to hear from the Minister of Health and Wellness what his position would be on this legislation and if this is an acknowledgement that the Department of Health and Wellness no longer sees themselves as being the ones responsible for physician recruitment. In fact, if I'm not mistaken, this current government has downloaded those responsibilities to district health authorities and told them that they're responsible now to undertake the duties of physician recruitment within their district health authority. It is unfortunate that this was once a provincial responsibility, which is now being handed down, first to the district health authorities and now it would seem that it is being handed down to municipalities to do so on their own.

Under the circumstances, certainly, I commend Barrington for coming forward and asking for this. It is unfortunate that the province is not doing this on their own rather than

having an extra responsibility put on the municipalities which, I'm sure, have their hands full in dealing with other matters. I'm aware that my own municipality, Richmond County, has entered into these types of agreements through the work with the Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority, located in Antigonish, which serves the communities of Richmond, Inverness, Guysborough, and Antigonish.

We have been successful in our own area in that the medical students that agreements were signed with were all from Richmond County. In fact, two are currently practising in Richmond County, a third is on the way very shortly. I believe the municipality may be entering possibly into another agreement as there is a native of Richmond County who was practising away and is going to be returning to Richmond County, and we certainly hope for a long time.

We continue to have physician shortages in Richmond County and in the Strait area. The Minister of Health and Wellness should be aware that the recent closing of the office by Dr. Ben Boucher has thrown almost 5,000 patients without a family physician. As well, we have seen some physicians leave the community of L'Ardoise, such that we now have two of the doctors who entered into the agreements, each is putting in one day a week in L'Ardoise, so there are two days when there is a doctor there. I've been receiving phone calls from residents saying they have to call first thing in the morning for an appointment and within five to 10 minutes of the phone lines opening up, the doctor is booked for the day. It has been extremely frustrating for them and we are hopeful, with the arrival of the new doctor who is going to be specifically located in L'Ardoise, this will assist, but obviously more needs to be done.

I do hope the Minister of Health and Wellness is watching this legislation, will acknowledge to the House whether the Department of Health and Wellness endorses these types of agreements, whether they have accepted that they no longer have responsibility for physician recruitment. I guess the way Bill No. 84 is worded the language is broad enough that I don't think it only applies to doctors. I think it would probably allow the Municipality of Barrington to enter into agreements with nurses, lab technicians, X-ray technicians, and other health professionals, because in rural communities it's not just the family doctor who is being a challenge to maintain and to recruit - there are other professionals, as well, within the health care system that are becoming a challenge for communities throughout.

Mr. Speaker, we will be supporting this legislation moving forward, but I do believe that the government should be looking at whether an amendment to the Municipal Government Act would be appropriate, in light of how this is now two bills that Barrington has asked for. Again, we know, as I've acknowledged, that my own municipal units - and I assume others - are entering into these agreements as well, which is clearly not specifically authorized under the Municipal Government Act. If that's where we're going, I don't see why we're not changing that Act so that there's no question of any municipal units - that they would be in accordance with the Act to enter into these types of agreements.

With that, Mr. Speaker, those are the comments I wish to make on second reading. If there are additional comments, we look forward to the Law Amendments Committee process to deal with them at that point in time. Merci.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I too want to speak for a few moments on this bill. This is something that Barrington has worked very hard on for the last number of years, basically coming forward with that first bill a number of years ago. The MLA at the time, Mr. O'Donnell, felt that it should have been something to have brought forward and probably done in concert with the warden of the time, who happens to be the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture today.

The broader question was well brought up by the member for Richmond: the fact that this continues to happen without legislation in many other municipalities and constituencies across Nova Scotia. I know full well that within the Municipality of Argyle today there has been some work on helping to pay for moving costs and trying to skirt the outer edges of what's allowed or what's not allowed in the Municipal Government Act.

I believe there has to be a better system than these one-offs for possibly pitting one municipality against the other, because what happens is that the provincial recruiter goes to these job fairs, and they say, we'll identify a number of doctors or that kind of practitioner and we can bring them to Nova Scotia. At that time they'll show them a bunch of different locations across Nova Scotia.

Then it sort of falls to the purview of the district health authorities, and of course the district health authority is going to say, well, our area is so large, here's the area. You could possibly be in two or three different areas. If you look at the southwest or the district health authority within which Barrington falls - well, municipality-wise, I think there are 11 different constituencies within their purview. So they're not going to basically try to pick a winner or a loser in this one. I think it falls to those municipalities themselves to sell and to provide some kind of incentive to come to the area, which is what this allows the Municipality of the District of Barrington to do.

There is a better way, and the better way is stopping that competition between municipalities, because ultimately, this is a tax base that gets called upon on many occasions to pay for many different things. I would much rather the Municipality of the District of Barrington be spending their money on a new health centre, which the mayor or the warden has talked about on many occasions, to try to provide a facility that everybody can be proud of, rather than working this way.

As it stands today, I think this is a good intermediate idea until the broader question that government can look at - that maybe the Department of Health and Wellness, with the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, can look at the broader

implications and try to find a solution to stop the in-fighting among municipalities in fighting for these health care professionals.

The Municipality of the District of Barrington has had a number of problems over the last number of years of bringing in new doctors. The ones who they have brought in have not necessarily stayed, so they are looking for opportunity here to find someone from that local area and help them through their process. By the look of the Act as well, it's not just for doctors but maybe for nurse practitioners, other health practitioners who can try to build a team of health professionals that can serve the Barrington area for a much longer period than we've been able to have happen in that area over the last number of years.

I know the warden himself has talked about this one on a number of occasions and, of course, we'll be supporting this one through the next part of the process, which is moving on to the Committee on Law Amendments. Maybe there's an opportunity there to make it even stronger or even better.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Shelburne, the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, for bringing this issue forward because, of course, it is a good piece of legislation for the constituents of the Barrington area. Thank you very much.

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

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: I want to thank the members opposite for their engagement. Mr. Speaker, I close debate on Bill No. 84 and move second reading. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 84. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Private and Local Bills.

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.

[2:52 p.m. The House resolved into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Mr. Alfie MacLeod in the Chair.]

[3:07 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Mr. Alfie MacLeod in the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the Committee of the Whole House has met and considered the following bills:

Bill No. 61 - Cyber-safety Act.

Bill No. 62 - Protection for Persons in Care Act.

which were reported with certain amendments by the Committee on Law Amendments to the Committee of the Whole without further amendments and the Chairman has been instructed to recommend these bills to the favourable consideration of the House.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

Bill No. 71 - House of Assembly Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill No. 71.

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

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

Bill No. 72 - House of Assembly Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

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

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

Bill No. 73 - House of Assembly Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Rule No. 51, there are a number of changes, one specific change I'd like to see to this bill and I was wondering if it could be recommitted back to Committee of the Whole House on Bills. We've been hearing from constituents in the area of Tracadie that actually, since it is split in two by the river and the new boundary, they would like to have a change there to be put in as East Tracadie, rather than just Tracadie. I'm wondering if that can be brought back to Committee of the Whole House so we can make that change.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion before the House is that this bill go back to the Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

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

The motion is defeated.

The honourable member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

MR. JIM BOUDREAU: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill No. 73.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to talk to the bill that is before the House. I would like to indicate that the proposal that is before the House has been something that has been discussed with a number of constituents and parties throughout the constituency.

One of the things I would like to point out is that Guysborough County itself was created when Sydney County was divided in 1836, so the word and the term Guysborough County has been on the record as an electoral district for a very long time. If there was no reference to Guysborough County, it would certainly be the first time in many years and it would also take away the reference to that county.

When we look at the situation throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, the counties have been traditionally recognized and therefore, I think it's fitting that the term Guysborough remain in the title of this constituency.

It's interesting when one does some research and looks at that, that in 1867 we had a gentleman by the name of John Joseph Marshall who was elected as an anti-confederate in that constituency and there has been a long list of representatives up to this point. I'm very pleased to say that I would be the first individual with an Acadian name who represents this constituency. I take great pride in that.

I want to talk a little bit about the other part of the name, which is Eastern Shore. As most of us know, the term "Eastern Shore" has been a name that has been attached to a fair portion of this constituency for a very long time. The residents along the Eastern Shore were quite upset and perturbed when they lost their designation as the Eastern Shore and the riding then had been called Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

One of the things that I wanted to do, or we wanted to do in the consultation process, is to ensure that there was no real reference to communities and names. The new name talks about the geography of the land and Guysborough County being the largest portion, of course, and then the Eastern Shore, which has been long recognized throughout history - we can go back in my area and look at the Eastern Shore as being identified back as early as 1536 with the repeated voyages of Captain Savalette coming back and forth to this area. As some of you may know, Savalette was a Basque fisherman who spent almost his entire life fishing off the coast of what we now call the Eastern Shore.

The word Tracadie was chosen, not because of a community - it was chosen because of a reference to the river which forms the boundary. The word "Tracadie" has great significance in our history because it is of Mi'kmaq origin and it basically means ideal camping place. It should also be noted that this ideal camping place was used by many individuals, in particular the Acadians settled in along the Tracadie River for many generations. It's also of significance that the African Nova Scotian communities in this constituency - who have been there for a long, long time, dating back until about 1787 - settled in around this area in a community that is referred to as Upper Big Tracadie.

I just want to make a special note of that, because often in our history certain groups are not recognized, and in this way this name recognizes the three groups that I think are sometimes not recognized as they should be - those being the Mi'kmaq, the Acadians, and the African Nova Scotian community.

I just want to share a little story with you. This area, Upper Big Tracadie, is well known for producing great fiddlers - fiddlers like Joe Izzard and George Reddick. George Reddick in particular, I think, crafted his own fiddle and played for the Queen.

AN HON. MEMBER: He was instrumental in that.

MR. BOUDREAU: He was instrumental in that, and Joe Izzard's fiddle is on display at the Black Cultural Centre.

I want to end this by indicating that this name - the name that has been given - is not based on any community. It's based on geography, and the geography is designed to recognize the longevity of three distinct geographical areas, those being the County of Guysborough, which goes back to 1836; the Eastern Shore, which we can go back to 1536; and the area of Tracadie, which has great significance to the Mi'kmaq, the Acadians, and the African Nova Scotians.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will take my seat. This is the reason for the rationale behind this name change. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I thank the member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour for bringing it forward, Mr. Speaker, but really what this continues to show is the interference of government when it came to the Electoral Boundaries Commission. We can go back a year now and look at what happened during the Electoral Boundaries Commission, and we can see where government sort of liked it in some cases and, of course, didn't like it in many of the other ones.

This is a really good example. What happened to the community of Tracadie is that basically down the river it got split in two. The community of Tracadie itself truly is in Antigonish. It's not in this new constituency. The East Tracadie Road - all the parts over there happen to be in this new constituency, which the Electoral Boundaries Commission called East Nova.

This is, again, an underlining of the failure of this government when it came to the Electoral Boundaries Commission, when it truly interfered with the terms of reference. I know the member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour was a member of the standing committee originally when the warnings went up by that time by the member for Richmond, by the member for Clare, by the member for Argyle - myself - where we said, if

you start limiting or you start making it completely wide open and forgetting about your Acadian communities, you'll start going down a road that you don't want to go down.

I know that the member is finding himself in a constituency that is far too big, and now representing the community that got split in two. Well, I happen to represent a community that got split in two now, or will hopefully someday represent that community that got split in two, which of course is the community and the County of Shelburne. I can tell you that the new constituency of Argyle-Barrington is going to be a tremendous force in this province, one that is going to work very hard to make sure that these things happen, but I am trying to illustrate the problem with what's being proposed here today.

I am not the MLA for Argyle-Barrington, neither is the member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour the member for East Nova - or the member for whatever it is being called today. (Interruption) Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie, thank you. He is still just the member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour. Maybe someday he will be lucky enough to be the member for that larger constituency and maybe someday he will have the opportunity to change the name at that time, because I would not be comfortable with myself, my conscience would not be good to say that I am going to change the name of the constituency of Argyle-Barrington to something else.

Do I call it the constituency of Seal Island? Do I call it the constituency of Lobster Bay? Or do I pick a whole bunch of other communities within that - the Comeau's Hill-Woods Harbour-Clark's Harbour constituency? What do I do? My conscience would not be right in renaming it something beyond what that Electoral Boundaries Commission named it.

All of these bills that we see before us in third reading are all in that same vein, ones that this government did not like the turnout of the Electoral Boundaries Commission and therefore went and changed the names, and trying to change them back when they really don't have the authority to do it. You know, if they come forward with a petition and a group of people who said that these people asked me to do it, well then fine. But what we see are name changes that are politically expedient for them, to make it look a little better that they didn't interfere in the process of the Electoral Boundaries Commission.

I think that is the shame of the bill that we see before us today, and even though I understand and appreciate the research of the member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour, I don't agree with the fact that he has the right to change the name of a constituency that he does not hold - and might not hold in the future. Thank you very much.

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

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 74.

Bill No. 74 - House of Assembly Act.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I do so move that Bill No. 74 be now read for a third time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, a private bill, is one that I believe represents recognition and inclusion, something I personally believe in strongly and have endeavoured, as a MLA, to champion. I've endeavoured to champion these values both in and for the communities I represent. In truth, I'm proud to represent four distinct communities, two of which have not, until now, been included in the name of the provincial constituency.

Millbrook First Nation is a very successful, viable and valuable community, and I am proud to represent the people of Millbrook First Nation. Salmon River is another wonderful community and it's an old community, Mr. Speaker. A lot of people don't realize that in fact the Mi'kmaq first lived in Salmon River and then they were moved to where they are now, in Millbrook First Nation.

My community, which is made up of Truro and Bible Hill and Salmon River and Millbrook First Nation is an old community. We have a lot of French Acadian roots there as well, with L'École Acadienne, which is a growing population of students; we also have a large Mi'kmaq population; and we have a large African-Nova Scotian population. Mr. Speaker, I'm very, very proud to be able to represent the interests of all these different people.

I'd like to just share a quick story as well about my mother, actually, who was a teacher at the Truro Junior High School in Truro. We moved to Truro, Nova Scotia in 1968 from Australia and my mother and father were both teachers. We came over on a boat with 2,000 Australian teachers who, that particular year, were being shipped to Canada because there was a shortage of teachers in Canada, and Australian teachers had been approached by the Canadian Government to come and fill in a need right across the country.

So my parents agreed to come over to Canada and we first went to Regina, Saskatchewan, for a year, and then they heard how beautiful Nova Scotia was, and they wanted to come and spend some time here. My dad applied for a job and was accepted at the Teachers College in Truro, and my mother was accepted at the Truro Junior High

School. So we moved to Nova Scotia. I was 8 years old and I remember my parents making it a point to reach out across the great divide to all of the different solitudes. You know, they oftentimes say two solitudes, but in Nova Scotia, at the time, it seemed there were four solitudes: there were the Mi'kmaq, the African-Nova Scotians, the French Canadians, and the English and white Canadians. So my parents made a big point of reaching out and trying to bring people together.

My mother did it in her work at school, and on the weekends taking kids for trips horseback riding, things like that. I remember that oftentimes I would go with them and it was just a wonderful time, Mr. Speaker, to bring all these children of various backgrounds together. And my father set up the first Mi'kmaq program in Nova Scotia, at the Teachers College, to train Mi'kmaq students to be teachers. He saw there was a lack there, a lot of teachers who did not understand the background of First Nations people, and he felt it was time that teachers from a First Nations background were out there in the community teaching children.

My mother, the first day of school - one of the band councillors in Millbrook First Nation told me this story recently. He remembered coming in there, and he and his friends were worried because it was Grade 7, Mr. Speaker, and until that time, they'd been going to a school where they had a nun for a teacher who taught them that the way you spelled arithmetic was "A-Red-Indian - blah, blah, blah." He said it was so racist and they were so hurt by the treatment that they had received, they really didn't know if they were going to make it through junior high school.

He said on the first day of school they thought they'd give it a try. They showed up to class, and this little blonde woman with a very thick Australian accent, who was 30 years old at the time, showed up, and her main subject at the time was history. She picked up two big history books, Mr. Speaker, and she showed them to the class. She said, now I want you to note, class, that these are the two books I'm supposed to teach you history from, the history of Nova Scotia, but I'm going to show you, class, where these books belong, click - in the garbage can.

Mr. Speaker, my mother said, apparently, that she refused to teach Nova Scotian history from these books, which she felt were outdated, were racist, did not properly explain the background of either the African-Nova Scotian community, or the Mi'kmaq, or the French-Canadian community. She actually went into the archives and discovered for herself what the history of Nova Scotia was. She talked to people in those communities who knew the history, who had a verbal history passed down, and that was what she proceeded to teach to the students. This particular band council member told me, and tears came to his eyes when he remembered this story, and he said, Lenore, if it wasn't for your mother, we would not be here today. I have to thank your mother for her attitude, because she reached out across the divide, and we got through school because of her.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that short story, that explains, in a nutshell, why I am the way I am, who I am, what I believe in, and as soon as I became MLA in Truro-Bible Hill, I actually set up a second office, one in Truro and one in Millbrook First Nation, because I believe that I should come to the people instead of the people having to come to me. And with that, I take my place, and I hope that this will pass without any question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, at the Law Amendments Committee process, when we looked at these bills, specifically Bill No. 73 and Bill No. 74, I raised concerns over the length of the names that were being proposed, because when we went through the boundary review process, the proposed name for the new riding, which includes the portion which I currently represent, had been Cape Breton-Richmond. We had discussions about whether that was an accurate reflection of the fact that you had the Town of Port Hawkesbury, the County of Richmond, and a significant portion of what is now known as Cape Breton West - the communities of Big Pond, Ben Eoin, East Bay, and other communities.

When we threw out a few proposed names, the answer that came back from one of the commissioners was: Elections Nova Scotia has told us there's a limit to the length of the name, and you can't go beyond that. That was fine. When I saw these bills and I saw the length of the name, especially Bill No. 73 - which just passed, renaming what was proposed to be the East Nova riding - and now seeing this name.

When we were sitting in the Committee on Law Amendments and I raised the issue, I noticed there was a representative from Elections Nova Scotia there in the room. I said, I've raised this concern, and the easy answer here would be just to ask the gentleman from Elections Nova Scotia to come forward at our committee and tell us whether there are any concerns here.

I have to tell you, under a majority government you get used to bizarre things happening, but first of all we still have - which is contrary to precedent here - a Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage who sits on the Committee on Law Amendments. The tradition in this House is that during majority governments ministers do not sit on committees, yet he continues to flaunt that rule even though they have a significant majority.

But right away when I suggested that, he said, shh, no, no, we can't allow that person from Elections Nova Scotia to come forward and answer questions. To me it was bizarre. Why? We had almost no business that day; we were going to be done in a matter of minutes, why would you not allow that individual? Now I have the answer. When I had the chance to speak to the representative afterward, I asked, how much notice have you been given of these changes? He said we found out the day they were tabled.

So how much consultation took place with Elections Nova Scotia? None. Absolutely none. What's more interesting was to try to find out, am I the one losing my mind, or was this not a concern that was raised to us at the time? This morning I received an e-mail confirming that, yes, there was a limit of 30 characters for the name of a riding. But because of Bill Nos. 73 and 74, without any notice to Elections Nova Scotia, they've now had to find ways of amending the printing and the fonts that will appear on election materials because of Bill Nos. 73 and 74.

Which does beg the question, why is it that this government would not have simply picked up the phone and told Elections Nova Scotia, we have some members who have concerns and some proposals and we'd like to share those with you. Once again, it uses its majority to simply barge ahead and leave everybody else to adjust afterward. I agree, and I am uncomfortable with the fact that members can stand in their place and simply change the name of proposed new ridings they don't represent. There has to be some sort of a formula used where communities have their chance to have input, whether it's our municipal colleagues or some other levels where communities can be the ones coming forward with this, rather than elected officials cherry-picking what name they think a riding should be called.

There's a reason why we have an independent boundary review commission that we ask to do that. Should there be an ability to change names if they're not accurately reflective? Absolutely. There should be. But I believe there needs to be some sort of process where Elections Nova Scotia, which is an independent body, could be involved rather than having a situation where members can just stand and introduce bills and name their ridings whatever they wish. I shouldn't say "their ridings," because these are proposed new ridings that have no representative until the next election is called and the votes are tallied.

With that, I was pleased that I was not losing my mind, that there was actually a concern within Elections Nova Scotia with the printing that is there, that they did have a limit. I rise on this bill because unless we change more before we're done, there are two ridings now that exceed the standard limits placed on riding names. The proposed ridings of Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie and Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River will be the two ridings that go above and beyond. One can only hope that these printing changes that have to take place will not cause any issues for those with any sort of vision impairments but it does beg the question again, why would they simply not have asked Elections Nova Scotia and sought their input on these changes?

My colleague certainly is assisting on what is really behind this but regardless, it's unfortunate that this is the way business is done under this NDP Government, but so be it. At the end of the day it is the voters, Mr. Speaker, not the members of this House, who will have the final say on this issue, like so many other issues. Merci.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

HON. LEONARD PREYRA: Mr. Speaker, I hadn't intended to speak to this bill but I do want to clarify certain misconceptions that may have developed about the Law Amendments Committee process. I agree with the member that he did make the recommendation about the length of names and, in fact, we agreed with him that it was something we should look into, but the question was whether or not we could pull someone out from the audience who had not expressed an interest in giving any evidence, who had not demonstrated any capacity to speak to the question that was on the floor.

Really what happened, Mr. Speaker, is we took the member's advice. We went to Elections Nova Scotia. We consulted with them and we have responded to his concern. I think that is the right way to do things. We also drew to his attention that if he did have any changes to propose, he could have proposed them himself, but it was a government responding to a very legitimate question that he has raised and this is the outcome, and I thank him for raising it.

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

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 75.

Bill No. 75 - House of Assembly Act.

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

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to speak for only a few moments here. First of all I move third reading of Bill No. 75.

This change is more for clarification for the people I represent currently in the new proposed boundary of what the Electoral Boundaries Commission called Sackville. What happened was the current seat that I represent was split into two, splitting into a seat called Hammonds Plains-Lucasville, which I spoke in favour of at the Elections Commission on the first round, or in fact wrote a letter asking the commission to include Lucasville in the name of the constituency.

Then the seat that I currently represent was then also - they also created a seat called Sackville. So, of course, when I announced that I would be seeking the nomination for our

Party in the constituency of Sackville, people said well what about the member for Sackville-Cobequid, are you running against him? So I had to explain to people that no, the community that I wish to represent, after the next election, is Middle and Upper Sackville and portions of Beaver Bank.

This is merely a clarification piece, in particular for the people of Beaver Bank as well, whom I wish to represent after the next election. Again this is just a clarification for those people and I know that they will certainly recognize that as that. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's agenda for the day and we appreciate the support of everybody, especially obviously the member for Glace Bay, he has been very good today.

I move that the House do now rise to meet again May 8th at the hour of 2:00 p.m. The House will sit until 6:00 p.m. I would now to turn it over to the Deputy House Leader of the Official Opposition.

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

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, we will meet between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. tomorrow. We will call Bill Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 56, 60, 63, 64, 65, 68, 77, 79, and 82.

MR. SPEAKER: Could you repeat that please.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member could indulge the House and read the names of the bills also. (Interruption) I was joking.

MR. SPEAKER: So we do not need to have that done.

The motion is that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow at the hour of 2:00 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We have now reached the moment of interruption.

The Adjournment motion topic is:

“Therefore be it resolved that by breaking the MOU, the NDP has forced HRM to pay \$8 million more in education cost pressures and that the NDP is downloading education costs to all municipalities and further cutting from our classrooms and putting quality of education at risk.”

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

NDP - HRM MOU: BREACH - EDUCATION EFFECTS

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious issue for the municipalities, in particular HRM. As the province proceeded to eliminate the MOU that was in place for the province to take over the cost of education and certain other costs that the province had in place from the municipalities, it has become obvious, even though the minister at the time indicated there would be no extra cost for municipalities . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The chatter is really getting loud and it's very hard to hear the honourable member so those who would like to have conversations, if you'd like to carry them on in another location, that's great.

The honourable member for Preston has the floor.

MR. COLWELL: As the minister indicated during the debate and information that followed up after the MOU was basically torn up for the municipality and indeed he continues to say there is an out clause in it - and definitely there is - it doesn't mean they had to do it. They said that there was no effect on the municipalities, there would be no

extra money that they would have to pay. Well, talking to members of the regional council in the Halifax Regional Municipality, because of the increase in the assessment base in the Halifax Regional Municipality, this year the taxpayers of the regional municipality are going to have to pay another \$8 million into education costs of the province.

That seems very unusual because the province this year cut education spending by about \$11 million. So if they cut \$11 million out of the education budget and they're going to receive an extra \$8 million from the Halifax Regional Municipality, it means a \$19 million change, so where does the \$8 million for education go into the government's coffers? I would say it probably goes into general revenue one way or the other, either directly or indirectly by the department just not putting as much money in or the government not putting as much money into education and then just putting that extra \$8 million in to say it really went there. Either way, it goes into general revenue, and that's not the idea of this whole process.

It's getting worse as time goes on and we're seeing more and more costs downloaded on the taxpayers. People say there's only one taxpayer in this province - actually there's more than one taxpayer. People who own properties are going to be paying this bill and, as they do with anything that they do with the municipality and the money is simply transferred to the province, where indeed the province gets most of its funding from income tax, which everybody pays - everyone who works and has an income. So indeed, it's a double-compounded thing that has been here. So effectively the NDP Government has again succeeded in raising taxes in the regional municipality.

They say they've got a balanced budget; they're balancing the books now not only on the income-tax payers, in the fees that they charge everybody, which are getting exorbitant from all the increases they've had, two in a couple of years, down onto now the property owners as well, again just another step to make it more expensive to live in Nova Scotia - and by making it more expensive to live in Nova Scotia it means that businesses won't locate here, and they won't stay here if they are here.

I've talked to several small businesses in the last couple of months and they all say the same thing: it's getting almost impossible to do work in Nova Scotia - and that's scary, that's the backbone of Nova Scotia's economy.

As you see property taxes go up, it means it's another bill for small businesses in our province; that is just an indirect tax that helps the province. So as you see all these things transpire and all the ways that this government has very cleverly come up with ways to raise taxes without admitting that they're raising taxes - although they did raise the GST by 2 cents, which is another 25 per cent increase in taxes for everybody in the province, everybody who spends any money is hit by this 25 per cent increase. It's just another way that they're raising taxes through the education system.

The outcomes in education really are questionable, so we really need to look at ways to improve education in our province. The municipalities are putting in - and I believe my number is correct, I'm just going from rough calculations here - between 2008-09 up to 2012, municipalities contributed around 22 per cent of the total provincial education budget, around that much. That's getting very serious and as the province reduces the budget, the municipalities pay more, that number is getting higher and higher for the municipality's share of paying it. As this continues, it's going to be more and more difficult for people to stay in their homes, and it's going to be more difficult for businesses to stay here and operate here successfully and profitably.

I was speaking here on Friday and I got a lot of laughs when I talked about this stuff, and I was quite entertained today when they put several resolutions in about things I said on Friday. It shows that I'm really getting to the heart of what the problem is with this government not being able to properly stimulate the economy. Once they start complaining, you know that you're hitting a sore point and, indeed, that they're very, very sensitive about the poor job they've done creating employment in this province, as well as increasing taxes so drastically.

As we see the taxes go up, the employment goes down, businesses are closing. And we talked today in Question Period - there were some questions about a company in Pictou that the province put in \$60 million of taxpayers' money again - DSTN - that was supposed to create 500 new jobs. Evidently that's not going to work out too well.

As we see, this government continues to make bad investments time and time again. The Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism touted that Theriault Shipyard got a whole \$20,000 to really help their operation. Now, \$20,000 is great, and that's a very solid, good, long-standing company in Nova Scotia, but Irving gets \$300 million? There's something wrong with this whole picture here - \$300 million.

So \$300 million that Irving could have done by themselves; they could have done it without the \$300 million. I'm sure, as a company, that's probably net worth more than the Province of Nova Scotia when you really look at it. They're very capable business people, will very successfully complete this shipbuilding contract when it ever gets going here - probably won't employ the 11,000 people or whatever the new number is that this government is touting. People are starting to realize that there are going to be very few jobs from this.

But there will be some jobs, and that's very positive. It's always positive for our economy. Hopefully they're well-paid jobs, so that people will be able to stay in Nova Scotia. It's getting very expensive to live here. Every time the taxes go up in this province, one way or another, either by the province forcing the municipalities to put the property taxes up both for residential and businesses, it becomes more and more difficult to live here.

The government wants to keep that in mind. We hear the Premier asking questions here and answering questions - or supposedly answering questions. All he says is, that can't be true; it can't be true. After a while you wonder, because even when documentation is given to the Premier that shows that what he's saying, what is being asked, is true, and his answer doesn't change, it makes you wonder what people are going to believe down the road when election time comes around. Hopefully they see the light and understand that this government has done nothing to create and develop employment in this province, which would help the economies in all the municipalities and the province as a whole.

As we move into and continue to be one of the worst-performing provinces in the whole country, including the territories, it makes you wonder what kind of poor management is in place. We see some drastic things that happened here, and as time goes on we're going to see just what kind of a job this government has done in the province. They tout a lot of things, but there's not much to be seen for the actual activities that they have done, except for more unemployment, higher taxes, and giving away money to big corporations. It's a shame that the property-tax owners from the municipalities have to contribute to that cost when there is no need of doing it. With those few words, I'll take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, I'm really pleased to be able to engage in this debate. I hope there are people watching who can glean some useful information about the resolution that the Liberal Party has put forward.

I will table this piece of paper. I just want to read from it presently. "The UNSM and the municipalities acknowledge that unforeseen costs or revenue losses may impair the province's ability to achieve its commitments as expressed in this memorandum and that in any event all are subject to the appropriation of the necessary funds by the Legislature."

That's Clause 9 of the MOU, and the interesting thing about the location of that clause is that it's on the page that the signatures are on from the parties who agreed to the MOU - one being a former minister of the former Progressive Conservative Government. What they did in that MOU is both parties agreed to an out clause. In other words, if the province didn't have the money, they could move away from the MOU, that's exactly what they agreed to. Now when the member opposite spoke he said, yeah it was in the agreement but they didn't have to.

Well I have to say the state of the province finances as left by the previous government certainly meant that they did have to - which was us - and I have to say if the previous administration didn't feel that if this was an issue they wouldn't have put it in. But I think they looked at this realistically and said \$100 million, we just may not be able to

come up with that, so we better allow ourselves a mechanism to get out of this agreement, and they did.

Mr. Speaker, the finances of the province certainly didn't make it possible for the province to continue but I will say this: the municipalities came out of that MOU in better condition than they went into it with. Certainly they had a bit of a bump.

I'd like the people who are listening to be aware that the honourable member for Preston, who spoke to this, was a member of the Liberal Government that put the service exchange in place with the municipalities, that actually resulted in the municipalities having to pay that education tax, the debt on the housing authorities, and the correction services. The previous Liberal Government actually set up the service exchange that forced the municipalities to make these payments and now, for some reason, he has a problem with that. I would say it is a bit hypocritical.

The thing that the member would be aware of - he was a municipal councillor, he should be aware of it - is that the municipality, the HRM, does not budget the money for the educational tax as part of their process around delivering services to their citizens. In other words if they are talking about collecting garbage, cleaning, plowing the streets, whatever - that money is not part of the budget. In other words it didn't take away from money that is budgeted for those services - this is a flow-through. They know they're not using it and it doesn't go to the general revenue of the province; it goes to the school boards not to the general revenue of the province. The member opposite, who spoke to this, should be aware of that. He was a Cabinet Minister and a minister of the Liberal Government that brought in this service exchange, and being a councillor, he should have been aware of exactly how this worked.

Now, he has spoken in this House on more than one occasion around the change of the MOU and how that has forced municipalities to raise taxes. This year the HRM actually would have lowered their rate, except for a fee they put on for cleaning the sidewalks. We have a cap on assessments in this province and it's around CPI, three per cent roughly, whatever. Assessment went up by six, basically across the province, so even with a cap there is this increase in assessment and the HRM felt that they could actually lower their rate so that taxes for people didn't go up and the only charge they put on was an additional charge to clean the sidewalks because that was an issue - members might remember hearing that in the media - about the people complaining about the level of service for cleaning sidewalks.

So this goes completely opposite to the condition that the member tried to speak to that municipal units have had to raise taxes in order to deliver service; totally not true. I'm going to say two years ago the municipalities, as a group across the province, had about \$140 million that they had access to in their own accounts, so the question of whatever other things they may want to do is purely up to that municipal unit.

I also want to mention, because the member may be aware of this - I'm not sure if he is, but certainly for people listening - once upon a time, the cost for education was borne by the local government not by the province. I'm not sure if it was in the Regan government or just which government - I think it may have been the Regan Government - that changed. Now, instead of local governments covering 100 per cent of the cost of education, they cover about 15 per cent.

He talks about this downloading by the province onto the municipalities because of this educational cost - the province took that away from them years ago and has left them with about 15 per cent that they have to cover, which is one of the lowest percentages in the country. Some of them are up to 25 or 35 per cent of the educational cost is borne by the municipal units. (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. MACDONELL: The cost to the local government has been taken up, 85 per cent of it, by the province. (Interruption) If the member for Yarmouth was to review Liberal Government history, it would be very helpful for him to have some notion of exactly the events that have gotten the province to this place. It was, by and large, by the previous Liberal Government under Premier John Savage.

They entered into the service exchange and the way that was done was on the basis that the municipalities would not have to pick up more cost. In other words, they used to do the Community Services work and the province was not going to leave them more burdened by this exchange. So the amount of costs that the municipality took on for the services that they did - compared to what the province took away from the municipality - was supposed to be that neither party was unduly burdened, that the municipalities were not to have significant cost increase.

I know that I'm getting close to the end of my time, Mr. Speaker, so I have to say I'm really glad that the member opposite raised this debate. I think that the people listening might have gleaned some pertinent information that this is not as a hardship brought on by the NDP Government. This is just following the guidelines of an MOU that previous administrations had signed on for, and since the finances of the province wouldn't allow this to go forward, in the interests of Nova Scotians, the province moved away from it and the municipal units actually came out of the MOU in better shape than they entered into it. So with that I'll take my seat. Thank you.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to stand here this evening and take part in this debate about the MOU and the downloading on the municipalities of some educational costs. Mr. Speaker, we've had some good debate in this Legislature over the last little while around municipalities and the struggles they are facing

in this day and age and under this NDP Government, and we've had a lot of talk about the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. I heard the member opposite talking about the municipalities and how they didn't raise their tax rates and the Halifax Regional Municipality actually only raised their tax rates for cleaning sidewalks.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Cape Breton Regional Municipality didn't raise their taxes this year, but they also had to put in their budget that there will be no paving in their capital plan this year; no paving in the municipality whatsoever. And when I spoke about that, when I asked about that, I was told that because of the tearing up of the MOU - or so-called opting out of the MOU - that the Cape Breton Regional Municipality had to add \$2 million to the school board, in order for the school board to survive.

So although they are saying it is not hurting municipalities, I beg to differ for the CBRM. If any one of the members drives through Cape Breton on some of the roads that are there, Mr. Speaker, some of those roads are deplorable, as you would know yourself from driving out through areas in your municipality. This capital plan for the CBRM would put a lot more people to work in the area, which would have raised up the tax base a little better, which would have allowed us to do a little bit more, but that's gone.

It's fitting that we talk about this debate today, today being Teachers' Day. We know that teachers are an essential part of our education system. I have a lot of respect for a lot of teachers. I had a good bunch of teachers myself over the years, and I know my children, without good-quality teachers, wouldn't be where they are today, as would most kids of the province, actually. If we know what goes on in the province and we know the cuts to the education system that have happened over the last four years, we know that our teachers must be excellent because they're doing the same work with a lot less money and a lot fewer teachers. Without these teachers doing their job, the shape of our society would be different.

We in the PC caucus believe a strong education system is a vital part of our economy, our province, and our way of living. The education of young people is simply the most essential thing for our future, but what we've been seeing is that some of our future is moving away. We have an obligation to ensure that the state of our education system is better off when we leave office than when we entered it. I heard a member of this House, just recently - Mr. Speaker, you might know the gentleman - who said that there were three reasons he went into politics, and that they were his three children, but now he has seven reasons, because he has four grandchildren as well.

We obviously share the values that education is essential in society, and sometimes we wonder and we question if those are actual values that the NDP share as well. We believe that small class sizes in the early years are essential to creating proper learning environments, and we saw last year, when the school year started, that they had to hire temporary teachers to fix the problem of overcrowding in our classrooms. This disrupted a lot of classrooms. I know I spoke to parents and teachers at the time, that the children got

used to certain teachers, took a month, month and half, we were into the school year, and those teachers then had to end up taking on new children, or they had to put a new teacher in front of some of these children. It took another month, month and half, for those kids to get comfortable, which impacted on their learning ability. This disrupted more than just the teachers. It disrupted the students, the parents, and the community as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, we introduced a bill that would cap students at 25 in Grades Primary to 3. By doing that, we would know at the start of the year that our classrooms would be stable, our classrooms would have the same teacher in them, our children would get comfortable early on, and the learning process would begin.

When budgets need to be reined in, we believe that cutting from the top is the proper way, and decreasing spending. We know that the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has a large staff, yet we've heard that the majority of the cuts - \$65 million - have been done at the classroom level. Actually, last year the Chignecto-Central School Board decided to cut a lot of its librarians, so children wouldn't have the ability to do that, to go into the library and learn that way.

We also believe that education is an investment in our future. It's widely known that every dollar spent on front-line services returns between \$9 and \$14, not to mention what it will cost in lost opportunity. We can assume that every dollar cut from this investment cost future Nova Scotians between \$9 and \$14 dollars.

This is not the system that we want to leave for our children. We want to leave a system that is healthy and vibrant, so that our children learn the skills needed to survive in today's world. We will work with the municipalities, the communities, and the families to create the right conditions. We've seen the attack on rural schools and, obviously, we don't share those views. Mr. Speaker, we would not download the costs to municipalities for our education system.

We just heard the minister talk about the NPD and the MOU, we heard it has been ripped up between municipalities in the province because we said they couldn't afford it. Now, Mr. Speaker, we heard there was an out clause in that MOU and they simply used the out clause because they couldn't afford it. (Interruption)

I hear the member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour talking about taxpayers, I guess he hasn't been around here the last - I've been here two years and all we've heard about is taxpayers' money being spent on places like Daewoo, Irving, Bowater Mersey (Interruptions) Not that we're against that, Mr. Speaker, but if it's the taxpayers' dollars that are important, I think educating our children should be important as well.

Mr. Speaker, if it's all about money then we should look at how we're spending that money. At the time the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations said the Province of Nova Scotia has not added a single nickel to costs the municipalities must bear.

Now, I have an article here that I'll table that shows that that's not the case, and many municipalities would argue on that statement as well. I know that the CBRM has argued that statement because I've been there when it has been argued. I'm told it is \$2 million - I hear \$7 million in the background. It's unfortunate that when this government looks to make cuts, the first place they looked was the front lines of education and health care.

Mr. Speaker, that's where our investments do the most good - investing in our children, and investing in the early years makes them better able to do the math, as such, when they get older. Maybe the downloading of these costs helped the bottom line of the government, but it means municipalities are making cuts and compromises - or they have to raise taxes. No municipality wants to raise taxes, nobody else wants to raise taxes, nobody wants to pay extra taxes, but we had to cut services in Cape Breton because they had this downloading and they had to put money elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, municipalities have their own issues. In fact we recently announced that we encourage municipalities to develop local resources, to keep those resource royalties so they can improve the education system, they can improve the structures, the other areas that improve employment in that area. If we had that, maybe that money could be spent towards education, but right now we don't have that and it's important that we make sure our education system is fully funded so that our children learn in order to reach the potential they can possibly reach. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, and I want to congratulate the members on their debate tonight.

The motion is carried.

[The House rose at 4:14 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1266**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas the 29th annual Truro Sport Heritage Society Awards were presented on February 28th, 2013; and

Whereas Peter Millman from the Truro Lions Club throwing team was named male athlete of the year in the 16 to 20-year old category; and

Whereas Peter, who was named Cobequid Educational Centre Male Athlete of the Year in 2012, is now attending the University of Lethbridge;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this exceptional young athlete for the numerous awards he has received, and wish him success with his future athletic and educational endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1267

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas the World Ball Hockey Championship will take place in Toronto on June 1 to 9, 2013; and

Whereas 23-year old P.J. Moore from Lower Onslow, Colchester North, is one of the 25 players and staff named to the squad by the National Ball Hockey Association; and

Whereas Moore helped Canada's junior squad to a title in Vail, Austria, in 2010 and has recently been named one of Canada's top 30 junior players of all time by the National Ball Hockey Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very talented athlete for the many honours he has received, and wish him and his team success at the Canada Men's World Ball Hockey Championship.

RESOLUTION NO. 1268

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas the Scotiabank in Tatamagouche has a program that supports various groups by matching any funds the group raises; and

Whereas Scotiabank has donated funds to groups including the local Legion, the River John Home and School, Wallace Elementary, Pippa's Place (an orphanage in Kenya), North Shore Recreation Centre, Tatamagouche Minor Hockey and Tatamagouche Figure Skating Club; and

Whereas this is the first year that the North Shore 4-H Club has been a part of the Scotiabank Community Volunteer Program and was very grateful to receive \$3,500, giving a much-needed financial boost to its operations;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the North Shore 4-H Club for being one of the beneficiaries of this excellent Scotiabank program and commend Scotiabank in Tatamagouche for its continued support of local organizations.

RESOLUTION NO. 1269

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Scotiabank has a program that matches any funds that a group raises; and

Whereas in October the Emergency Health Services hosted a Haunted House to raise funds to support the new Neighbours Helping Neighbours Foodbank, which opened in Tatamagouche, Colchester North, in 2012; and

Whereas the number of people throughout the province who need to make use of food banks has steadily increased;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate both the EHS and Scotiabank for their efforts to help the less fortunate, by doing such an excellent job of raising money for the food bank in Tatamagouche.

RESOLUTION NO. 1270

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas Mary Smith was recently recognized for 30 years of dedicated service with the Watershed Association Development Enterprise (WADE); and

Whereas Ms. Smith was educated at Miss Murphy's Business College and Saint Mary's University and has been working at WADE as an Employment Assistant Counsellor providing support for many members of the community in their endeavours to find long term employment; and

Whereas Ms. Smith from North Preston, a mother of two children, is not only known for her work at WADE, but also for her creative mind and excellent talents in arts and crafts;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly recognize Mary Smith for her contributions to her community and our province, and wish her every success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1271

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas Hue Graphics is located in Lake Echo and is owned and operated by a long-time resident, Thomas Hue; and

Whereas Mr. Hue specializes in three areas of graphic design: creative services, automotive art, and vinyl signage, and obtains most of his work through word of mouth where his work can be found in many offices around Metro such as doctors' and dentists' offices and on a wide variety of vehicles; and

Whereas Hue Graphics produces design in graphic, logos, business cards, advertising artwork for classic vehicles, and custom signage;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join me in acknowledging that small business is the backbone of Nova Scotia's economy, and we applaud Thomas

Hue for his dedication to the community and the excellent work he provides to all his customers in the province.

RESOLUTION NO. 1272

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas Quentin Eric Moore began his career in the marine supply industry in the 1960s with John Leckie Limited where he quickly became general manager and was approached by a company from Holland to start Atlantic Netting Rope & Twine, which flourished to several branches in Atlantic Canada, and many still exist today; and

Whereas Quentin Moore started his own company, Scotia Twines Ltd., in the early 1980s and was the first company to develop, manufacture, and sell braided rope locally in Atlantic Canada and throughout North America from his factory 24/7 with 75 employees, out of an old bowling alley in Halifax; and

Whereas Mr. Moore expanded his business into North Sydney, NS, and still finds the time to work with Christmas trees, shearing them occasionally, and still maintains his relationship with his customers;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House thank Quentin Eric Moore for creating a product that was ahead of the times and which has become the standard in the industry on which all ropes made are compared to, throughout Atlantic Canada.

RESOLUTION NO. 1273

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a highly prestigious award for youth achievement, which operates in 140 countries and territories and is a valuable development tool for youth; and

Whereas Isabella Lynn Rossi, age 16, has earned the Bronze Award as an independent participant in the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme for 2012; and

Whereas Isabella hiked, travelling some 20 kilometres staying overnight in Keji Park wilderness area to hone her survival skills, plays the flute in her school band and the Dartmouth All City Seniors Band, holds a second degree black belt in tae kwon do which she also instructs, volunteers in her church, school, and community ;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate this phenomenal young woman as she sets many goals for herself while at the same time caring for others, and wish her every success in her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1274

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a highly prestigious award for youth achievement, which operates in 140 countries and territories and is a valuable development tool for youth; and

Whereas Giavonna Lynn Rossi, age 14, has earned the Bronze Award as an independent participant in the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme for 2012; and

Whereas Giavonaa hiked, travelling some 20 kilometres staying overnight in Keji Park wilderness area to hone her survival skills, plays the flute, holds a second degree black belt in tae kwon do which she also instructs, volunteers in her church, school, and community ;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate this phenomenal young woman as she sets many goals for herself while at the same time caring for others, and wish her every success in her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1275

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a highly prestigious award for youth achievement, which operates in 140 countries and territories and is a valuable development tool for youth; and

Whereas Abigail Hodder, age 15, has earned the Bronze Award as an independent participant in the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme for 2012, and in order to complete the adventurous component of the award hiked from Lake Echo to Musquodoboit Harbour and back for a total of 54 kilometres in two days, carrying all of her supplies in her backpack; and

Whereas Abigail is a Grade 9 student at Eric Graves Junior High School, did photography as her skill, and volunteers with the Awana Program at the Lake Echo Fellowship Baptist Church, is interested in becoming an oral surgeon and will enter the IB program in September ;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate this phenomenal young woman as she continues to sets standards, and wish her every success in her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1276

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a highly prestigious award for youth achievement, which operates in 140 countries and territories and is a valuable development tool for youth; and

Whereas Zachaeus Jackson, age 15, has earned the Silver and Bronze Award as an independent participant in the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme for 2012; and

Whereas Zachaeus is home-schooled and is very interested in pursuing a career in the RCMP, and his area of skill was the piano which he practiced two hours a day, volunteered with the Awana Program at Lake Echo Fellowship Baptist Church, Emmanuel Bible Camp, and mentored with the HEMS Home-schooling Program, and is currently employed at the Dartmouth Sportsplex as a swimming instructor and a day camp leader;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate this outstanding young man as he continues to set standards, and wish him every success in his future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1277

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a highly prestigious award for youth achievement, which operates in 140 countries and territories and is a valuable development tool for youth; and

Whereas Hannah Grace Jackson, age 14, has earned the Bronze Award as an independent participant in the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme for 2012, and in order to complete the adventurous component of the award hiked from Lake Echo to Musquodoboit Harbour and back for a total of 54 kilometres in two days, carrying all of her supplies in her backpack; and

Whereas Hannah Grace is home-schooled and has inducted Bible Study as her area of skill over the course of a year, is actively involved in volunteering with the Awana Program at Lake Echo Fellowship Baptist Church, does a lot of volunteer babysitting, has found time to open her own small photography business, and has taken a course at the Nova Scotia Institute for Art and Technology;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate this phenomenal young woman as she continues to excel, and wish her every success in her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1278

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a highly prestigious award for youth achievement, which operates in 140 countries and territories and is a valuable development tool for youth; and

Whereas Noah Naugler, age 14, has earned the Bronze Award as an independent participant in the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme for 2012, and in order to complete the adventurous component of the award hiked from Lake Echo to Musquodoboit Harbour and back for a total of 54 kilometres in two days, carrying all of his supplies in his backpack; and

Whereas Noah attends the Halifax Christian Academy and is an active volunteer with Northwood Homecare, as well as very involved in tae kwon do in his spare time;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate this outstanding young man as he continues to set standards, and wish him every success in his future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1279

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a highly prestigious award for youth achievement, which operates in 140 countries and territories and is a valuable development tool for youth; and

Whereas Noah Shields, age 14, has earned the Bronze Award as an independent participant in the international Duke of Edinburgh's Award Programme for 2012, and in order to complete the adventurous component of the award hiked from Lake Echo to Musquodoboit Harbour and back for a total of 54 kilometres in two days, carrying all of his supplies in his backpack; and

Whereas Noah attends the Halifax Christian Academy and volunteers with the Awana Program at the Lake Echo Fellowship Baptist Church, his skill is the guitar and he is currently offering lessons to elementary aged children in order to earn money, participated in a mission trip this year to Guatemala to work in an orphanage for a week, and his sport is surfing where he won medals at the provincial levels;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate this outstanding young man as he continues to set standards, and wish him every success in his future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1280

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston)

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

Whereas Bruce Baillie retired from his position as a social worker for the Province of Nova Scotia to enable him to spend more time with his family; and

Whereas Mr. Baillie became very concerned about a serious issue affecting the mini-home park and all its residents in Lake Echo where he lives, and at his own expense proceeded to take the landlord to the Residential Tenancies Board; and

Whereas Bruce Baillie spent a considerable amount of his own time preparing for the case, initially winning, and then following up with an appeal from the landlord to Small Claims Court;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House applaud Mr. Baillie's efforts in trying to resolve the long-standing issue, not only for himself but the residents of the mini-home park where he resides, by following the rules as set out by government.