



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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First Session

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2013

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2013

Sixty-second General Assembly

First Session

4:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Ms. Margaret Miller

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We will proceed with the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Finance.

RESOLUTION NO. 48

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

Whereas it was in this very Legislature that a charter was granted on March 30, 1900, giving members the right to use the designation of “chartered accountant”; and

Whereas 59 Nova Scotians recently passed their uniform evaluation tests to earn their chartered accountant designation; and

Whereas this significant accomplishment prepares these individuals for challenging professional careers and provides the foundation from which they, like many of their fellow chartered accountants, will give back to their communities and make invaluable contributions to our province;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature recognize and congratulate these graduates on the hard work they have put forth to earn this prestigious designation and join me in wishing each of them every success in their future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Environment.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, before I introduce my bill I would ask permission to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, seated in the east gallery are members of various groups who have an interest in the legislation I am about to introduce. I'd ask them to rise

as I call their name: Mark Butler, Ecology Action Centre; Jennifer West, Ecology Action Centre; Gretchen Fitzgerald, Sierra Club; and Angela Gilles, Council of Canadians.

I'd ask my colleagues in the House to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 5 - Entitled an Act to Ban the Importation of Hydraulic Fracturing Wastewater. (Hon. Randy Delorey)

Bill No. 6 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 5 of the Acts of 2011. The Elections Act. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

Bill No. 7 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 376 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Public Service Act, Respecting the Office of Communications Nova Scotia. (Hon. Andrew Younger)

Bill No. 8 - Entitled an Act to Transfer the Assets of the Nova Scotia Jobs Fund from the Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism to Nova Scotia Business Incorporated. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 49

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

Whereas the NDP introduced regulations to ensure Nova Scotians would have access to the lowest energy costs possible; and

Whereas the NDP established a process to ensure an independent body would be responsible for determining what the lowest cost option is; and

Whereas the NDP was a champion of the Maritime Link project which was recently found to be the lowest cost option for electricity for Nova Scotians;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House finally concede the Maritime Link is a good deal 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 Dartmouth South.

RESOLUTION NO. 50

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

Whereas Dr. Patrick Sherlock is a member of the faculty at the NSCC Waterfront Campus in Dartmouth and has been recognized by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union's Teachers Make a Difference program and will receive an award of \$300 toward his school's breakfast or library program; and

Whereas that program took place from October 15th to November 10th of this year and encouraged students throughout Nova Scotia to nominate teachers who made a difference in their lives and contributed to their school and community; and

Whereas Dr. Sherlock was one of nine chosen from 238 nominees to represent teachers and community college members in this province and was nominated for such reasons as being kind and patient, warm and dedicated, for encouraging self-expression, being an inspiration, instilling passion, and for making learning fun; and

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dr. Patrick Sherlock on this meaningful acknowledgement, thank him for his hard work, and wish him the very best in his future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

RESOLUTION NO. 51

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

Whereas Anse MacDonald has been involved in the sport of basketball for several decades in Pictou County and was presented with the Frank Baldwin Award from Basketball Nova Scotia in 2011; and

Whereas Mr. MacDonald played a major role in all aspects of the game from coaching, managing, organizing and fundraising for the New Glasgow Junior-Senior High School basketball teams and community recreational teams; and

Whereas Anse MacDonald organized tournaments, ran summer and winter leagues, started booster clubs, and provided guidance to assist coaches, youth and adults playing basketball in his community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Anse MacDonald for his decades of community volunteerism, the giving generously of his time and knowledge, and for being honoured by North Nova Education Centre by having an annual high school basketball tournament named in his honour.

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 Sydney-Whitney Pier.

RESOLUTION NO. 52

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

Whereas Chris Hayes was a veteran reporter with The Cape Breton Post, and a dedicated storyteller; and

Whereas Chris covered all levels of politics and was well-known for his fair and balanced approach to reporting; and

Whereas since his passing in November 2013, Chris is being fondly remembered as a dedicated family man and outdoorsman;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly extend condolences to the family, friends, and co-workers of Chris Hayes, on his recent passing.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

RESOLUTION NO. 53

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

Whereas Sarah Fraser of Williamswood has been a long-time cat advocate, working with stray and feral cats; and

Whereas she has worked tirelessly to ban the practice of declawing cats; and

Whereas as a result of Sarah Fraser's dedication to the protection of cats she has presented a petition to the Nova Scotia Veterinary Medical Association, which was reviewed at the association's AGM and resulted in serious debate of this issue;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sarah Fraser for her ongoing dedication to the protection of cats, and her success in having the practice of declawing reviewed by the Nova Scotia Veterinary Medical Association.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley.

RESOLUTION NO. 54

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

Whereas the Musquodoboit Valley Planning Committee is an organization that is dedicated to working with individuals and groups to promote their community by developing a marketing initiative to increase tourism, local businesses, and forestry research; and

Whereas this committee is a subcommittee of the Middle Musquodoboit Agricultural Society and are contacting local producers to determine their interest in promoting their products through a local food map, a community and school garden, and a community supported agriculture program; and

Whereas the Musquodoboit Valley Planning Committee has received funding from the Rural Communities Foundation to become a test community for the new “GoodNS” micro-volunteering site to develop an on-line and off-line way to match volunteers with volunteer opportunities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Musquodoboit Valley Planning Committee for their dedication to promoting tourism, events, groups, businesses, and producers in their community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

RESOLUTION NO. 55

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

Whereas Dr. Kathy Gallagher is a graduate of Dalhousie University, has been a member of the College of Family Physicians of Canada for more than 20 years, and served as president of the Nova Scotia College of Family Physicians from 2004 to 2006; and

Whereas making meaningful connections with people is an integral part of delivering health care in Dr. Gallagher's family practice, located in Bedford; and

Whereas Dr. Kathy Gallagher has been recognized as the Nova Scotia Family Physician of the Year 2013 for her contribution to delivering quality health care with compassion;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature thank Dr. Kathy Gallagher for her commitment to providing quality health care for more than 20 years and extend congratulations on being awarded the Nova Scotia Family Physician of the Year 2013, representing doctors in Nova Scotia who strive to provide quality health care and compassion for their patients.

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. 56

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

Whereas Peter MacPherson, who began his career with Mahone Funeral and Ambulance Service in Mahone Bay, has over 25 years of service with Emergency Health Services; and

Whereas Peter served during the Swissair disaster in 1998, is currently a well-respected volunteer with the Peer and Family Support Team, and is an Emergency Health Services Intermediate Care Paramedic in Mahone Bay; and

Whereas Peter was one of 17 paramedics in Nova Scotia to be presented with an Exemplary Service Medal by the Province of Nova Scotia during a ceremony held at Government House on September 25th;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Peter MacPherson and thank him for a long, distinguished, and ongoing career as a health professional.

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 Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. HOUSTON: Seated in the west gallery are my good friend Doug Porter, my good friend Stirling MacLean, and also a former member of this House, Fraser MacLean. I'd ask them to please stand and receive the warm welcome of this House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

RESOLUTION NO. 57

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

Whereas the Ladies Auxiliary of the Little Harbour Fire Department held a potluck supper as a Fall fundraiser at the Little Harbour Community Centre; and

Whereas all proceeds from this fundraising effort go to the purchase of safety equipment and gear to protect the firemen, our homes, and businesses in our community; and

Whereas the huge support of this event ensures our growth, our safety, and our sense of community in Pictou East;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the efforts of the Little Harbour Fire Department and their Ladies Auxiliary for the wonderful service they provide to 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.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

RESOLUTION NO. 58

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

Whereas Fred Lohnes began by providing shoe repair services and eventually took over the business of Veinot's Footwear in Liverpool; and

Whereas Fred Lohnes has been providing excellent service to the residents of Queens County for many years, and has been a stable and long-standing business on Main Street in Liverpool; and

Whereas in October 2013, Fred Lohnes of Veinot's Footwear was awarded with a Business Achievement Certificate by the Region of Queens;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Fred Lohnes of Veinot's Footwear for his long-standing and outstanding contribution to the business community within the Town of Liverpool, as well as for his many years of dedicated service to the residents of the County of Queens.

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 Sackville-Beaver Bank.

RESOLUTION NO. 59

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

Whereas Sackville resident Kevin Patrick Gillis passed away on November 22, 2013, at the age of 44, after a courageous battle with cancer, leaving his wife of 21 years and a young son eight years old; and

Whereas one of the many kind-hearted things that Kevin did was when one of his friends decided to return to Nova Scotia from Ontario, and as a weary traveller who had driven for more than 20 hours, was dreading the fact that he would have to remove all of their household items from storage and set up their home once again, finally when they arrived at their house, the friend's wife first wanted to settle in their two young children and upon entering their house, to their amazement they saw that everything that had been in storage was once again exactly where they remembered it - Kevin had done all of this as a friend, without telling anyone; and

Whereas Kevin Patrick Gillis was a true friend to everyone he met, his true passions were family and friends, friend or stranger made no difference to Kevin, he never hesitated to lend a helping hand wherever it was needed;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize Kevin Patrick Gillis for his lifelong act of selfless giving to others.

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 North.

RESOLUTION NO. 60

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

Whereas George Chisholm Baker passed away on November 10, 2013, in Kentville; and

Whereas George Baker was a veteran, an electrical engineer, the president and editor of Kentville Publishing, and an outstanding champion for tidal generation as a clean energy option; and

Whereas George was elected to the Canadian Academy of Engineering, received several honorary degrees and was a member of the Order of the British Empire;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the life and contributions of George Chisholm Baker with a moment of silence.

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 Chester-St. Margaret's.

RESOLUTION NO. 61

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

Whereas at 80 years old, Richard Graves has been running for 28 years and has participated in over 800 races; and

Whereas Mr. Graves, originally from Chester, has received many awards over the years including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal; and

Whereas Mr. Graves had dedicated his life not only to his own physical fitness, but has volunteered with many organizations that strive to improve the physical fitness of others through running;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Richard Graves on his lifetime commitment to running and volunteering.

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 Timberlea-Prospect.

RESOLUTION NO. 62

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

Whereas the Sir John A. Macdonald High School football program began recently in 2005; and

Whereas the Sir John A. Macdonald Flames football team have reached the finals of the NSSAF Tier 1 Championship on several occasions, but they have never won until this year; and

Whereas on Sunday, November 17, 2013, the Sir John A. Macdonald Flames staged a second-half comeback to beat the C.P. Allen Cheetahs 24-23 and claim their first-ever NSSAF Tier 1 football banner at Huskies Stadium;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Sir John A. Macdonald Flames football team, their players, their coaches, and their fans on being the NSSAF 2013 champions, and wish them continued success in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Pictou West.

RESOLUTION NO. 63

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

Whereas when in Opposition the Liberal Leader agreed with the Progressive Conservative caucus that Cabinet should not control the Jobs Fund; and

Whereas the Auditor General pointed out glaring holes with the procedures and policies of the NDP's use of these funds around the Cabinet Table, saying the "protection of taxpayers' money is inadequate and the economic benefit of the programs is uncertain"; and

Whereas after being elected the Liberals reversed their former position and indicated Cabinet will continue to control the controversial fund;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly condemn the Liberal flip-flop on control of the Jobs Fund, and urge the government to increase transparency and protect taxpayers' money by relinquishing control of the fund to an arm's-length entity like NSBI.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 64

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

Whereas six years ago a group of youth from north-end Halifax, under the guidance of Jessie Jollimore, dietitian of the North End Community Health Centre, started a community garden project planting seeds and tending crops on an abandoned lot in their neighbourhood; and

Whereas the group Hope Blooms decided to turn their produce into a line of organic salad dressings sold at the Halifax Seaport Farmers' Market; and

Whereas Hope Blooms is forging ahead with plans to expand their salad dressing business and build a year-round greenhouse, after they successfully competed before the CBC Dragons, coming away with \$40,000;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize Jessie Jollimore, all staff, volunteers, and youth from Hope Blooms for their creativity, ingenuity, and their inspiring contribution to their community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

RESOLUTION NO. 65

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

Whereas the 6th Annual Symposium on Inclusive Education and Employment is being held December 2nd and December 3rd of this year; and

Whereas the David and Kathleen Mooney Altruism Award is presented at the annual symposium on behalf of the Collaborative Partnership Network, to a volunteer with a can-do attitude; and

Whereas Claredon Robicheau is well-known in his community and throughout the province for his dedicated work volunteering and not letting his muscular dystrophy disorder and the fact of being a wheelchair user hinder his accomplishments received the David and Kathleen Mooney Altruism Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Claredon Robicheau on winning this award, and wish him continued success with his community, non-profit work, and devotion to the welfare of others.

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 Northside-Westmount.

RESOLUTION NO. 66

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

Whereas employees at Nova Scotia Power's Point Aconi Generating Station recently reached the milestone of one million working hours without a lost-time injury; and

Whereas the 70 employees at the plant work at a variety of jobs from power engineers, electricians, and maintenance people; and

Whereas employee commitment to safety is a workplace priority;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate these workers at Point Aconi Generating Station on their safety milestone and wish them many more injury-free hours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River.

RESOLUTION NO. 67

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

Whereas Dr. Ryan Sommers has been a family physician in Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River and a valued member of the Colchester East Hants Health Authority medical community since 2008; and

Whereas Dr. Sommers was involved in front-line care and public education during the outbreak of the H1N1 flu pandemic; and

Whereas Dr. Ryan Sommers will use his experience and public health and preventive medicine specialty training as northern Nova Scotia's new Medical Officer of Health for Colchester, Cumberland and Pictou Counties, and the Municipality of East Hants;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Dr. Ryan Sommers on his appointment as Medical Officer of Health for northern Nova Scotia and wish him continued success in his medical career.

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 Environment.

RESOLUTION NO. 68

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

Whereas Gabrieau's Bistro in Antigonish won the awards for Best Wine Menu and Best Green Restaurant at the 2013 Restaurant Awards dinner held on November 19, 2013, by the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas it is the second environmental award for the restaurant this Fall having already been named Small Business of the Year at the 14th Annual Mobius Awards of Environmental Excellence held by RRFB; and

Whereas Gabrieau's also won Restaurant of the Year with Chef Inspired Fine Dining at the Taste of Nova Scotia Prestige Awards, announced at the annual Tourism Summit on November 26th and organized by the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Mark and Karen Gabrieau and their staff on winning these prestigious awards and gaining provincial recognition for a job well done.

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-Barrington.

RESOLUTION NO. 69

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

Whereas four divers from western Shelburne County received the Medal of Bravery on November 20, 2013, at Province House in Halifax; and

Whereas Donald Mahaney of Barrington Passage, Thomas Hennigar of Clark's Harbour, Thomas Nickerson of Clyde River, and Gary Thurber of Doctors Cove left port on February 23, 2013, under extreme weather conditions, to locate and search the hull of the *Miss Ally*, that had capsized on February 17th; and

Whereas the Barrington Municipal Council nominated the divers to recognize the heroic efforts they made to try to recover the remains of the five fishermen tragically lost at sea;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Donald Mahaney, Thomas Hennigar, Thomas Nickerson, and Gary Thurber on receiving the Medal of Bravery, thank them for their unselfish acts of bravery, and wish them safe haven.

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 Sydney-Whitney Pier.

RESOLUTION NO. 70

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

Whereas Carl Fleming has spent more than 32 years in journalism, most recently as editor and writer with the Truro Daily News; and

Whereas Fleming was recently named the managing director of the Cape Breton Post; and

Whereas Fleming's experience in print and digital media will bring intriguing daily news to the people of Cape Breton;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Carl Fleming and wish him all the best as he writes a new life story at the Cape Breton Post.

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 Fairview-Clayton Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 71

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

Whereas the Fairview Community Association is an active participant and enormous contributor to the health and strength of this community; and

Whereas the activities and programs directed by the Fairview Community Association are done on a volunteer basis; and

Whereas on November 30, 2013, the Fairview Community Association's Festival of Lights and the first annual Christmas tree lighting in Titus Park was hugely successful and enjoyed by the community's children and adults alike;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Fairview Community Association for their contributions to their community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

RESOLUTION NO. 72

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

Whereas Scott Jones has recently been honoured for his volunteer efforts and service to his community in Pictou County; and

Whereas Scott Jones was a recent recipient of a YMCA Peace Medallion, recognizing his serene, peace-promoting personality; and

Whereas Scott Jones has recently become a well-known person around the globe because of a senseless attack that left him paralyzed;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Scott Jones for being honoured with a well-deserved YMCA Peace Medallion and salute him for his capacity to continually look at the positive side of things.

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 Sackville-Cobequid.

RESOLUTION NO. 73

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

Whereas Pirie Berggren and Sandy Wirtanen of Lower Sackville have been neighbours on Kipling Drive for 27 years; and

Whereas Pirie and Sandy donated many hours of their time working in the Acadia Recreation Society gardens, including donating money to pay for a truckload of mulch; and

Whereas Pirie and Sandy are great examples of how volunteers continue to make Sackville a beautiful place to live;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature acknowledge Lower Sackville neighbours Pirie Berggren and Sandy Wirtanen for their commitment in enhancing the beauty of the Acadia Recreation Society garden and setting an example for all residents of Sackville.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie.

RESOLUTION NO. 74

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

Whereas Lillian Clyke of Guysborough has been involved in the Guysborough County Adult Learning Association for two years; and

Whereas Lillian was selected to participate at the LNS learner conference in Truro on November 6th to November 9th; and

Whereas this honour reflects the determination and hard work Lillian has shown while working at the Guysborough County Adult Learning Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Lillian on being selected to participate at the LNS learner conference and express our support for the importance of adult learning and the differences it can make in people's lives.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley.

RESOLUTION NO. 75

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

Whereas for more than 50 years Colchester Christmas Index Program has been helping families in Colchester County who may be facing financial difficulties provide a special Christmas for their children; and

Whereas Cobequid Children First Foundation was established in 2007 as a registered charity to raise money to give youth in Colchester County opportunities they may not normally have; and

Whereas organizations such as these help make Christmas dreams come true for deserving children by ensuring their families have the food and toys required to make a joyous holiday;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly continue to support programs and organizations that make Christmas a special time of year for all families in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

RESOLUTION NO. 76

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

Whereas Georgie and Helen Uhlman of West Caledonia are one of the first woodlot owners in the region of Queens County to receive woodlot certification from the Forest Stewardship Council; and

Whereas over 70 per cent of their land is being opened up and used for recreational and educational activities; and

Whereas Georgie and Helen Uhlman were named Nova Scotia's Woodlot Owners of the Year for 2013;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and extend congratulations to Georgie and Helen Uhlman being named Nova Scotia's Woodlot

Owners of the Year and on their creation of a truly unique woodlot and making it available for recreational and educational activities.

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 Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank.

RESOLUTION NO. 77

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

Whereas she may be only 23 years old, Mo Kenney is far from being a novice songwriter - she began writing in her early teens and has now released a debut self-titled album that contains many of her songs written in the last eight years; and

Whereas singer-songwriter Mo Kenney, based in Waverley, began playing guitar when she was 11 years old and began writing songs at 15 years old and is now, at 23 years old, appearing in front of enthusiastic audiences at festivals and in theatres and clubs from coast to coast; and

Whereas her debut album won her the 2013 SOCAN Songwriting Prize, three Music Nova Scotia Awards for Pop Recording, New Artist Recording, and Female Artist Recording of the Year, and a Canadian Folk Music Award for New/Emerging Artist of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Mo Kenney on her awards, and wish her continued success in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Pictou East.

RESOLUTION NO. 78

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

Whereas 88-year-old Earl Fraser is the only living veteran whose name is listed on the Sunny Brae Veterans Memorial for his contributions to the Second World War; and

Whereas Mr. Fraser was wounded in action and not expected to walk again, but he courageously won that battle too; and

Whereas Earl Fraser continues to be an example of how to live a long life in a free country as a result of serving his country during wartime;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize and thank Mr. Fraser for his service to our country.

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 Chester-St. Margaret's.

RESOLUTION NO. 79

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

Whereas tomorrow, December 3rd, is the annual International Day of Persons with Disabilities; and

Whereas it's a day that aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the rights, dignity and well-being of persons with disabilities, including children; and

Whereas persons with disabilities deserve the support and backing of their provincial government;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize that celebrating the achievements and contributions of people with disabilities helps to promote public awareness, understanding, and acceptance of persons with disabilities.

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 Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 80

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

Whereas the Holy Trinity Emmanuel Anglican Church is a vital part of the Dartmouth North community, running both a clothing depot and a successful breakfast program for the children of Harbour View Elementary School; and

Whereas Holy Trinity Emmanuel Church recently commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the laying of their cornerstone; and

Whereas on November 15, 2013, a night of music and celebration was held to observe the 63rd Anniversary of this church;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Reverend Kees Zwanenburg and the congregation of the Holy Trinity Emmanuel Anglican Church on this milestone year, and thank them for their continued contributions to Dartmouth North.

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 North.

RESOLUTION NO. 81

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

Whereas the purpose of the Royal Canadian Legion's poppy campaign is to raise funds to support our veterans and to ensure their sacrifice is not forgotten; and

Whereas Juanita Blenus and Michael Samson are long-standing members of the Kentville Royal Canadian Legion Branch 6, acting as overseers of its poppy campaign for Kentville, Coldbrook, New Minas, and Centreville over the past three years; and

Whereas their Poppy Fund campaign has raised over \$100,000 in the past three years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize Juanita Blenus and Michael Samson for their outstanding service and commitment to the communities they serve.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River.

RESOLUTION NO. 82

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

Whereas long-time Truro resident Herb Peppard, 93, fought for his country during World War II; and

Whereas Mr. Peppard is one of 175 surviving members of a special U.S.-Canada military unit known as the Devil's Brigade; and

Whereas he and the other members of this elite commando unit have received the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal for their exploits during World War II;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Mr. Herb Peppard for his heroism and his bravery.

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 Labour and Advanced Education.

RESOLUTION NO. 83

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

Whereas the Dalhousie University Tigers men's basketball team has signed Rick Plato as their new head coach; and

Whereas in 25 years of coaching, Plato led his Mount Saint Vincent University teams to 13 Atlantic Canadian Athletic Association conference championships, was named ACAA Coach of the Year 13 times, and received the national Canadian College Athletic Association Coach of the Year Award in 2009; and

Whereas as a member of the Saint Mary's University men's basketball team from 1976 to 1981, Rick Plato was MVP and Athlete of the Year in 1981, won two CIAU championships and a spot in SMU's Sports Hall of Fame;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Rick Plato on his retirement after 27 years of teaching at C.P. Allen High School, and wish him continued success as coach with the Dalhousie Tigers men's basketball 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 Pictou West.

RESOLUTION NO. 84

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

Whereas Paula Stewart of Mount William Road, Pictou County, received the Alex MacDonald Ambassador Award; and

Whereas the Alex MacDonald Ambassador Award honours an individual deemed a champion in the field of workplace education and has shown exceptional achievement through a commitment to learning in the workplace; and

Whereas Ms. Stewart worked diligently and is deserving of this award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ms. Stewart on receiving this honour, and wish her well in her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

RESOLUTION NO. 85

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

Whereas on December 7th, Carman United Church in Sydney Mines will be searching for the best cookie at the Carman Cookie Crumble, an event to raise funds and awareness for the Sydney Mines Food Bank; and

Whereas Rev. Nick Phillips has petitioned local residents to bake batches of their very best cookies for judging in the quest for the best Northside cookie; and

Whereas after prizes are awarded, the baked goods will be auctioned off and bragging rights will be in place for the following year for the best cookie on the Northside;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in saluting Rev. Nick and his novel fundraising for the Sydney Mines Food Bank.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: 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. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 1.

Bill No. 1 - Electricity Reform (2013) Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, is this the part where I just ask for waiver and we move on? (Interruptions) I can ask, but I'm not going to get it, right?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

HON. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I will move that Bill No. 1 - An Act to Amend Chapter 25 of the Acts of 2004, the Electricity Act, Respecting the Sale of Renewable Electricity - be read for a second time.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday I introduced our government's first piece of legislation, the Electricity Reform (2013) Act. Our government brought this bill forward because we are committed to improving Nova Scotia's electricity system for the benefit of ratepayers. We are also committed to an electricity market that is rapidly adaptable to changing world conditions, and with this bill we are delivering on our promise to open and improve the electricity market while creating new local investment opportunities for renewable electricity providers.

This legislation will permit greater competition and choice for electricity ratepayers. Independent evidence presented at the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board noted that this type of competition should put downward pressure on rates. We already know that in 2003, when one municipality in Nova Scotia had expected the then-government to legislate this provision, they moved ahead with plans to take advantage of it. At the time, the council of the day had approved investments that would have resulted in economic investments in Guysborough County and elsewhere in rural Nova Scotia and a savings on today's electricity bills for that municipality and thus those property taxpayers.

I've previously discussed that specific example in this Legislature in greater detail, but it points to the fact that that opportunity was lost in 2003 because this legislation was not passed. Had it been passed at the time, there would be the benefits of lower rates for that municipality, trickling down to taxpayers as well as investments and jobs in rural Nova Scotia, which do not exist for those projects today because without the passage of that legislation, those projects died.

The Premier has also said that opening the marketplace for renewable energy to be sold by retailers is an important next step in the evolution of the electricity marketplace. This approach has been recommended since 2003, and on Friday it was actually noted in Newfoundland that such legislation is such a benefit in Nova Scotia, it should be considered in Newfoundland and Labrador as well.

Nova Scotians have told us that they want greater choice in renewable electricity suppliers. We have heard recently from businesses and suppliers who are very interested in this opportunity. For instance, companies like Scotian WindFields and Minas Energy are already out looking at opportunities for how they might serve Nova Scotians with this new opportunity.

The legislation will allow providers of renewable electricity to compete with Nova Scotia Power and sell directly to customers. The bill will also commit us to engage independent expertise and hear from people across the province.

As the market develops, Nova Scotians will have the opportunity to decide who they buy their electricity from. It's a solution that puts Nova Scotia first and gives choice to Nova Scotians. Once the legislation enabling the change is in place, we will quickly start the required consultations on technical aspects of the renewable-to-retail regulations to be in place by Spring 2014 and these will be posted on-line so that there is ability to comment from Opposition Parties and members of the public.

Mr. Speaker, those regulations will be based upon the regulations developed for the wholesale market opening in the mid-2000s, but will be adapted and expanded. They will give legal authority to key players to draft detailed tariffs and the rules needed to operate the new and more open marketplace in Nova Scotia.

It is important to note and to note very clearly that recovering the cost of operating the system to deliver electricity is not new. Every ratepayer in Nova Scotia currently pays these tariffs embedded in their electricity rates. The results of the work by the key players will be subject to full Utility and Review Board examination and approval. Once the new market is open, independent power producers will simply seek out customers on commercial terms and build projects to serve them. They will need to meet all environmental and other approvals, but that's just normal business.

Let me be clear: in the opening of the market, one fundamental principle prevails. New opportunities will not come at the expense of existing ratepayers and suppliers of power to Nova Scotia Power. This is specifically enshrined in the bill; no ratepayers will pay additional costs as a result of this move because somebody leaves the system.

Nova Scotians will have a choice: either stay with Nova Scotia Power or go with an independent supplier who will provide renewable electricity on commercial terms. These measures will ensure that ratepayers and industry are protected.

We have a lot of work ahead of us. There are many who would like to see this happen overnight and in a recent stakeholder meeting - which was extremely well attended, I might add - the biggest question was, how fast can you get this going? My job is to ensure that this is done right. There have been 13 years to get this started and get it underway and we are moving quickly. In the past week, I have received numerous calls from producers, potential customers and stakeholders who are thrilled to see this measure finally moving forward.

Opening up the retail market for renewables is only one step in the electricity marketplace and the evolution of that marketplace. That brings me to the second part of the bill. Before we take the next steps beyond this, we want to better understand exactly where we want to end up.

The legislation will require us to consult with experts and everyday Nova Scotians on what our options might be and what the challenges and opportunities to each choice are. The legislation lays out areas of consultation, but is also clear that the issues are not limited to those mentioned in the bill. We want to know where Nova Scotians want to be and what their expectations are, so we chart a course for our long-term electricity future that Nova Scotians own and support. We will engage experts, stakeholders and ratepayers to hear their ideas on what is important.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this frank and transparent approach demonstrates our government's commitment and willingness to involve and listen and engage Nova Scotians in these discussions. It will be the first consultation in 13 years in this province on electricity market transformation, and it's long overdue.

Among the many things we will address is, we will look at emerging technologies and what the risks and opportunities they present are, and what timeline they will likely emerge on. We will look at market trends that are impacting rates, including fossil fuel trends, supply and demand, changing world and national emission requirements, as well as consumer trends and opportunities for energy efficiency and conservation; and we will also look at the opportunities and experiences gained by others so that we can best plan for and manage best practices in electricity generation and transmission.

At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, we need to understand what others have done and why and, if there is a benefit for us, to take similar approaches. We will end up with an electricity strategy that supports our province's goal for both meeting our environmental obligations but also in the lowest cost possible, as well as one that helps grow the economy, puts the focus on investment, technology, research, and opportunities that result in real benefits to Nova Scotians.

We will get there through consulting with people with first-hand knowledge and experience of what's working and what's not. We've seen a lot of reports over the past few years delayed and delayed, and it becomes a bit of fodder for Question Period over the years in terms of, where is that report? This legislation specifically lays out a requirement for me as Minister of Energy to table that report in 14 months and for the consultation to be completed within 12 months.

Before I sit down, I want to remind members that we are committed to full consultation on process and substance. Both the draft terms of reference for the electricity future review and the draft regulations for the retail opening will be available for comment on the Department of Energy Web site once they are ready. We are open to any ideas as well as bills submitted by the Opposition as well as submissions to the process and input on the terms if there are any specifics of how they would like to see the consultations roll forward or any areas of the province where stakeholders, they think we might be missing.

Nova Scotians will have the opportunity to have their say on what will give us stable and reasonable power rates for many years to come. We will look at technology, opportunities for our universities, our workforce development and for Nova Scotians. The review will examine the benefits that come from efficiency, renewable opportunities, and economic development.

Next year promises to be an opportunity for us to discuss how we can improve the system we use to generate and deliver electricity in Nova Scotia and how we can put ratepayers in the driver's seat. We will follow with Nova Scotia's plan for the electricity future of tomorrow. Thank you. (Applause)

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I note that this is Bill No. 1, the government's first bill. It should go through the same tests as any test that a government bill goes through and that is: does it actually make life better for Nova Scotians? Does it actually bring their energy bills down? Does it actually make it easier to balance the family budget at the end of the month - or for a small business to pay its bills and focus on getting new customers and hiring more Nova Scotians instead of trying to find the money to pay what are the highest power bills in all of Canada?

We're here in the month of December, it is about to get cold outside - it's already getting cold outside - and too many Nova Scotians are about to see their power rates soar once again. Sadly, too many aren't sure how they're going to pay those bills - too many families, where their salary hasn't gone up, their hourly wages haven't gone up, their pension has not gone up, but their power bills continue to go up - are not sure how they're going to get through this winter.

This House knows, I'm sure, of many examples in our own constituencies. All Nova Scotia saw the example of Arlene MacIntyre of Sydney, a senior on a fixed income, whose power bill has skyrocketed, who can't afford to pay it, who is forced into that awful situation where she actually closes down rooms in her apartment - like the bedroom - and takes towels and stuffs them under the door so she doesn't waste heat in those rooms. She tries to live in her living room and kitchen for the winter because her power bill has become unaffordable.

Mr. Speaker, that is not right, not in my Nova Scotia, not in yours, not in anyone else's.

The test for Bill No. 1 that is before us today, this government's first bill, should actually be will it help people like Arlene MacIntyre and those thousands of other Nova Scotians who can't afford to pay any more. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, the answer for this winter and the answer for all time is no, it doesn't actually work, it doesn't actually make our power bills better.

The sad thing is that I believe the government knew that when they came up with this policy, that it was a slogan designed to win an election but not actually to provide relief to Nova Scotians who need it. That is a great shame, Mr. Speaker, because Nova Scotians wanted their political leaders and candidates to actually address the problem, not come up with fancy TV ads and cute slogans. They want to address the problem.

The problem is that our power rates are too high. It is not right that as a Nova Scotian you have to pay the highest rates for power in all of Canada - that's the problem. If the minister brought forward a bill that actually made that better, we would be the first ones to stand here and vote for it. But to perpetuate that TV ad, the fancy slogan, that electioneering after the election knowing that it won't bring our power bills down, we can't participate in that.

On our side, we said the same thing before the election as we are saying now, that the answer is to actually change the power market so that bills are affordable again, not to follow through on an empty slogan, but that's what this bill does, Mr. Speaker. All it does is follow through on an empty slogan because our rates won't go down. The minister has admitted as much; certainly in the short-term he said, don't expect your rates to go down. Well you know what, Mr. Speaker? It's cold now and our bills are going up now and people can't afford it now.

There are policies that the government could have brought forward that would have actually helped but instead they bring forward this, knowing that it won't make a difference in our bills in the short term and we believe it won't make a difference in the midterm or the long term either. We know that, Mr. Speaker, because it has been tried in other places, as near as New Brunswick and as far as California and it has failed.

The New Brunswick energy blueprint reviewed their policy where they brought it in 10 years ago and concluded it was an absolute failure. It resulted in higher power bills, of all things, and the end of renewable investment at the same time. It is a double loser for Nova Scotians who want renewable power and who want affordable rates, yet the government insists on going through with this empty plan, Mr. Speaker.

They sold it to Nova Scotians as being the same as our phone bills, Mr. Speaker, where 10 years ago the phone market, long distance and local, was deregulated and our bills went down. They told Nova Scotians that it's just like your phone bills, they went down, your power bills will go down, it's the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, it's not the same thing. First of all, you can't say it's not deregulation and then use deregulation as an example of why your bills will go down. That was the great charade that was played for Nova Scotians before the election and we're not going to participate in it because there are too many Nova Scotians who actually want to see something for real change.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberals in Opposition screamed and screamed about power rates. Maybe it was because they actually wanted to do something about it or maybe it was all an act in Opposition. Well here's the test because now they can do something about our power bills, now they can bring forward policies that actually make them lower and provide real relief but they don't. They stuck to the same empty promise as before the election and unfortunately, we're going to go through another cold winter and we're going to go through many more cold winters to come with a bill, Bill No. 1, that fails that important test of actually making our rights better.

Now I appreciate that the minister says don't expect any relief from this Liberal Government in the short-term - at least he admitted that - but to dangle out the hope that someday in the future there might be some relief, when we know from other places that that did not happen, is not right.

Mr. Speaker, it is with regret, truly, that I get up with this first bill and call it what it is, when we want to be able to support things that actually make a difference. You know, there might as well be an asterisk on this bill and a big disclaimer that says, not exactly as illustrated - just like on the TV ads, not exactly as illustrated - because they try to sell this sorry policy to Nova Scotians as breaking the monopoly. Well it turns out it's not exactly as illustrated.

After all, Nova Scotia Power is the monopoly that they are talking about. Even after this it still will own 100 per cent of the electricity transmission assets in the province, 100 per cent of the distribution assets in the province. They will have most of the generation, all of the traditional carbon generation, and they're still allowed to own up to half of the wind projects. They could change that. They complained about it in Opposition that even for all those wind projects, Nova Scotia Power is allowed to own half, but does the bill address that? No. So all the transmission, all the distribution, most of the generation, and up to half of the wind projects, Mr. Speaker, that's not breaking the monopoly; that's entrenching the monopoly, that's what they're doing now.

They said one thing before the election and now they're saying something else after the election - that's what Bill No. 1 shows to Nova Scotians - but that's not even the end of the story. The minister says that he knows of some windmill companies that want to set up; I hope that's true, I hope it is. But then they have to find customers and he thinks they will.

Mr. Speaker, even after they generate electricity from renewable sources like wind, they're going to have to pay a tariff to Nova Scotia Power, not one but two and maybe three, and maybe four. How much will that electricity cost when it gets to our homes after they've paid a transmission tariff to the power company and then after they've paid a distribution tariff on top of that? Then they pay some kind of backup fee to the power company, or somebody, to provide electricity to that sad customer who has to pay so much when the wind isn't blowing because all renewable projects, with a few exceptions, need backup power and Nova Scotia Power is the likely provider and they will have to be paid for that. They might even make more money than they do now under the minister's plan. Now imagine how Nova Scotians are going to feel when they find that out.

Even that's not the end of the story, Mr. Speaker, because clearly the government has not done the math on their own proposal. It's time for them to actually do the arithmetic. On top of the cost of generation, which of course in a private market would have to include some kind of profit, on top of the transmission tariff, on top of the distribution tariff, on top of the backup fee, the minister's bill says that when customers leave the system that those of us who remain cannot pay more.

Well then who does? Because someone has to pay their share of maintaining the existing energy infrastructure and if you're going to tack that bill onto these renewable customers that the government talks about, now we have five charges - five - that they have to pay. This is the arithmetic, this is not a matter of political opinion. This is math.

Now maybe the government thinks there is someone out there who will pay multiples of their current bill - already the highest in Canada - to try to make this work. I hope that whenever renewal projects come forward they find that person, because they are a saint. They are obviously a very wealthy saint as well, because they're the only ones who are going to be able to afford it.

Time after time in Opposition the Liberals asked the NDP, how much will our power cost under your policies, and were frustrated when the NDP couldn't answer that question. That was before the election. Now, after the election, the minister brings forward a bill, and he makes an eloquent speech in introducing it to this House here in Second Reading, but what did he not say was how much that electricity will cost when it gets to our homes. They have the same problem that the NDP had: they don't know the answer. That's because lots of people may say that sounds good, but until someone actually steps forward and finances a project and finds a company or a household to buy that power, it is all a fairy tale. It might have made a good TV ad, but it does not make good electricity policy, not in a province that already pays the highest power rates in all of Canada.

Then the minister says, we're opening up the market. You can open a market on paper - that seems to satisfy the government, if it at least exists on paper - but unless you have real producers and real customers transacting, there's no market. It would be the same as saying you're opening up the market for blacksmiths, which might be true on paper, but there's no one out there trying to get into the blacksmith business. For those who need horseshoes, they're not prepared to pay more than they already pay. It is as backward a policy as if they were applying it to the blacksmith industry.

The problem is that there are actually things that we could be doing to make our electricity market better. One of them is to actually reduce the guaranteed profit - the return on equity of the power company. We in the Official Opposition, the PCs, have a bill on the order paper right now that does this. We argued that this was a good, positive change before the election, and we're prepared to stick with it after the election. In the case of the Liberal Government, they also said that the return on equity - the profit of the power company, that guarantee - was too high before the election. They said it here in this House, and they said it on the campaign trail. It's in their platform that it has to be reduced. Here we are on Bill No. 1, with no talk of that anymore.

I know they're going to say, well, we'll review it. That's what the NDP used to say, and nothing ever changed. We want real change to the way electricity works, to provide real relief to people. That guaranteed profit at 9 per cent, which sticks in the craw of every Nova Scotian who goes out there and works hard under no guarantee to make a buck for themselves, that's a good place to start. That would have been a good Bill No. 1, but we don't have it. Instead, we have this.

I will say as a Progressive Conservative that I like competition, I want competition. We want competition in energy like we want it everywhere else. It is the best way to force companies to be sharp, efficient, and fair in their pricing. Not competition on paper like this bill, but real competition, and there is a way to do it.

The Atlantic Energy Gateway council painted the way by saying that if we work together as an Atlantic market, and if we actually build an Atlantic energy grid, our power bills could go down by almost \$1 billion a year as a region. Where is the phone call to his

counterparts in the other provinces, saying let's do this because it's better, it actually makes a difference, we could actually change something?

It's not done, Mr. Speaker, until it is in place. Then we can have real progress on energy. It doesn't even require the creation of new energy companies because there's already New Brunswick Power, there's already Nova Scotia Power, there's already Maritime Electric in P.E.I. By creating a regional energy market, we could buy power literally on the hour from the cheapest source available and make them compete against each other.

This is a policy change that works, Mr. Speaker. It's in our energy plan - it's the one we talked about before the election, and it's the one we believe in after the election. That's what Nova Scotians expect.

Mr. Speaker, I can't help but note that in the news today Michelin has completed an agreement with Heritage Gas to use natural gas to fuel their plants. What a great example of something the government could pursue on behalf of all Nova Scotians, to use more of our own natural gas here at home, which is cheaper and cleaner than the way we make electricity now - but there's nothing on that today.

In my own constituency, in the Town of Oxford, Oxford Frozen Foods last year made a multi-million dollar investment to bring gas into the Town of Oxford to heat their plant, to run their plant, because it's greener and cheaper. It makes them more competitive and it saves jobs. And because it saves jobs it is better for the people of Oxford, and because they are bringing that gas pipeline into town every household in Oxford will have a chance to make the conversion, if they choose. That's real competition, Mr. Speaker - not paper competition, but real competition for the energy market in Oxford.

Why not find ways to get natural gas available to more Nova Scotians both in their businesses and their homes, knowing it's cheaper and knowing it's greener? But no, Mr. Speaker, we are stuck with this bill and this policy which failed in New Brunswick, which failed in Ontario, which failed in British Columbia, which failed in California, and now we're going to get stuck with it here - among the other places where it failed.

Mr. Speaker, I will just conclude my little tour of the government's energy policy here this evening by pointing to one other provision, that after all those years in Opposition, after all their talk about the energy market, after campaigning that they had all the answers, now we have a bill that says the government is going to engage in a consultation with Nova Scotians on what they want in the energy market.

We've been down that road before. We've been down that road before with the previous government, with the NDP, that after they made a lot of promises in their election that they wanted to get out of after the election, like our HST, they engaged in this broad

consultation. We all know how that ended up - we ended up with a broken promise and the highest HST in Canada.

Now the Liberals have borrowed a page from the NDP playbook. That orange and red hue is showing up again on energy, that there is actually no real change to the way that our electricity bills look or the way our energy market is going to work. We're going to get a consultation and then they're going to come back and do whatever they want anyway.

If this is all they want, Mr. Speaker, then Nova Scotians are going to be sitting here four years from now, looking at their power bill - still the highest in all of Canada and the government will have to answer for that.

Mr. Speaker, the last thing that Nova Scotians expected, when they elected the Liberal Government, on power was that their first bill would be to do more study and create more reports and do more consultation. You know, while they are reporting and studying and consulting, it's still cold outside and there are still families who can't pay their bills and there are still businesses that are struggling to compete because they pay power bills well in excess of their competitors around the country and around the world.

So to come here tonight and introduce Bill No. 1 and say well, actually we might have said that before the election but now we think we'll consult, study, and do some more reports. That is not good enough for all those Nova Scotians who actually want change - not more of the same when it comes to their power bill and that's why we rise in Opposition and refuse to participate in what really is a smoke and mirrors bill that actually does not make a single Nova Scotian better off than the day before. Thank you.

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

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words on Bill No. 1. On Friday I characterized this bill as a bill of, you know, cross our fingers and hope it works, and that's just the issue. Today I heard more of the same from the minister when he talked about broadening issues that are not even contemplated in this bill about other aspects of consultation and so on. The fact of the matter is that previous to the election he and his Party, when they talked about what they were going to do, the buzz was break the monopoly. When we said no, it's deregulation, they flat out said, oh no, it's not deregulation and now they're saying it's deregulation.

Mr. Speaker, in Bill No. 1 you cannot have it both ways. I mean it's good to have a catchphrase but the reality is deregulation has failed and not just by inches but by miles, not just in the Canadian market but in markets in places like - of all places - California, an interesting state inasmuch as they have such a great amount of wealth and ability to absorb such things. They do manufacturing and agriculture to a much greater extent than the people of this small province but in many ways it mirrors it because it's resource industries

and so on and, you know, they are on the brink with the way Enron treated things. Many of us will remember the brownouts and so on.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a bill that helps us in any way to find a meaningful resolve to what's happening to Nova Scotian families as it relates to their electricity bill. In Opposition the now governing Liberals had four years and a campaign to really tell us what it was all about, what they were going to do, and if Bill No. 1 is the best they can do, then I would put forward to you that we're very much in trouble because it isn't. I think in terms of if there were local producers out there - and let's get really out there for a second and say that if this bill was to get out there and work its place into the market system, and so we're talking about local entrepreneurs who are involved with helping to produce this clean energy. So they start making money. What happens when Hydro-Québec comes knocking on the door and says, I want to buy you out? What happens, as the previous speaker said, the idea that we cannot produce at this time and they go back to Nova Scotia Power? How can anyone guarantee those things?

I see the idea of these small local companies. It reminds me of back in the mid-1970s when Canada got involved with opening the market for cable television, and to their credit, what they wanted to do at the time, cable stations would be owned by small local groups from various backgrounds but it would be representative of the community. Now, Mr. Speaker, we see what has happened since then. That market has been basically gobbled up by three or maybe four major players within Canada and if they find that there's a way to make a buck, they're going to gobble up these local people. Any idea that this is to help local groups is, I think, a fallacy at best.

We need an energy plan, but what the minister is saying today is pass Bill No. 1 and if you pass that we are going to go out and we are going to do some more studies; we are going to go out and we're going to talk to Nova Scotians. They didn't talk to Nova Scotians before they brought Bill No. 1 in, they just foisted it on Nova Scotians and said, there you go; this is what you want. It has to be just the thinking of the government because they are saying now, if you pass this bill we are actually going to go out and start talking to people because we haven't talked to them before, so that's what we're going to have to do.

First of all we're going to break the monopoly but we're going to deregulate, but when that catastrophe and that snowball comes bounding down the hill, we're going to start studying, people; we're going talk. We are going to stick to the timelines, but, Mr. Speaker, the timelines will mean nothing to anybody in this province when the issues of this broken bill happen because it will be deregulated. These people will find out they probably have bought power or have contracted with a group for power that may no longer be able to serve their needs. It's deregulated and so what? So by deregulation, if they want to come back then and be a new customer or renew their relationship with Nova Scotia Power, what is left for them? What does Nova Scotia Power do with them?

The government today - or actually, I guess, on Friday is a better way to phrase it - they really don't understand the renewable market. With every breath they could muster and every word they could muster they were certainly against Muskrat Falls and on Friday the URB said no, we are casting aside your eight suggestions and we're moving forward. It is issues like that that say, wow. If the government thinks that the URB took all eight of their suggestions, boy, I am in trouble and all Nova Scotians are in trouble if they took it.

Now I know the Minister of Energy will have the time to close debate on this and if he wants to give his version of how that Grimm's Fairy Tale ends, that's fine. The reality is that's what the board said.

Let's say if their want had come true and Lower Churchill wasn't to happen, where would these upgrades in transmission lines come from? Really, you can't have one without the other. We know that what this province is in desperate need of is an upgrade of their transmission lines. We are in a position - for years, we were an energy taker and so we have really poor transmission lines.

I remember talking to some colleagues at one time at an energy conference in Maine and they were saying that was one of the things through government reinvestment - and at that time President Obama had said to the people in the various parts of the United States, what can we do as a government to invest in infrastructure? Just about every state at that point said look, we need to upgrade our transmission lines because they deteriorated so much over the years, partly because of failed approaches in areas like California, failed areas like Maryland, where people saw their bills go up about 60 per cent because of deregulation.

These weren't small markets like ours, these were markets that were in the middle of the loop; they weren't at the end of the cord, as they say. So we have an issue here as it relates to infrastructure. They were against Churchill Falls that would provide some degree of that transmission infrastructure, so it's kind of perplexing when you put the two together and one doesn't get that they're - pardon the pun - linked.

Mr. Speaker, you know the idea of putting this bill forward and then saying, well, we don't know when or if we're going to see lower rates for this, because bringing in this bill today you would think that the consultation would have allowed them to say yes. I suppose I'm not as Pollyanna-ish as the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party to think that rates can just be pushed down to almost nothing overnight. Well, the reality is the whole power electrical generation system is a big ship to turn around and we appreciate that. I think it's only right that whoever is given charge of that, that it be done in a meaningful time.

The issue here is that there's absolutely no timeline, it's not even like 10 years that we'll have this turned around, not even 20 years. There's just oh, we'll just hope that this is

going to work. If this works, that's great. If it doesn't, it's a shrug, a hearty hi-ho Silver, and off you go.

Mr. Speaker, what does Bill No. 1 do, except give you the slogan back: we broke the monopoly? But who does it help? I live a kilometre and a half from the largest generating station in the province, Lingan generating. It's not always the best neighbour, in some ways. We have issues, especially in parts of my constituency that are more downwind from them in the Dominion area, that when they have flare-offs and so on, they have issues with dust and so on.

Here is a plant - now mind you, it was built by Liberals; Liberals ran Nova Scotia Power when they built it. They expropriated land, which is one of the finest recreational swimming areas in the area, but they expropriated it and built it. It burned for years, until the mines were closed. It burned Cape Breton coal. (Interruption) Who closed the mines? We will come to that in another part of this speech, Mr. Speaker. (Laughter)

Mr. Speaker, we've been a power generator before; that is the position that I'm trying to make here. It's nothing new for Nova Scotians to be a power generator and a power exporter. I'm sure that the member who was just prompting me, I can remember the time when there was much upheaval about the oil market, and who stabilized the energy prices for Nova Scotia at that time were the hard-working women and men who mined coal in Cape Breton - mainly men were the active miners, but there were obviously women in the system. That's where it came from, so we're no stranger to generating.

If you look right down the pipe, whether it's Nova Scotia Power or whoever, right next to this large coal plant is a series of about - I think it's up to as much as a dozen wind turbines now, Mr. Speaker, but it's the ability and the overall efficiencies of wind turbines.

Now, I don't think there's a person in this Chamber who is against clean energy - that should go without saying - but what we don't have is how we are going to get these folks who generate energy, and then get it to market in a proper way? The only answer the government has for us today in going forward is, let us do deregulation - a form of which has failed in Ontario, failed in New Brunswick, failed in Alberta, failed in Maryland, failed in California, failed everywhere it's gone. For some reason, keep hoping that it will change. That's just not the case - you just can't keep repeating the problems of the past and hope they're going to change.

In the minister's opening remarks he talked about those things; he talked about being able to take best practices. Wouldn't it have been more prudent to get the best practices on the front end than to start this and find out that the best practices are contrary to your bill? Wouldn't that have made more sense? Rather than to come running up to this Legislature with a bill that fulfills nothing, it just says we've broken the monopoly.

We would be supportive of breaking the monopoly if there were a way you could show it worked. In the body of this bill, there's nothing in here that says it works. It doesn't give anyone lower rates, and it doesn't really give a decent framework of what the real meaning of local is - who are local providers? Do we define local as Atlantic Canada; do we define local as within a county or a district? I'm at a loss with that.

It's a time that we should be seriously looking at this. The government is very high on hyperbole and very low on how to get things done. We have extremely high prices here and . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: The highest in the country.

MR. CORBETT: Highest in the country? I don't know. (Interruptions) Mr. Speaker, they're saying what the rate rose to - maybe they should look at the 40 per cent in Alberta.

We do have issues about where we're going to go with the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and how federal regulations will impact us. Again, that's why we're supportive of green energy; that's why we've been supportive from the get-go in the Lower Churchill - it makes absolute sense. If Bill No. 1 were to really take on and say we're going to build on what transmission lines we're going to get out of Lower Churchill, we would be happy with that. But how can we support a bill that doesn't do anything except break the monopoly and deregulate?

My friend, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, says he's fond of deregulation. It's very seldom that I agree with that member and this won't be one I'll agree with him on either, because in this market it's too small to go and just throw that out and say without a plan, we're just going to deregulate, let's just do a roll of the dice and see what happens. The one thing I will agree with that member on is if the roll of the dice doesn't go out the way the government wants it to go - and there's a better than even shot that it won't - that ratepayer that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party talked about, she'll probably be down to living in one room.

It will be too onerous, if he or she at the end of the day has to go out and shop, wait for the weekly flyers to be dropped off and find out who has the best energy deal this week and where can I get it. Is that what Nova Scotians expect from their government? All of a sudden are we going to start buying our power from Walmart? Mr. Speaker, that's all the more reason why we cannot support this bill. The bill absolutely says nothing, it just says look let us do this, let us deregulate, that's all we want to do.

Now I've heard the minister talk about a few groups that have contacted him, that are excited about it. In my time home on the weekend I haven't heard a consumer that was excited about it, and in fairness it's a fairly complex issue so it's hard to grasp on first blush and so people would want more time for this but that's the reality. In governments, Bill No.

1 is a sort of showcase bill, if you will, Mr. Speaker, to show that this is what we're about. Well if this is the showcase bill of what they're about then they're not about much because the bill is not about much.

I still am intrigued by the minister's "we're going to do these other things" that are not even contemplated in Bill No. 1, they're not contemplated, I think he had the weekend to reflect and realized, whoa is this one a stinker or what. So he has to realize, oh we've got to put some meat on this bone and so there are now all these other consultative processes that he has talked about, all these kind of deadlines that he's going to meet.

Mr. Speaker, it's perplexing, I think, to a lot of people why the government rushed this bill to this House and put it in the front window of the store and everyone will be happy with it. For me, this is not a bill that I have a philosophical difference with. It's not like, you know, at least from my perspective, no one's got the argument left to right on it, it's not that kind of political or centrist. It just seems that, my argument with this bill is to come back another day and give me a bill with all that consultative process in it that reflects what Nova Scotians want, which should be in there, what Nova Scotians are willing to pay, what type of energy they want.

Going to back to earlier when we talked about when we burned Nova Scotia - predominantly Cape Breton coal - for our markets. That fit in a time and place, Mr. Speaker. I'm the son of a coal miner and I understood that put food on our table but it's a different world. Many people really don't like the thought of selling or burning fossil fuels, then there is the other side of it is the market for fossil fuels. One year you could be riding high in April and shot down in May, as they say in the song, so that's an issue of some of the problems with fossil fuels, that's life.

We were really hoping that we would have a really good bill here from the new government that we could get behind and support and would allow Nova Scotians to see an energy future, to say, we need a mix of product in our energy system but all it is, is the old mantra of breaking the monopoly and deregulation. There is just nowhere that they can say, yes, at this point we will have lower rates for Nova Scotians. There's just nowhere, so why the rush? Why not do that consultation and make sure that Nova Scotians are getting the best possible rates? Why are we debating an empty bill here today? Is it just for show? There is no substance for ratepayers. Is it just to tweak the nose of Nova Scotia Power? These are questions that will be answered by other people, but the government does what the government does. We realize, as I've often heard, they do have a majority and they will do their darnedest to pass this bill.

Our Party will not be supporting this bill, if you haven't already guessed that, but more importantly I urge Nova Scotians to take time, when this bill clears the hurdle of second reading to get to the Law Amendments Committee, and make sure your voice is heard to protect your stake as a ratepayer, because the government is not. You better get there, because I'm going to tell you, when this bill passes and deregulation comes to Nova

Scotia, like it has in New Brunswick, like it has in Ontario, like it has in Alberta, you will be paying higher rates, and it will be thanks to that government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, an interesting discussion has been going on here tonight. I wonder if when the NDP agree with the PCs, are we sort of in agreement - regardless of our philosophical differences, that we're agreeing? Maybe I should reconsider my position on this one. I'm not too sure what is going on here. (Interruptions) It's strange.

Again, the test that we should put on all pieces of legislation that come before this House of Assembly is whether it is right for Nova Scotians or not. Nova Scotians need to know that their government is standing up for them when it comes to the ever-increasing cost of their power bills. Only a few months ago - a month and a half ago - all of us were knocking on doors and listening to Nova Scotians. I can tell you - not each and every one, but a good majority of those people were talking about their power rates and how they can no longer afford to pay their power bills. They're finding they are getting far too out of their reach. What we see today, again, is something that's not going to make that better. This is a little bit of window dressing when it comes to power rates in Nova Scotia.

People shouldn't have to choose between keeping their power on and feeding their families, and that does happen far too much in this province. For some of the new members of this House, maybe you have had it happen already, but there will be lots of constituents coming to your offices with \$1,000, \$2,000 bills, wondering how the heck they're going to be able to pay for it. Regardless of that, we really don't have answers for them. It's very difficult once your bill gets that far - that they're going to be able to pay them off. They should never have gotten there in the first place. We shouldn't have the highest power rates in the country, and we should be able to help them pay those bills as they come to them.

My esteemed colleague who sits next to me talked about slogans. Really, this is what this bill does: it tries to bring back a slogan. The Liberal Government - the Liberal Opposition of the time - talked about breaking the monopoly, talked about deregulation, which is ironic because the same minister brought a bill in today talking about the NDP slogans of JobsHere and Ships Start Here and all of that stuff, that maybe they should be changing the way governments advertise. Well, that's exactly what this bill is doing, allowing this government to be able to say look, we broke the monopoly.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we all know that really isn't true because really what happens here is that 95 per cent of the generation, 95 per cent of the transmission, and 95 per cent of the distribution of electricity in the province is still in the hands of Nova Scotia Power. Really nothing has changed there.

If we look at the regulation and we look at the generation of green energy in this province, Nova Scotia probably owns half of those too. So how did that break the monopoly?

Mr. Speaker, the power company will be required to give permission to retail producers to use their lines. I think if you look outside and you look around our communities, no one else really owns the power lines except the power company, except for places like Berwick and little energy producers that have that, the generation themselves. What charge will that infrastructure be required to get the electrons from a power generation to it? What's it going to actually cost?

Let's say the rate is 13 cents, so if the rate is 13 cents, plus, plus, plus - plus, plus, plus is what is going to happen, if they can provide you with an energy rate of 13 cents. We know that green producers are producing for far more than that. I have yet to see a green project that is producing for under that in Nova Scotia at this point.

So there are a few other questions that we need to have answered and maybe the minister will answer them during his wrap-up of this. How will those extra, additional costs impact the ratepayers? He's saying it won't. Well, I need a little more assurance of that.

What will power bills look like? Not only are we going to be paying more for those bills, in our estimation, you're going to have to buy the extra power from someone else. So when those producers are not producing, at what rate are you going to have to buy from Nova Scotia Power? Is it going to be at their regular rate or is there going to be an extra rate because you're only an occasional customer of Nova Scotia Power?

For far too long Nova Scotians have been asking government to stand up for them, to bring their power rates down again. That's what we all heard during this last election. Once again we have a government that cannot guarantee it.

We need to be realistic. This plan did not work in New Brunswick. We heard a whole bunch of other places where it didn't work. It was not economical, did not attract enough interest in it. Power rates have become too serious an issue to be met with just a thin and unpredictable plan. Nova Scotians, of course, deserve much better than that.

Winter is coming, Mr. Speaker. It has been here for a couple of little visits and I'm sure it will come to stay pretty soon. It will present hardships. Another 3 per cent increase is coming in January, folks. I kind of forgot there was a 3 per cent increase promised to Nova Scotia Power during the last increase request. This bill is cold comfort for those Nova Scotians already struggling, and this government should be thinking of them.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak to Bill No. 1, which is, in my estimation, a disappointment for Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret's.

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege to speak on Bill No. 1. Everyone knows there is a reason why Nova Scotians find themselves dealing with high electricity prices. It is because over many years this province has relied on coal and the price of coal has gone up 75 per cent. Why was that reliance? Because there was no planning in terms of our energy and the direction we needed to go.

When the NDP formed government, we knew there needed to be some type of strategy to move forward and we had to be looking at renewable, clean energy. That is why we pursued the opportunity with Muskrat Falls.

There are other reasons besides the coal prices going up by 75 per cent that have created these high electricity prices. Of course, we all know that one of them is the fact that Nova Scotia Power is a private company and was privatized by the former Progressive Conservatives when they were in government. We also know that the Liberals gave Emera the power to be the parent company to Nova Scotia Power, and that has created all the issues around the shareholders and that has created the issues that many in the public perceive as unfair salaries and unfair shareholders' rebates, what they're getting. But that was not created on its own - the Liberals had a hand in that.

When the concept of Nova Scotia being a partner with Muskrat Falls and when it was announced just a couple of years ago, the former Leader of the Official Opposition, now Premier, could not wait to get to Newfoundland and Labrador to stand for photo ops about Muskrat Falls. But, wait, he was in Opposition, so therefore that meant we cannot support this. So the Liberal game began and that was the game that they still play - the game of perception, the game of slogans without any solutions. So they did not see the benefit at that time to support the Maritime Link. They knew the nature of the electricity files, a very complicated one to explain to the general public, so it was easier to take the route of political perception - we will break the monopoly. Boy, that does sound good. Why wouldn't you vote for us, we'll break the monopoly? The perception game over and over again - and they're still playing it.

It plays on people's emotions, you know, the very people we were talking about and we were knocking on doors and everyone here, no matter what Party they represent, I'm sure heard from people, families and seniors, who are finding it so, so difficult to pay for those electricity bills, those electricity bills that are so high because there was no planning years ago leading up to today. There was no planning to look at renewable energy and make a difference, but the Liberals who are now in government say that they had the solution and that solution is that they'll break the monopoly. That solution is let's take credit for Muskrat Falls. Isn't that a flip-flop? I cannot count the number of times I sat over on the other side and heard members of their Party, in Opposition, getting up and standing and saying that Muskrat Falls is not the deal - it's not a good deal.

Well, the Utility and Review Board was where the process took place and it was in the proper place, in the proper hands, and the public, and the Opposition and government, everyone had the opportunity to express their concerns and give their suggestions. That's what the Utility and Review Board took into consideration. It wasn't the Liberal Party who made those changes, as they now claim in the media that they tweaked it. They didn't tweak anything because there was nothing to tweak because of the fact that that information was already provided through the proper consultation process that we have in Nova Scotia.

You know, it was only less than, what, not even two months ago that we were knocking on doors and I know that people were thinking that it was the Liberals that had the solution. They were going to come in and they were going to be the saviours of the electricity issues and the high price. They were in high gear telling Nova Scotians that they were going to be the saviours; they were going to break the monopoly. They were going to have Hydro-Québec as part of it - I don't even hear them talking about Hydro-Québec at all. It's silent. Before, it was almost every day in this House we were talking about, oh, Hydro-Québec. One of the questions that we kept asking was how are we going to get Québec-Hydro here? Do you think New Brunswick is going to let Hydro-Québec go through? And once they reached Nova Scotia, whose grid were they going to use? Nova Scotia Power, I believe.

It's the same as this bill. It's all about perception; it's a slogan; there's no meat to it. It's not realistic - you know, they are saying in the bill that they will force Nova Scotia Power to be part of this and allow people to be able to, or companies to, come in and be a part of that grid.

Well, they are a private company - did we forget that? That is no different than going to Michelin and bringing in a bill to tell Michelin that they have to let Goodyear come into their plant and use their equipment to make Goodyear tires. Do you think that Michelin is going to stand for that? I don't think so.

The fact is, this is what we have to be looking at, as the other speakers in Opposition have brought forth to Nova Scotians. Nova Scotians will see this. They're waiting to see their electricity bills go down. What I heard about at the door was electricity. When I ran in 2009, what did I hear at the doors? About electricity. It's a complex issue that takes time. That's what we said, and it's funny that now that's what the Liberals are saying: give us time. Well, I can tell you that many people are not going to give you much time, because they've been told that year over year over year, that we're trying to explain that these things are complex.

I think time is running out. I know you haven't been here very long, but believe me, in the minds of Nova Scotians, time is running out when that electricity bill comes in January or February and then it comes again in March or the late Spring. I don't think your slogan of breaking the monopoly is going to work all the time and in the future.

One thing in closing - the person who actually said it the very best is now the Premier of Nova Scotia. The now-Premier stood in this House and said - to media also - that your past actions are a reflection of your future actions. We know that deregulation has failed in the past in many places throughout the world. That should be an indication of the path that we're on with this electricity bill, and that is failure. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg.

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to speak long. There are a few things on Bill No. 1 that I think we need to talk about and put on the record, though.

There has been much talk about how this is going to break the monopoly. We're going to break the monopoly. The question that was asked to me many times on the weekend, we're going to break the monopoly by giving an alternative that actually costs more money than the one we have now. That's really not what people consider to be breaking a monopoly. They think that doesn't give them any choice. The question on people's minds is, what are we going to do about the price of power? The winter is coming, and the costs are going up.

Just in the last three days in our office, we've had a couple of calls from people who are losing their power because they can't afford the bills they already have before we get into the major heating season. The question is, how do we do something now that will really affect the consumers in the Province of Nova Scotia? To say we're going to break a monopoly, that we're going to let private producers go out and produce power, is good - free enterprise is great. But, indeed, that takes time. That is going to take time, and the consumers, the ratepayers, the people who turn on the lights, turn up their heat - they need answers now, not down the road.

There's no talk about how this is going to affect the cost. We need to know more about that. The ratepayers - the Nova Scotians that put all 51 of us here - are asking the question, how am I going to get through the winter? How are we going to survive? There's nothing wrong with the idea of breaking a monopoly, if it were real. In terms of the real world, it's about the cost. We spend money right now on very expensive foreign coal. We heard that time and time again from the former government.

There is a solution. The minister's own department will tell you that coal will be part of the solution for Nova Scotia's electrical production for the next 20 years. Nova Scotia Power will tell you that. We have coal here in this province, better quality coal than we're importing. Maybe this government could look at that, talk to the people who have the ability to produce coal here, create jobs for Nova Scotians, stabilize the price and the quality of the coal, a better quality of coal that gives more BTUs that will create better and more energy at a cheaper price, and less transportation on that very coal. At the same time his department says we're going to be using it.

We all want to see other sources and we need to have other sources of power production, and breaking the monopoly might be one of the ways to go, but it's an immediate problem that needs to be addressed right now, Mr. Speaker, and I don't think this bill, Bill No. 1, is doing that for the people.

These new companies are going to form because they want to make money and that's fair, that's what it's about, but Nova Scotia Power wants to make money too. They're not just going to just say you can put power over my distribution system, you can send power over my lines and I'm not going to want you to pay me for that. That just doesn't happen; that's not how business works. There is a cost and that cost has to be met by somebody and at the end of the day all these costs that we're talking about, Mr. Speaker, they are paid for by the consumer, the people who put us in this House.

So if we're truly worried about the people of the Province of Nova Scotia, if we're truly worried about the ratepayers, we should be looking at the things that we have control over right now, the things that we can do to effect change immediately, not studies that are going to take months to take place, not the construction of wind towers that are going to take months to take place, but look at the system that is there now and how we can correct that system so the people in the Province of Nova Scotia get a better power rate. This bill does not answer the immediate question. We need to have action now, thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. ANDREW YOUNGER: Thank you Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the comments on that. I'm going to try and address a few of them. I won't go through them all because we would probably be here for the next hour.

First of all, the member for Cape Breton West is absolutely right. We all know and everybody . . .

MR. MACLEOD: Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg, please.

MR. YOUNGER: Oh sorry, I still have the old riding names in my head but I'll learn them. Coal will be part of the energy mix for a long time to come and this government, even before being sworn into Cabinet, had actually been working on exactly the issue that the minister references and working to try and address that. In fact there are a number of ministers actually working on that. What I will say however, and the member should be aware, is that the single most expensive type of energy that Nova Scotia Power was using today was coal. It was double the cost of the power that they were importing across the border - double.

Mr. Speaker, importantly - and this is why this is important to think about - when the Leader of the Official Opposition stood up and he said we need immediate solutions, and I agree there is a problem this winter, and had the Tories acted on this when they were given it in 2003, we might not be in that situation this winter. Had the NDP acted on this when it was recommended to them, we might not be in this situation now because we could have addressed that in advance. At the end of the day it wasn't acted on and we're acting on it now.

The Leader of the Official Opposition stood up and said there are all kinds of things he can do immediately but didn't name a single one. Well that's a bit disingenuous at the end of the day. I completely agree with the various members who said that there are people who are having to choose between paying their power bill and other things and that is a very serious problem. I have also said in this Legislature, and elsewhere, and in fact in my remarks just before they spoke - this is just one part of the overall plan and is not meant to represent the entire breadth of things that we will be doing in terms of the energy market.

I think it's going to become increasingly important that if the members of the Opposition want to be engaged in this, as I hope they will be, that they also watch very carefully what the government is doing because the Leader of the Official Opposition stood up and said, as though it hadn't already happened, that we should be discussing the idea of regional co-operation with the ministers, when a number of weeks ago I announced that one of my first acts was, in fact, to ensure that that is on the agenda for the Atlantic Energy Ministers at our coming meeting, and that that was already done and that was done in my first week in office. I am perfectly happy, Mr. Speaker, to stand up and accept the criticisms and suggestions from the Opposition, but they best make sure they are accurate.

The reality is that there are many things we are going to disagree on and there are many things we are going to agree on. The Official Opposition introduced three bills the other day, I think it was in the Department of Energy and I'm having each one of those looked at at the moment, to see what the risks and opportunities are in those and we'll see where we go on that. As well, I've invited both Opposition Parties to become involved in how we structure this consultation. We have the Official Opposition that doesn't want us to do a consultation and we have the NDP who said we should be doing more consultation before doing anything. We have the NDP saying this is deregulation and we have the Official Opposition saying it isn't deregulation. This is why we need to have this discussion.

Mr. Speaker, there are just a couple of other things I want to address because I think they are extremely important. We all know that power rates have increased, we all know they need to be addressed and they need to be addressed in a timely fashion. There are some things that will require the Acts of this Legislature, there are some things that we will be doing outside of that consultation. For example, despite the fact that the other two Parties still support having a tax on electricity, that is going to be removed from power bills, which will reduce power bills. Yet the Leader of the Official Opposition and the NDP

have stood up in favour of keeping the tax on electricity bills for every single ratepayer in this province. That will no longer be on ratepayer bills and that will reduce power bills.

Mr. Speaker, there are things that we are doing and we have committed to, so the question is why is this being done now? Why is this Bill No. 1? I have stood in this House in Opposition - and you can go back and read my comments when I introduced our version of this very bill - I was perfectly up front and honest in those bill debates about what this bill would mean, what the impact would be, what the timeline for rolling it out would be. I stood up in this Legislature and I said that and I say that's why it needs to be Bill No. 1, because it will take a while for it to work through the system.

Now the NDP says there are going to be all kinds of people taking advantage of this, and the Leader of the Official Opposition says nobody is going to take advantage of this. Well odds are that it will probably be somewhere in the middle. It's an opportunity for investment and that investment is already going to New Brunswick and places like that. That money is already being spent by companies and individuals in this province and that money is going to New Brunswick. Anybody who wants to defend that that money should go to New Brunswick, because they have the legislation, instead of sitting here, feel free to stand up and have that debate because right across the street the building that my office is in, they buy their power from New Brunswick at the moment because this legislation is not here. That means that people in New Brunswick are getting the economic investments that we could be enjoying in this province. If you want to stand up and defend the fact that Nova Scotians' money is already going out of this province and into New Brunswick, go for it.

So, Mr. Speaker, maybe there will be only a small impact as time goes on but you will never see me stand up and oversell something, you'll never see me oversell this bill. If you go back and look at my remarks in Opposition and my remarks today, I've been completely up front about what this bill means and what the opportunities are. That opportunity might be far better than we think but we know what it will mean.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see this go forward to Law Amendments Committee and I look forward to the constructive suggestions of the Opposition Parties as we move forward. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 1. 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. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Government Motions.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I move that the adjourned debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne be now resumed.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to rise from my seat and stand here as the member representing the people of Pictou East. I'm extremely grateful for the support I was shown in the election, and I am fully aware of the trust that the people of Pictou East have placed in me. Trust must be earned and never taken for granted, and I will work hard to honour their trust.

I am also fully aware of the trust my colleagues have placed in me by naming me the Finance and Treasury Board Critic. I thank them, too, for trusting me, and I look forward to getting to know the Minister of Finance and enjoying a productive working relationship with her. I respect the minister's accomplishments and admire her demeanor. I will be fair but vigilant, and I am sure that we will get along just fine.

The province is in need of good governance, good management, and I am hopeful that we will soon start to see just that as the celebrations and parties wane and the government gets down to business. I can tell you that I am standing here for just one reason: I am worried about the path our province is on. It is not a path that will create jobs where our children and their friends will be able to live and work in Nova Scotia. We must change direction. The government has promised to do just that, and I believe them. They will have every opportunity to do so. Now they just need to start doing it.

Members, I applaud you for putting your names forward and congratulate you on your election success. Rather than sitting back and criticizing, you are here. I thank you for doing that, the people of your constituencies thank you for that, and hopefully the people of the province will ultimately thank you.

Being an MLA is about working with people, understanding what is important to them, and working hard to get the results that they want and need. Each of us understands what a privilege it is to be elected and stand here in this prestigious Chamber. As many of you may know, I am a chartered accountant, and I come from the business side of things. As such I find comfort in numbers, and as I start my first speech here I want to calm myself by sharing a couple of numbers with you.

On October 8th I became the 40th person elected to represent the people of Pictou East - the 40th in a long line of, for the most part, impressive individuals. On that same day I also became just the third chartered accountant elected to this House. That is a number that has really given me pause for thought. Only three chartered accountants have been elected to represent their constituencies since Confederation - and all three were Tories, I will have you know. You know one of the other two. He is seated in front of me. Since Confederation, just three chartered accountants. I hope the government understands how fortunate it is to have two of the only three chartered accountants ever elected to the Legislature sitting directly across the aisle from them at this moment in time.

I am 43 years old. I like formulas. The 40th MLA, the third chartered accountant. Forty plus three equals 43. That's not a coincidence. I look forward to having many opportunities to discuss numbers in this Chamber.

The members of the Assembly share a common bond. Campaigning is not easy. We all did it, and it's impossible to explain what campaigning is like to somebody who has never campaigned. We all did it, and we share that bond.

As the members here will know, you never know the type of reaction you will receive when you knock on a door. I received every type of reaction from "I would never vote for the Tories, and if I did, it wouldn't be for you" to "I only vote for the Tories and you're the best candidate I've ever seen", and everything in between. I am sure that every member here today - and indeed, everyone who has had their name on a ballot - has similar experiences. But I will say this:

The people of Pictou East are particularly polite,
Even in instances where their politics may not be right.
On these doorsteps I forged some incredible allies,
And I will conduct myself to make them proud as I look them in the eyes.
The issues and concerns of my constituents are real and here.
It is now my job to make sure the government knows them and holds them
dear.

Nobody is here by accident, and I am no different. Like everyone in this room, I was powered by a great team - a team that started at home. My wife of 18 years, Carol; my 14-year-old daughter, Paget; and my 12-year-old son, Zachary, were my core team. They have been so supportive. They are always top of my mind, and will be top of my mind as we make decisions here. Carol supported me through my business career, and she readily supported me when I ran an idea by her for a new career. I remember discussing this idea with her, an idea to enter politics. Her immediate response was - well, let's skip her immediate response and go to her ultimate response, which was supportive.

You can't campaign without support at home. I had it, and I have it now, and I thank them for that. I must also say how much I respect and admire my children. They have

made and are making incredible sacrifices. Carol and I work hard to balance the demands of a busy family and a busy constituency office, and I thank my children for their patience and understanding.

I want to share a little story that I think speaks to the character of my children. I remember on election night, in the midst of all the euphoria, my daughter quietly confided in me that she felt bad for telling me on such a happy night, but she felt sad for my opponents and she felt bad for Darrell Dexter. She felt bad for feeling bad. I hugged her and I told her that I understood exactly how she felt, and that is why we are who we are, because we have compassion. (Applause)

As politicians we will need resolve, but we will also need compassion. Madam Speaker, I would like to offer this: if you ever need to know which Pictou East church dinners have the best selection of desserts, my son will be happy to enlighten you. He has it all scoped out, as we have visited many such dinners on our way home from hockey or soccer, as the case may be.

When I talk about support, I must mention my in-laws, Art and Verna Steeves. My in-laws are also our neighbours, and they are always there to help get the children to and from events or feed our chickens or care for our dog. We rely on Art and Vern heavily, and I appreciate all that they do for us.

At this time I would also like to thank my brother and his family. Todd and Krista and Fynn and Kane and baby Bri were there for us on nomination night and again on election night, as were my sister Leanne and my parents, Lloyd and Sharon. I thank them.

For me, just securing the nomination was a challenge. It was a three-way contested nomination, and you may know that Houston is not what you would call a traditional Pictou County name. Early on in the campaigning process, a gentleman who would later become one of my biggest supporters said to me: Tim, I admire what you're doing and you're a good candidate, but I need you to do one thing for me. I need you to change your name to Tim MacHouston because if you are not a Mac in Pictou East, you have to have some beside you - and I was lucky to have the support of a number of Macs, the MacLeans, the MacGregors and the MacDonalds, to name a few.

They may not be happy to be acknowledged because they are private people but, Madam Speaker, without Stirling and Fraser, Hugh and Andy, and Dave and Murray, and their families, I would not be here. After securing the nomination in November 2012, I set about assembling a campaign team. In life you have to surround yourself with good people. I was able to and I am proud to say today that much of my core team that powered me are all undefeated in elections - yes, undefeated. Norm and Pat Lord, Sandy MacGregor, Chris Lamey, Rick Feehan, Seymour Dewtie, Morris Campbell, Leslie Ebert, Orville Mason, Tom and Jo-Ann Luddington, Mike and Gloria Yorke - these people, and countless others who stepped up to drive, to phone, to plant signs, and everything else necessary were doing

so for the first time in their lives. They had never campaigned or actively been involved in a campaign before. They were first-timers and today they are all undefeated at 1- 0, as am I.

As the member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg likes to remind me - it is nice to have the energy and naïveté of youth, but a little experience goes a long way too. I was also fortunate to have that necessary political experience around me as well, people like Albert and Florence Marshall, Cathy Boswell, Joan and Clary MacDonald, Cyril and Emily, Sharon MacDonald, Joanne MacHardy, Henrietta Hood, Doug MacNeil, Doug Porter, Blair, Daryl, and Dwayne, the Palmers, the Munroes, and Diane Campbell.

Madam Speaker, every time each of these people said something nice about me, they were lending their good name to me and allowing me to piggyback on their reputation, and that is truly amazing to me. What they did for me is truly amazing.

Madam Speaker, these are only a few of the people of Pictou East who need to be recognized for their dedication and commitment. If I were to name every deserving member of my team, it would take so much time that the other members in this Chamber would start checking their phones, initiating sidebar conversations, maybe even walking around, and we don't want that.

In recognizing the people who have helped me along the way, I will state the obvious. Campaigns take work; campaigns require good people, and I am glad to have the opportunity to acknowledge the commitment, dedication, personal sacrifice and hard work of these very special people and also their counterparts in the other political Parties who were so essential in making the political process work. These volunteers have earned and deserve a special vote of thanks from all of us for keeping democracy alive in our communities. We would be lesser communities without them. (Applause)

To have an opportunity to speak in this Chamber is quite an honour. The historical significance is something to treasure. If I ever forget the seriousness of the job to be done, I need look no further than the gallery or the intricate architecture that surrounds us, or even to the impressive uniform of the Sergeant-at-Arms, or the Chief and Assistant Clerks, or perhaps, Madam Speaker, even your robe, and the hat that Mr. Speaker donned on the very first day we assembled here - that was a splendid hat and I hope that we see it often for it is a reminder of tradition and respect.

I will work hard to uphold this respect; I will eagerly support the government when I believe it is making good decisions, but I will oppose them when I feel that they are in danger of harming my constituents and fellow Nova Scotians, and it is in those times that I will try extra hard to conduct myself with dignity.

The Speech from the Throne alluded to the complacency of the general public toward the political process. This group assembled here is now the one tasked with changing that. The people of our communities have sent us here to make decisions; the

challenge is to make good decisions and I look forward to working with my colleagues in my caucus, with my colleagues on the government side, and also my friends to the left - literally. We have an opportunity to do some good so let's do it.

Now not to be outdone by some of the preceding speeches and those to follow, I would like to take a few minutes to talk about my constituency, Pictou East. I should tell you that I am not a native of Pictou East, I actually did most of my growing up here in the city, in Fairview, and Carol grew up in Timberlea. After we got married we spent 12 years living outside of Canada and when we finally decided to return to Canada, we literally could have moved anywhere but we chose Pictou County and we chose Pictou East. The reason, we had simply fallen in love with the area during vacations and time spent there so when I speak affectionately about my constituency, it is sincere.

A former member for Pictou East offered a great description of the constituency and with your indulgence, I will borrow it here:

Pictou East is bounded on the north by the Northumberland Strait with miles of sandy beaches, inlets and quaint villages such as Chance Harbour - where I live - Merigomish, Lismore, and to the south by rolling hills, scenic valleys and forests. The Trans-Canada Highway runs right through the constituency from west to east. This is an area that is as economically diverse as it is geographically dispersed. Our major urban centre is the Town of Westville, with its proud history of coal mining. Together with a loose collection of villages that dot the landscape, each with their own identity, Pictou East has historic charm.

Resource-based industries are important to my constituency. The forestry, the farming and the fishery employ many of my friends and neighbours.

I must thank former member Jim DeWolfe for that description and I hope he doesn't mind that I used it here.

To stress the geographic size of the riding I should tell you that the people of Pictou East are protected by the services of no less than 11 district fire departments: Pictou Landing, Little Harbour, Merigomish, Barney's River, Linacy, Thorburn, Blue Mountain, East River St. Marys, Eureka, East River Valley and Westville - 11 fire departments. I'm sure that may surprise many members.

Those of us who represent rural ridings know that fire halls are often the centre of the community. They host many events and believe me, each of these fire departments can barbeque an excellent pork chop or chicken dinner. Government must support volunteer fire departments where it can. They keep us safe.

The people of the communities of Pictou East know that being an MLA isn't just about shaking hands and slapping backs. It's about representing people, it's about getting issues fixed. That is what they have asked me to do and that is what I will do. To that end, Madam Speaker, the people of Nova Scotia were obviously not happy on October 8th; they wanted change. Clearly the people were not optimistic yet the government of the day was insisting that they should be optimistic. The budget is balanced, they said, and times are good. But, as we can see, people didn't believe it, and why should they? When times are good and budgets are balanced, people do feel good, but I wasn't seeing it and I wasn't hearing it in my conversations at the rinks or the boardroom.

Young people were and are leaving our communities, our province, and moving west for opportunities they can't find here. This is the sad reality of the situation. So people voted for change and I'm not sure that the people are any more optimistic today than they were before October 8th but we need to give this government every chance to show them that they can be optimistic and, Madam Speaker, I'm prepared to do just that. This government is telling us it will be different and I sincerely hope that it is.

On a personal note, I'm looking forward to the financial update that is due mid-December. I promised my constituents that I would make sure the government is making good, long-term financial decisions. I will be watching closely because an area of experience where our governments have traditionally been woefully lacking is business common sense. I want to help bring some practical business sense and sound financial practice back to our provincial government and I want the government to know that I am here to help. We are all here to help. We need to bring accountability and calculated decision making back to government. I want the government to know that I am here to help. We're all here to help.

With all this talk of a new decorum, I'm encouraged that maybe this government will accept some of the feedback that we will provide. After all, we heard many references to open-mindedness in the Speech from the Throne. It talked about the government engaging with Nova Scotians, about seeking input from the people of the province, about making sure that Nova Scotians are not excluded from the decision-making process. These are all good things.

We even heard the member for Halifax Atlantic say that a good idea is a good idea, no matter where it comes from, and I agree. I want the government to know that whenever it needs some good ideas, it shouldn't be afraid to ask because over here on this side we have quite a few good ideas.

I was also pleased to hear the member for Dartmouth South say that his government will listen, then act. I do sincerely believe that this is his intention. But I remind the member that simply saying it is so doesn't make it so. The people of Nova Scotia do want you to listen. On the door steps I heard over and over that people are tired of politicians assuming they know it all and then proceeding to make the same mistakes over and over.

The people of Nova Scotia are looking for a government that will change course based on feedback where necessary. They, like me, want you to admit when you are wrong. Please don't be afraid to admit that you are wrong. We'll always be willing to give you that opportunity and I'll even give you the opportunity right now to make your first such admission should you choose. Hearing nothing, I will proceed.

I want to believe that it is the intention of this government to listen to the people and I have to admit that early returns are positive. Quite often people who are in need reach out to everyone possible; sometimes we see people contacting every single MLA in the province and sometimes beyond. I have at least two cases where my constituents reached out to a minister and myself, simultaneously. I have to tip my hat and give credit because both of these ministers have responded to these constituents and I thank these ministers for that. But it is early and mine is a small sample size, but thank you for listening to Nova Scotians.

I do want to touch on a couple of areas of particular concern to the people of Pictou East and no doubt all of Nova Scotia - education. I am pleased to hear about the government committing to making investments in education to ensure that every child has access to a modern curriculum. Every child in Nova Scotia should have the same access to education no matter where they live. Sadly, this is not currently the case. As I am sure the Minister of Education is aware, the junior high students of Highland Consolidated Middle School do not have access to the same types of labs and activities that exist in other schools. The students of Highland Consolidated are currently sharing a building with the elementary students of Dr. W.A. MacLeod Elementary School because the Highland Consolidated building has been closed. I am sure the minister will agree with me that this is a situation that needs to be addressed. The students of Highland are being shortchanged.

I am also thinking about the students of Frank H. MacDonald Elementary School and East Pictou Middle School. Both of my children attend East Pictou and our community is looking for leadership from the Department of Education as it seeks to have Frank H. expanded into a P to 8. Again, I believe the minister is aware of this and I look forward to giving her any necessary assistance on this matter. I am hopeful that some of the government's reinvestment in our schools will make sure that all students have comfortable, conducive facilities. The students of my constituency deserve it. Nova Scotia deserves it.

This government has a chance to provide leadership and empower teachers with the right tools, so let's put our spend on education dollars to the best possible use. Remember those famous words, that if you think education is expensive, try ignorance. We need these kids to not just graduate and get a job but to create jobs. I hope this government is open-minded as it conducts its curriculum review, and maybe it will even consider ways to ground students and young people to their communities, possibly by incorporating volunteerism into the curriculum in some way.

We need jobs. We need new companies, but we also need our existing companies to grow. As a province, we need to find a way to create opportunities for companies to be successful here. The government has stated that it will meet the needs of entrepreneurs through appropriate forms of assistance, but what business needs is customers, not loans or assistance. Government should be a customer of Nova Scotia businesses where it can, and this has not happened enough.

Talking to business owners and being in business, I have heard many stories of how difficult it has been to do business with the government. This government will have a chance to change that. I appreciate that as MLAs we come from different backgrounds, so I would invite the members to talk to some of the business owners in their constituencies and get perspective on their experiences selling to government. They may find business owners that missed out on government tenders for miniscule amounts or silly reasons, and we can't have this. Nova Scotia companies that win contracts hire people in their shops, they hire local truckers - the spinoff is real. I challenge the ministers to keep this in mind as they see tenders awarded within their departments.

This government wants to direct more economic attention to small- and medium-sized businesses, and I offer this as an area where they should be willing to look closely. We need to support our manufacturing industry. We, as elected officials, need to create an environment where business has a chance to be successful. I can't stress enough to this government what a customer means to a business. It means more than a loan, and it means more than assistance. Customers drive business.

Madam Speaker, I'm worried that we still have Cabinet-controlled slush funds. It hasn't worked in the past. Every government has tried it. The NDP took it to new levels, but everyone has tried it. It's an old idea. What we need is new ideas, and the reality is that jobs are not created 300 or 400 at a time. Jobs are created one at a time, two at a time. This government has an opportunity to help business. Please take it.

I was disappointed to only see one line about agriculture and fisheries in the Speech from the Throne. I'm sure my colleague, the member for Kings North, will have much more to say about this, but for today I would like to remind the government of the importance of these two industries to our province. They are particularly important to Pictou East, but they are equally important to all of us.

The fishery is a diverse industry, and right from the wharves in my constituency, boats leave and return with lobster, tuna, and herring, to name just a few. When we think about the lobster fishery - and I am thinking about some of my good friends who make their living from the lobster fishery - Kenny, Edwin, Sammy, JD, and the Brown family, to name just a few - I think about what the lobster fishery means to my community. The lobster fishery is significant to the province.

Just last week we had two resolutions read in this House regarding the lobster fishery, yet this is a fishery that saw strike action last year. Most people in Pictou East know a lobster fisherman. They enjoy a lobster. Lots of people in Pictou East have been out on a lobster boat either as a spectator or as a worker. We have an appreciation for the value of the product, and we understand what is involved in lobster fishing. I can tell you that having worked many a settin' and haulin' day myself, I certainly realize how hard fishermen work and they deserve a fair price. I sincerely hope that this government accepts the importance of the fisheries and intends to pay it more than just one line of lip service. Let's work with the fishermen to ensure that they get a fair price.

Let's talk about roads. I was pleased to hear that the member for Lunenburg had visited Pictou East; at least I assume she was talking about Pictou East when she mentioned her concerns about roads, roads and roads. Roads are an important part of rural life; people should be able to get around. I had an elderly lady tell me that she finds it expensive to get back and forth to town, just on account of the price of gas. Then she says, if I hit a pothole and blow a tire or damage my car, I just don't have the money to fix it.

This is how roads can impact people's lives. I have seen it and every member who represents a rural riding has seen it. I must say that I have been impressed by what I have seen out of the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal under this new minister and I look forward to seeing more good things because there is much work to be done.

Many people in Pictou East make their livelihoods from our natural resources and in particular, our forest lands. My good friend Seymore Dewtie has made his living hauling pulpwood for 30 years but Seymore now regularly leaves his family and his grandchildren to head out West and work. Nowadays it's incredibly difficult to make a living from the woods. We need to make sure that we are properly using our resources and I hope that each member, each minister, new and old, has a Seymore Dewtie that they know and respect and that they can think about as they make decisions in their portfolio. The decisions you make as a government affect people, so let your own Seymore Dewtie be on your mind as you make those decisions.

Madam Speaker, let's talk about the hospital. The Aberdeen Hospital serves a large catchment area, certainly all of Pictou County and also beyond, particularly where orthopaedics are concerned. It is an important asset of our community. I thank this government for acknowledging that it must carefully review any changes in the district health authority structure before it moves forward. I ask that the government not shortchange the people of Pictou County and the people of Pictou East as it implements changes.

The prior government approved budget for modernization of our emergency room and pharmacy but it stretched out the time to get the renovations done by a number of years, which delays the completion of the project out as far as 2016. Stretching out

construction means increasing costs in the long run. This is important work and the modernization will help stabilize the number of physicians in our area. This government has a chance to show leadership - the sooner the work can be done, the better. Happily, this is a project that fits nicely with this government's plan to get doctors to rural areas and keep them there.

I also want to note the importance of our seniors to our communities. Our seniors were let down by the last government. We need to treat them with dignity and make sure that they receive the best support. We owe that to them.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to take a minute to raise some environmental concerns. If I devote one minute to the environment it will be more than was devoted to the environment in the entirety of the Speech from the Throne. The only mention of the environment in that speech was that the government intends to remove the *MV Miner* from the Cape Breton coastline. Sadly, there was no mention about Boat Harbour or the Nova Scotia Power fly ash situation. These are two big issues affecting the people of Pictou East and I would be happy to work with the government as the new minister gets up to speed on these files.

Now I realize that each minister most likely has a file in their portfolio that maybe they wish wasn't there. They have likely each inherited things that maybe they wish they did not but the reality is that now each is the member responsible for those files and in the case of the environment, the boat harbour situation is not going away and neither am I so let's work together to deal with it head-on.

Now, Madam Speaker, perhaps it would have been more fun to stand here today and talk solely about the lovely golf courses of my constituency or the beautiful landscape, but as you can see, I am worried; there is a lot of work to be done. I am, and I know my entire caucus is ready to work with this government to get it done because the challenges that this province faces didn't wait for the election. Good representation starts with understanding the issues that matter to our communities and then working with our communities to find solutions. We all know that issues did not go away simply because there was an election. It's now time for the government to govern and the people expect big things from this new government, and I promise to hold the new government to account.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I want you to know that our Pictou East constituency office is up and running and my wonderful constituency assistant Sue Uhren will be happy to greet you with a smile if you ever find yourself passing through Pictou County because we are ready and willing to help, and I want to believe this government is too. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, definitely Madam Speaker, it's an honour to stand in this Chamber. I was very fortunate to have the support of the community, to have

my return to the Legislature - which I'm very appreciative of - for my fourth term. Just for the new members of the Legislature, going almost into my 11th year, it goes by really quickly so be careful because you never know how much time goes by. Also I think there is a new club, where I can have some of my former colleagues here join, that I've had the opportunity to sit in every position of the Legislature.

I first want to begin by appreciating and thanking you and saying that I respect the results of the last election and I'm going to work extremely hard to represent my community of Sackville-Cobequid here in this historic Chamber. It is an honour and privilege, I think, for all members here to have this opportunity. There are not too many Nova Scotians who have been given this opportunity to represent their communities here on the floor of the Legislature, the oldest Legislature in the country. It truly is something that each and every member here should appreciate and recognize.

I want to say thank you to many of the people who have supported me over the years, especially in my community, in order for me to continue to be the MLA here in the Legislature. Of course, I know all members here have had many people support them. There is always a team around you during any election and it's no different in my case even after four elections, Madam Speaker.

I have to thank my family: my parents, my brothers-in-law, my brother, my sisters-in-law, my brothers-in-law, but more importantly my wife and my two kids - my wife Penny, my daughter Taylor, and my son Jacob who are 15 and 12. I know the Premier has said this on a number of occasions around being the Class of 2003, the year I entered this Chamber, and how during that year people were starting school and now of course they are in high school. When he said that it really brought me to think about my own personal situation where my first caucus meeting after winning the election in 2003 was the first day of Primary for my daughter and now she's in Grade 10 in high school. It's amazing to see how much time has gone by, and it's amazing to see how they change and the influence you have on your kids, being in this position as a politician. You hope, and I hope this for my kids, that they have a respect for the political process, that they have a respect for ensuring that people respect and hopefully vote during an election.

I also had a great number of individuals on this campaign, Madam Speaker. As I said, this was my fourth election, and each election was different, each team was different, but I have to say that during this campaign I was fortunate to have a number of young people join my campaign team. I had university students, I had high school students, I had junior high school students, I even had elementary kids helping out on this campaign, which is amazing. That's really what you want to see, and I know all members of the House had similar experiences. It's so good to see that. We need to work extremely hard as parliamentarians to make sure that our residents recognize the importance of being engaged, down to the simple thing of getting out to vote. We know it has been a challenge. It has been a challenge since my first election in 2003. We went through a number of different initiatives to try to encourage Nova Scotians to be active, to get involved, to vote.

I know in the Throne Speech there was another mention of that, and I'll do whatever I can to support the government in ensuring that Nova Scotians recognize the importance of ensuring that they have a say, ensuring that they get involved, and that they vote in the election.

I had a number of young people who worked on my campaign who were foot canvassers - they used the telephone, they did drops on the doorsteps, and I would like to just thank a few of them by name. Andre Anderson, Ian Best, Katrina Cobean, Matthew Forbes, Madeline Mitchell, Caitlyn Woolaver, Alex Holmes, Nick Malbeuf, and Kaylyn Mundle were just a few of the young people who got active. One of our best phone canvassers was a young gentleman named Matthew who came into the campaign, who wanted to do whatever he could. So we tried him on the phone, and we were a little leery because he's Grade 9, he's 15. We didn't know if he could use the phone - or I knew he could use the phone. I'd better watch what I say. (Interruptions)

Well, you never know these days. They don't use the phone a lot - they text a lot. But I have to say this young gentleman, who attends Cavalier Drive, was one of the best we had on the phones. He was mature, he was respectful, and it was a treat to get to know him and see him engaged. I just hope that that continues on down the road.

The other thing that was different about this campaign too, not only that we had young people, is that we had families. We had the Harnishs, the Campbells, the Woodworths, the Wilsons, the Deckers, and the Livelys. These were people who came out, who went around driving signs in the lawns. They went and dropped doorknockers off. Some of them came in and made phone calls. They would input data in our computers. Some of them made food. It was amazing to see such a diverse group of people, and I have to say, it was different than in campaigns in the past. I think, like many, most of those who are engaged in politics or engaged in our political Parties tend to be there for a long time. The mavericks of the Party, we had a really high - you know, they were older, senior, more mature people, but this campaign was different. We've had such a mix. My youngest volunteer was eight, I think, and the more mature people were in their 80s. Every day I appreciated getting to interact with those individuals.

I would also like to thank my campaign manager, Wayne Copeland, and also Tammy Harnish, who worked every single day to support me. Also Colleen Smith, Terry Decker - and another person who supported me throughout the campaign was my colleague Mat Whynott, the former MLA for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville. We shared an office. So in the morning and in the evening we got together to debrief and figure out how the campaign was going and what did we need to do. Without that support I don't think any of us would be here today. I truly want to thank those who took the time to get involved, most importantly those who donated the food, first and foremost, to the campaign but those who did manage to donate and give financial support for the election. I think each of us know that it does take money to run an election and it's not the easiest thing to do, to go and

ask people to fund your campaign or donate money to try to get you elected in the Legislature. None of us here could do it without that support.

I'd like to turn to my riding. I've done this on a number of occasions and it's a great opportunity during the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne to explain where we're from and give a picture of the community we represent. I know that with this new session, with the 51 MLAs - I know we're down one riding - it's going to take me some time to, first, learn the names of all the new people but, more importantly, the riding names that even my own member for Truro-Bible Hill-Salmon River, and there's another - Millbrook - and I don't know what order they are in, I still have to wrap my head around that. I'm hoping that over the next couple of weeks with the session that I'll get to meet the new members, try to learn a little bit more and listen to their speeches on the communities they represent.

Sackville is a suburb of Halifax. It was founded, I think, in 1749 and it was kind of an outpost on the way down to the Valley. If you left here, there was a stagecoach stop, the Fultz House was an inn where you could stop and get supplies. In the late 1960s and early 1970s there was a real need for housing in Halifax and the surrounding areas. A lot of work went into co-operative housing to allow people at that time, who couldn't afford, I think, or maybe it was more difficult to purchase a home or have one built. That's what happened out in Sackville, a lot of provincial land was there and it was bought up so that people could go in on these co-ops to purchase their houses and the supplies for their homes. That's how my family went there, both my parents were in the military and this was a great opportunity for them to build a new home and raise a family. I've been very fortunate to have spent almost my whole life in Sackville. It's a great community where you can get great deals on cars but there's more than just car dealerships in Sackville.

We have many different community-based organizations, many sports teams out in our community and there's always something to do for somebody. If you want to go to one of the many dinners put on by our service groups or the churches that are throughout the community, they put on fundraisers for meals. If you want to catch a sporting event we have, of course, the Sackville Blazers, a hockey team that has been there for many, many years. We have two high schools that have an array of sports going on every single night of the week pretty much. We have of course basketball, hockey organizations, lacrosse, volleyball, football and soccer and many more. I know I'll get an e-mail and that's the challenge, when you forget somebody someone will always e-mail you and say you forgot about them.

We have many groups and organizations out there so that you can find something to do on any given night. We also have the artistic or the cultural side. We have some great organizations and theatre groups, like Eventurous Theatre, who put on plays and dinner theatres throughout the year. We have organizations that give so much back to the community, like the Lions Club and Kinsmen Club who work extremely hard to provide services that often aren't provided through services that government provides. I've always

said that in Opposition and in government, that the government cannot provide every service to every person in the province. We realize that, that's the reality of the province we live in.

If it wasn't for some of these service groups - and I know they're throughout communities across Nova Scotia - people really would be disadvantaged. I know the groups in our community work extremely hard to make sure that people who might need additional support get it. We have the Salvation Army and other church organizations. I can't name all the churches, there are many in Sackville that also provide support for the community, not only as a faith-based organization but support for people.

We have the Royal Canadian Legion in Sackville, which provides amazing support for our veterans throughout not only Lower Sackville, but the surrounding areas. (Interruption)

I've done a full hour a few times - that's the challenge and I hope that the new members recognize what a challenge it is to try to get on your feet and talk for an hour. When you do it your colleagues who have been there longer than you will take you out for a beverage and make sure you don't - and they'll pick up the coverage for that, right? I was going to say your name, but I've been here long enough not to say your name. But it is a challenge and it's a great opportunity - this is the time when you can speak about your community and really engage in what's going on in the community you represent.

We have a number of organizations in Sackville that really have taken it to another level on ensuring that our environment is protected. We have the Sackville Rivers Association, which has done amazing work not only in Lower Sackville but throughout the province in trying to restore some of the damage that has been done to our ecosystem through development. Sackville, for example, is one of those tales that for many, many years in the 1970s and even really going into the 1980s, and of course the airport being not too far from the community, there are two lakes in Sackville, one is First Lake and Second Lake and then there's Third Lake going up further - I don't know who named them all, but I think they could have been more enthusiastic, but they're great lakes.

First Lake was often a focal point for those pilots coming into the airport because it was just brown because of all the runoff from the development over the years in Sackville. Many organizations have worked to try to improve the quality of the ecosystem around - as I said, the Sackville Rivers Association, and Friends of First Lake have worked extremely hard to protect First Lake and make sure they build trails so that people can come back and see some of the work that they've done.

Also, Second Lake Park Association has worked for many, many years - I know some of the members here have heard of that organization over the years - I have always tried to bring it up in the Legislature to ensure that we support and government supports their initiatives. I was very proud to be part of a government that recently - I believe it was

in May - announced one of the first in over 20 years, I believe, provincial parks in Sackville and it's called Sackville Lakes Provincial Park and it oversees part of First Lake, but a lot of area around Second Lake, over 650 acres is protected now, is designated as a provincial park, something that will be there for generations to come - and it has been a long journey to get to that point.

I have been in the Legislature over 10 years and I brought it up every year, and even in government there were some challenges, so I was glad early last year to be able to be there with the Premier and the Minister of Natural Resources to designate a new provincial park, Sackville Lakes Provincial Park, in the heart of Sackville. It is because of the work of those from Second Lake Park Association, Friends of First Lake, Sackville Rivers, and many, many people who knew the importance of having such an area protected in a really developed area.

One of the things I paid attention to was the Throne Speech and listening to what the new government was going to tell Nova Scotians was the vision of their government - really that's what a Throne Speech is, it tells Nova Scotians what they're going to do and it should tell them how they're going to do it, when they're going to do it, and show the path forward. Listening to the Throne Speech - and I've listened to many of them over the years - I felt it was very light on details, a lot of things in there that sound great, but what Nova Scotians want is to see how the new government is going to do some of the things they said they were going to do, especially in the last campaign. Like all members here, when you go door-to-door there are concerns that come forward and we, as political Parties, try to give them some information and try to tell them how we're going to move forward on those issues that are important to them - and that's how they base, I believe, their decision on election day to vote for either Party or a candidate.

One of the first opportunities for government, even if it's a government that was re-elected or a first-time government, is in the Throne Speech to tell Nova Scotians exactly where and how they're going to proceed with the commitments that they made in the election. When I looked through, and heard and sat trying to hear what the government was going to do, as I said initially, it was light on the details. That concerns me.

As I said earlier, I take my role extremely serious as an elected official, but of course as Opposition members we have a role - Progressive Conservatives and the NDP have a role to play in the makeup of this Legislature, and that's to keep the government accountable for those commitments they made in their campaign and how they move forward. Over the coming weeks and the coming years, that's exactly what I will be doing as Health and Wellness Critic and as Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations Critic, and our caucus will hold the government accountable.

A couple of the areas that I was a little bit concerned around was when they mentioned the development of the province's first cultural strategy which will establish a new vision for culture in Nova Scotia. The reason it kind of concerns me a little bit is that

there had been a lot of work done, over the past four years or plus, in the area of arts and culture. I think we would all agree here on the floor of this Legislature that we have some amazing artists throughout Nova Scotia. The good thing about our artists is that they don't need to be located just here in Halifax or in Sydney, in the more populated areas, we have amazing artists all over the province - in the smallest, most remote communities because that's where they find it best for whatever discipline they are in.

A number of years ago I was very glad to be the province's first Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage. It really opened my eyes to the opportunity we have in front of us to grow and create a creative economy that really will contribute to the overall economy of the province. In rural Nova Scotia especially, we've seen over the last decades huge manufacturing industries leaving rural Nova Scotia, one of the things that did stay and we see it time and time again, what actually has great potential to grow is that creative economy side.

I know, as minister at the time, that was an important area and that's why we came forward with a five-point plan around the creative economy. I was pleased to be able to do that with the Premier in February 2011, about a month after I was sworn in as the new minister. One of the first things we did and one of the things we recognized is that we needed to engage the sector, we needed to ensure that they were part of the solution or part of how we moved forward to grow the creative economy. One of the first things we needed to do was establish an organization to oversee arts funding.

Arts Nova Scotia was created and that took the responsibility or the oversight from the minister, who at the time had the authority to say, yes, this organization should receive arts funding, this one should, this one might not, and it gives it to an independent body. That independent body decides where it goes. Those people who work within the arts and culture community are the best people, I believe, and are in the best position to fund where government's funding for arts and culture should go.

That was one of the things we did, and the other thing was to form what used to be the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture partnership. We created the Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council, and this council is, again, independent from the department, from government. There is a whole range of individuals with different experiences, bringing different cultural expertise to a council that advises a government, advises the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

One of the first things they did was to create a strategic plan and a cultural strategy. The whole role of the Nova Scotia Leadership Council was to have this cultural strategy and provide insight and vision to grow the province's creative economy. I hope, by what was put in the Speech from the Throne, that they will go to the creative leadership council and seek advice from them. I don't believe you need to reinvent and try to come up with a new system, I think everybody would recognize and appreciate that if it's arm's length, if

it's people within that sector driving where the funding and support and initiative should be, I think that really is where we should be.

They, of course, worked to come up with a strategy about Status of the Artist legislation, which we implemented, introduced, and passed. They are also working on creative economy emphasis on strategic initiatives that will foster winning conditions here in Nova Scotia for the creative economy. They also are going to work on outreach to make sure that people out in different communities have a good communication with the council, with Arts Nova Scotia, so that they know about opportunities that get funding for initiatives that they are working on. They also are going to work on communications and the Arts Endowment Fund, which I think is a great opportunity to lavish not only government funding but private sector.

We have some huge opportunities in the future and I hope the new minister recognizes that we have some opportunities that are before us soon that I think will really transform our creative economy here and really put us where we deservedly should be, on a high pedestal for not only national but international recognition of our cultural identity here in Nova Scotia.

I'm going to go quickly to some of the things that I thought should have been in the Speech from the Throne that I didn't hear. Of course, being a former paramedic and working through Opposition into the benches of government and being the first Minister of Communities, Culture, and Heritage, I had the great opportunity after that to become the Health and Wellness Minister. Not an easy job and I think another group that we could start is former Health Ministers, and share stories and experiences. It's a challenging job. We all know and I think Nova Scotians know that the most important thing to them is health care. I know we just fought a campaign on many different areas but if you spend any time with Nova Scotians you recognize how important health care and the health care services are to them.

What concerned me here in the Throne Speech - I'll accept that we have a difference of opinion when it comes to the health authorities and health administration of our system here in Nova Scotia. I know the Minister of Health and Wellness and the Liberal Party campaigned on reducing the number of health authorities across the province to two. I will admit now that it was something that I was supportive of for many years but as I learned a little bit more about some of the past experiences that I've seen, read about, and talked to ministers who have gone through that exercise, I realize that you have to be very careful.

In the campaign the Liberal Party said that they were going to save millions of dollars by reducing the number of health authorities in Nova Scotia to two. You don't have to look too far to see how that hasn't really worked out. In our neighbouring Province of New Brunswick you actually saw a spike, at one point, of health administration costs. The Province of Alberta went from one - or I think they had 10 or 11 - to one super board and

there were many, many issues when they did that. A lot of funds were diverted from front-line health care to pay off high executive pays and severance pays, and that concerns me. I think any money that is going to be diverted from the health care system to pay someone to leave should be a concern of all Nova Scotians.

We have a number of VPs; we have a number of health chairmen or CEOs of the health authorities who do some very good work. People need to realize we need health administrators in our health care system. We need them there to make sure that we can implement changes to improve services. Some of the services that we've improved over the last number of years, I think, have had a positive effect on Nova Scotians, things like the Collaborative Emergency Centres.

When we came into government there was a chronic issue of emergency room closures, especially rural communities, across Nova Scotia and there had to be something done, something different. I would hope that the Minister of Health and Wellness and the government recognize and work with those emergency centres that have converted to Collaborative Emergency Centres. I believe it has - and the data has shown that it has - improved the closure rates of emergency rooms across the province. We were very upfront to say that this collaborative model of care and this change in model of care won't be the fit for every hospital around.

I know the Minister of Health and Wellness has a hospital in his area that is seeing closure rates. He's been on his feet many times telling me about every single one of those closures, but the collaborative emergency model wouldn't work there, the hospital in his area, because it's too large. These are meant for smaller, rural hospitals, maximizing the skill sets of the health care providers that are in those areas. I really hope that is an area that the new government will continue to look at, continue to support, and continue to expand, because you don't have to take my word for it.

I know I was one of the ministers working to implement those changes, along with the former minister prior to me, the member for Halifax Needham, but we've had jurisdictions across the country come to Nova Scotia and adopt this system and this model of care, and it's not through one Party. We had the Liberal Government in P.E.I. who has come over, and now I believe the first Collaborative Emergency Centre is open in Alberton, Prince Edward Island.

We've worked collaboratively with them on a number of health initiatives, like the 811 system for example. They utilize our 811 system. We have the Conservative Government - no, it's the Saskatchewan Government, from Saskatchewan, because it's the Saskatchewan Party - who came here, and now they have Collaborative Emergency Centres in Saskatchewan. There are a number of jurisdictions that are looking at that model of care, and I hope that the government will recognize the importance of continuing to support that change in model of care.

One of the other positive things that I haven't heard in the Speech from the Throne, initiatives that have happened over the last number of years - and I hope the government continues to support them - is the increase in the Children's Dental Program, for example, something that we needed to support as a former health care provider. Good oral health care lends to good health care overall, and it's important for our kids to have a good support system around the dental program.

The other area which I was very proud to be part of was the insulin pump program for children and young adults. I think all Parties supported that initiative as we brought it forward, because diabetes - it's so important to make sure that individuals, especially young people, have good control of that disease, because that can allow an individual to have so many complications. If you can regulate diabetes well, then I think you are less dependent on the health care system for those complications from that.

We also realized there is a cost to the health care system on Nova Scotians. We do have universal health care coverage, but that doesn't cover everything. That's some of the areas over the last number of years that I've heard, and maybe members throughout the Chamber have heard, that people are concerned with. So dental was one of them. Under the Canada Health Act there's no requirement for provinces to provide a dental program for people, for their residents, but we know how important that is. That's why we had an established program and we've expanded it. I hope the government recognizes that they need to look and there has to be some energy around those services not covered under the Health Act.

Hearing aids and eyeglasses are just a number of them that I know came up through our campaign and knocking on doors, especially seniors who go without hearing aids, because they are expensive. How expensive they are was brought to light in different media stories and shows. I believe you can manufacture hearing aids pretty cheaply, but I don't think anybody gets off without paying over \$2,000 for a set of hearing aids. Eyeglasses, too. We need to try to see how we can ensure that Nova Scotians, especially our seniors, continue to have access to those types of services.

The other thing that we are grateful for here in Nova Scotia, and I hope we continue to see it into the future, is doing studies and trying to improve the health care delivery through trying new techniques. One of the recent studies we did, and it was out of Cape Breton, was the use of a clot-busting drug, or TNK, during heart attacks. We were the first jurisdiction here in North America, and I believe around the world, that did a study on what the outcomes of someone who was having a heart attack would be if they received that medication in their homes instead of waiting until they went to the hospital. The results were amazing, so of course we implemented the first-ever, clot-busting drug program that paramedics and ambulances across the province now have in their ambulances to give to people who have heart attacks. It has saved lives.

I think that's a great example of how we could contribute to changes in health care that will come in the future. We have a good size where you can do those trials, like this one in Sydney, but even in Halifax and throughout different parts of the province. I hope the government recognizes that we need to continue on down that path. That is what concerns me in the Speech from the Throne - it was very light, not giving much vision or information on some of those issues that are so important to Nova Scotians.

It's more than just break the monopoly of Nova Scotia Power. I know that has been the hot issue for the last couple of months, maybe the last year, but there are many more issues out there that the current government needs to start addressing. They need to tell Nova Scotians how they're going to address it over their mandate over the next four years. I was disappointed that some of that information wasn't here in the Speech from the Throne. That will be our role, in Opposition, over the coming years, to hold them accountable and make sure that they tell Nova Scotians exactly what their vision is, how they're going to do it, and how they're going to implement it.

One of the areas in health care that I was most disappointed in without really hearing anything in this was around mental health and addiction. Mental health and addiction here in our province have had a lot of attention over the last year but over the last decade or two it's an area that nobody wants to speak about or talk about. I believe, knowing government, we had an opportunity, we brought forth good initiatives; we brought forward the first mental health addiction strategy that the province ever had. I was a little disappointed that we didn't hear more in the Speech from the Throne on the direction of that.

Yes, there's a strategy in place now but we know and we were restricted financially at times to try to support mental health and addiction services more than we did over the last four years. It's an area that the current Minister of Health and Wellness and the Liberal Government have to pay some attention to. I hope that just because there's not much in this Speech from the Throne, that they will spend some time and energy and funds to increase the services of mental health and addiction here for Nova Scotians. It's extremely important and we don't have to look too far in the past to some of the cases that we're all well aware of. It's an area that we need to continue to support.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I take my roles and responsibility very seriously, as the MLA for Sackville-Cobequid, as an Opposition member. I was here a long time so I know what they said and many of the front benches were there. As the member for Argyle-Barrington said to me at one point when he kind of did that little circle leaving from minister to critic - I know the questions the Minister of Health and Wellness asked me over the last number of years. I might have to just go through it and dust some of them off and throw them back at him. I don't think I'll get a better answer than he received, but time will tell.

With that, Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to stand and have a few brief words in the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Thank you, Madam Speaker, let me just say, first and foremost, congratulations to you. This is the first night for the opportunity for you to preside over this House, so I just want to give you that recognition. (Applause)

It is truly an honour to rise in this House of Assembly and reply to the Speech from the Throne. I just wanted to mention a couple of people from my campaign. It's going to be hard to mention everyone, but two in particular would be my friend, Jacob Killawee, who served intermittently as my campaign manager - we had a small team, but a mighty team and Jacob was there since day one when I started going door-to-door for my nomination process - and also to my father, Councillor Reg Rankin, who was there to show me how to truly win an election. And it was basically by going to the doors and going out and meeting the people in their kitchens and living rooms and not taking any voters for granted - it certainly worked for him throughout the last seven successful elections.

I grew up in a political family who participated in this process dating as far back, in this country, to 1882, from what I could find out, and that's when my great-great Uncle Angus McLennan represented Inverness in this Assembly as a Progressive Conservative member, and following that (Applause) There's more though, he actually did see the light and crossed the floor (Applause) and served as a Member of Parliament under Laurier's Liberal Government from 1896 to 1908.

Tha e a' cuir urram orm a bhith bruidhinn dhuibh uile san Taigh Honorach seo.

Thainig an teaghlach agam dhan sgìre seo bho 'n t-seann duthaich. Tha cultar na Gaidhlig gu math làidir fhathast.

Tha an teaghlach agam air a bhith a' brosnachadh cultar na Gaidhlig airson uine mhòr: Coibhneas, Ceòl, Cànan 's iomadh rud eile. Tha mi 'n dochas gun cùm sinn oirnn an sar-sheann chultar seo a bhrosnachadh; fear dhe na prìomh cultar dhen sgìre againn.

Madam Speaker, I speak those few words in Gaelic not only for the interests of my own heritage, but to underscore the importance of the celebration of any and all family backgrounds - and I'm very honoured to serve alongside so many different backgrounds in this House.

I think we all recognize the pressing importance of promoting an intelligent, creative entrepreneurial immigration strategy. If not, consider that every day some 30 Nova Scotians reach the age where they begin to draw from CPP, so that is approximately 1,000 people every month entering into the senior cohort. This government must seek to

begin to arrest the trend in Nova Scotia of declining government revenues and increasing expenditures. We must get creative and adapt, as we do in the business world. We must be frugal with every government dollar and we must look to newcomers to help, as we did following World War II, when many immigrants contributed so much to turn our economy around.

Je voudrais dire qu'il est très important de protéger et promouvoir les langues qui existent maintenant dans notre province. Protéger et mettre en valeur les langues ne peut que nous fournir à la fois une meilleure compréhension du passé et des avantages pour l'avenir.

À l'instar de tout le Canada, la Nouvelle-Écosse a connu un grand succès économique dans un passé récent en acceptant que l'immigration est nécessaire. Après la deuxième guerre mondiale, beaucoup des gens sont venus des pays d'Europe et ont contribué à dynamiser notre économie et à construire une meilleure société en Nouvelle-Écosse.

La préservation des langues parlées par nos concitoyens nous procure également une meilleure compréhension de la nécessité d'accueillir les gens d'autres cultures à bras ouverts.

Furthermore, forming partnerships with municipalities, the federal government and neighbouring provinces can only help build prosperity. Like in any business, economies of scale can be realized and redundancy can be mitigated when we find ways to work together.

Madam Speaker, today we have a merged lottery system in Atlantic Canada - perhaps we can find similar savings by looking at other government agencies that are duplicated in provinces with less than the population you find in our major cities.

It was great to hear tonight the honourable Minister of Energy talking about a strategy to co-operate with the other Atlantic Provinces, and also the member opposite, just before me mentioning how the 811 number was used to collaborate with P.E.I. in Health. I think we can do a lot more of those collaborative agreements.

Augmented buying power can be realized by purchasing pharmaceuticals in bulk, and trade barriers between our small provinces can be relaxed for greater mobility of goods and services. I believe the future of our prosperity relies on co-operatively celebrating our own evolving culture, attracting new people to Nova Scotia, and collaborating with neighbouring provinces that face virtually the same obstacles that we do.

We start off, as many governments do, with the platitudes of getting along and working co-operatively for the greater good. Sensationalizing the positions of a new government at the start of a session is common practice in politics, an attempt to set the bar

very high. After all, these are the same people who said during the campaign that we had no new promises. So rhetoric aside, let's truly work together as much as possible to reach the outcomes we all want.

Madam Speaker, I must admit that I'm not a chartered accountant, but I do have experience with financial analysis alongside many CAs I worked with, and I am sanguine about the return on our proposed investments. We will work toward diminishing the out-migration of our young people, increasing immigration, do whatever government can do to rein in the relentless increase in power rates, and perhaps most importantly, reinvest in education. As John F. Kennedy once said more than 50 years ago, before he was president, there is no greater return to an economy or to a society than an educational system second to none.

I'd like to tell you about the riding of Timberlea-Prospect, but before I do that I have to mention the member who represented our community for 15 years. Frequently on the campaign trail and after the election I was reminded of the big shoes I have to fill, and rightly so. The Honourable Bill Estabrooks served this House and the people of Timberlea-Prospect with tremendous integrity, and always looked out for what was in the public interest. I intend to follow in that spirit.

Timberlea-Prospect is composed of both rural and urban communities. The Prospect communities have an impressive community centre. This centre serves the many distinct communities along the Prospect Road, most but not all of which are in my riding. The Prospect Road Community Centre is HRM-owned but is managed by a volunteer organization, the Resource Opportunities Centre. The ROC began life as a rural CAP site located in Terence Bay. By working collaboratively with all the other volunteer and non-profit organizations in the area, the ROC helped pave the way to making the PRCC a reality in 2010. Many of the communities in the Prospect area were thriving fishing communities in the past and suffered economically as a result of the fisheries crisis. Many of these communities are also very rich in cultural heritage, having been recognized internationally for their arts and crafts, weaving, rug hooking, woodworking, folk artists, painting, and sculpture. Many of the buildings and institutions which historically supported the cultural activities in the area are no longer in existence.

Shad Bay, at the edge of the riding, is a picturesque linear village where homes have a view of the water and are set on generous lots lining the Prospect Road as it hugs the coastline of the bay. Fish shacks still sit at the water's edge. In the 1930s and 1940s the village had an active fishery, but few residents make their living as fishermen today.

A Shad Bay resident who should be recognized for her outstanding volunteer contribution to community is Rita Mae Schwartz. Rita was a founding member of the Prospect Road Citizens on Patrol, serves on the board of directors for ROC, and now gives her time at the Souls Harbour Rescue Mission.

Continuing toward Halifax, the first community in the first peninsula is called Prospect Bay. From Hages Road in Cedar Court there is access to the trail around the “High Head” lands. This trail provides spectacular views of the rugged shoreline and coastal barrens, and leads hikers into the heart of the Village of Prospect. Approximately 10 kilometres from the main Prospect Road lies Prospect Village, also referred to as Upper Prospect.

On September 29, 2003, Hurricane Juan made landfall in Nova Scotia between Shad Bay and Prospect. It arrived as a Category 1 storm, and Prospect was at the centre of this storm. When day broke the villagers saw destruction of every single wharf and shed, except one small red shed that the Coolen family had in the cove.

Today Prospect is a sleepy little village, fully recovered from Hurricane Juan. Many residents are older and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere and the spectacular natural beauty that surrounds them. The Prospect Peninsula Residents Association has been active for decades. They have successfully undertaken a number of huge initiatives such as ownership and management of the community wharf, creating recreational spaces and hosting activities, facilitating a community library, holding annual events for Canada Day and Christmas celebrations, forming the Prospect Players theatre group, and being proactive with regard to land development in the local area. In order to finance a lot of the organization’s activities, the PPRA pull on the community at large to help host their annual lobster dinner held each August, involving upwards of 50 volunteers.

As in many small villages, volunteering is a way of life in Prospect. Worthy of recognition are community leaders such as Helga Baxter, Allison Lawlor, Sam Rogers, Jan Morrison, and lifelong resident Ellen Ryan.

Whites Lake, back on the main Prospect Road, is another distinct community. At the junction with the Prospect Bay Road is the Whites Lake Legion, which has been serving the community for decades. Besides being a home for the veterans of the area, there are two seniors’ groups that regularly use the facility, that I have visited quite a few times to play crib with. I’m not going to list all the names because some of them would probably be upset with me if I didn’t mention their name, but on Monday and Wednesday afternoons seniors get together to enjoy friendship and games in a relaxed and welcoming environment. These groups add to the quality of life for older residents, breaking isolation, forging new friendships, and creating a supportive network for seniors to support each other.

Heading down the next peninsula we enter into the communities of Terence Bay, another distinct community. Miraculously, there are actually six distinct settlements within Terence Bay known as Lower Prospect, Back Bay, Sandy Cove, Terence Bay, Up the River, and Across the River. Many of the families in this area can actually trace their family connections to these lands back for generations.

The Terence Bay Wilderness Area is 11,000 acres, it's coastal and near-coastal wilderness within a rapidly urbanizing portion of HRM. Together with the adjacent Long Lake Provincial Park, it forms nearly a 20-kilometre natural corridor between Spryfield and the Atlantic Ocean. Its lakes, woodlands and coastal environment offer outstanding opportunities for wilderness recreation. Heading down the bay you are treated to incredible scenery. At the top of Back Bay Hill you see the inlets and coves leading to the open ocean.

The *SS Atlantic* sank on April 1, 1873, off the coastline of Terence Bay and Lower Prospect. The Terence Bay Lighthouse on Tenant Point at the mouth of the bay was built in response to the fatal mistake that led the *SS Atlantic* into danger. In 1873, with no lighthouse to mark the way, the ship mistook Terence Bay for the approach to Halifax Harbour and sailed full speed in a blinding storm into Mosher Island. Local fisher families helped to rescue the survivors, took them into their homes, and buried the dead who washed ashore. It took local folks a number of years before a proper lighthouse on Tenant Point was built in 1903. The interpretive centre was completed in 2002 containing a small museum of artifacts from the *SS Atlantic*, interpretive panels, and a craft shop featuring the work of Nova Scotia artisans.

The *SS Atlantic* society hosts a number of events annually including the Blessing of the Fleet held on the last Sunday in July. The society has many dedicated volunteers. Worthy of note for their commitment and leadership of the society are Valda Kemp, Ann Bartlett, and Shirley and Jim Little.

Returning to the main Prospect Road that connects all of these communities in the area, you travel from Whites Lake into Hatchet Lake, where most of the Prospect population is. This is the location of the Prospect Road Community Centre as well as St. Timothy's Church built in 1961 as part of the St. Philip's Parish. Reverend Lisa Vaughan has worked tirelessly to bring more people and services together for the benefit of her congregation and the community at large. St. Timothy's and St. Paul's have a healthy and active faith community that makes a positive contribution to the community. Examples are the food bank run by Andy Mitchell, and a Divorce and GriefShare facilitated by Reverend Cheryl Rafuse.

Most of the Hatchet Lake population is within the community of Brookside, which continues to grow. The active Brookside Homeowner Association works to increase opportunities for the local population, estimated at approximately 1,500 people. Several members of the BHA should be recognized for their work in the community, including Wayne Hamilton and Valerie Wilson who are strong advocates for Brookside residents.

Heading out of Hatchet Lake towards Halifax, you travel over Long Bog before arriving in Goodwood. Opposite Long Bog is the Old Coach Road that leads through a quiet subdivision to the Indian Lake Golf Course and restaurant. The lands beyond Old Coach Road lead onto the Western Commons lands and link up with the Five Bridges Lakes area. That has now been designated under the Wilderness Areas Protection Act.

These lands run between Highway No. 103 to the north and Prospect Road to the south. It extends from Ragged Lake Business Park in the east to the Nine Mile River in the west. The new wilderness area protects about 21,000 acres of near-urban Crown lands between Highway No. 103 and Prospect Road. Just to give you an idea, it's almost five times the size of Halifax Peninsula and it's only minutes away from the city.

Goodwood is a residential area existing side by side with an established industrial area. The industrial area houses businesses such as C&D Recycling, which is Nova Scotia's only tire recycling facility. Other small businesses like Ace Upholstery, operated by Bob Dooley, are in Goodwood itself rather than the industrial area.

When leaving the Prospect Road, you would turn left to enter into the riding again in the urban communities of Beechville, Lakeside and Timberlea. I grew up in these communities during my childhood and school years.

I do want to speak to Beechville specifically because of its historic importance in Nova Scotia as an original indigenous Black community, formerly known as Beech Hill, and before that Refugee Hill. The first settlers were from the southern American colonies seeking refuge from slavery. They were given land grants here for fighting in the War of 1812. In the summer of 2014, Beechville will celebrate its 200th Anniversary. The Beechville Baptist Church has played an important role for the community, and there were many community leaders such as the late Reverend Doctor Oliver and the late Deacon Reg Hamilton who were responsible for the planning and construction of the church.

Madam Speaker, Beechville has changed dramatically in recent years. There is now a modern community called Beechville Estates with a modern school and just over 200 homes, with 30 to 40 languages spoken within the community. It is truly a marvel to meet people from all over the globe in such a concentrated area, the most pluralistic subdivision east of Montreal. My friend Ali Duale lives there with his family - 10 children - and when Ali is not looking after his own kids he's running a sports program for kids who come from all over the world as new Nova Scotians. There are now plans for another subdivision that will likely boast the same level of diversity on the lands opposite, behind Bayers Lake Park.

Lakeside is home to the other Legion within the riding. They also have the riding's only apartment buildings. Further down the St. Margarets Bay Road is Timberlea. There are several subdivisions in Timberlea off the Bay Road. This community started to grow rapidly while I was growing up, and continues to attract many young families. The oldest subdivision in Timberlea is Parkdale, where former county councillor Helena Poirier resides. She was responsible for bringing city water and sewer services to Timberlea in the 1980s. Since then the Timberlea population has more than quadrupled in size. Also, on these lands adjacent to Exit 3 is a championship golf course under construction in Brunello Estates, with plans for over 3,000 homes to add to our communities.

Going further down the Bay Road is the Bluff Wilderness Hiking Trail, rated as one of the best urban escapes in Canada. One of the largest subdivisions is Glengarry Estates, with an active homeowners' association thanks to the community efforts of Ken Hubley, John Feetham and Bob Angus, to name a few. The former CN railroad, which runs from Halifax through BLT and beyond is a popular recreational multi-use trail managed and maintained by volunteers. Timberlea resident Catherine Kelfentz is the chair of the BLT Rails to Trails.

After commuting through Timberlea is the community of Hubley and Upper Tantallon. There are a few active groups who meet regularly at the Hubley Community Centre. Jill Pullsifer and Harry Ward co-chair the Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust, and Richmond Campbell and David Patriquin co-chair the Woodens River Watershed Environmental Organization. The watershed includes all land, habitation and streams that drain into the Woodens River system. The headwaters lie in Hubley. From there, a set of 19 connected lakes flow southwest across the Chebucto Peninsula into the Woodens River and finally into St. Margarets Bay at Woodens Cove in Seabright.

All of these communities are host communities of HRM's landfill off of Exit 3 at a place called Otter Lake. The community agreed to host the landfill on the condition that state-of-the-art facilities were implemented to protect the local environment. A citizen-led stakeholder community was struck to create a strategy, and today the Community Monitoring Committee acts on behalf of its citizens. Recently, unwarranted anxiety has been felt by citizens because of a report written from the direction of HRM staff. The report recommends the closure of Front End Processing and the Waste Stabilization Facility, among other considerations, to save upwards of \$10 million of operating expenses.

The conditions of the operating permit are that screening of materials will be provided before waste enters the landfill. All Parties in this House supported the community with this and for that I give my thanks. There is an important vote coming up at HRM Council and I expect council to honour its commitments to my community.

Thank you for permitting me to tell you about the best riding in Nova Scotia and I look forward to representing the many distinct communities I spoke about today.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me and a privilege to stand here before you to speak as a newly minted member for Kings North. Many of you will recall that it was by a recount, a 21-vote margin, that I won the race, and I can tell you from my basketball playing days that it's like winning on the last shot, and those are both the most exciting wins to win and the toughest to lose. In saying that I would acknowledge the previous MLA, Jim Morton, in what was a very close race, a very well-fought race, and I know a very tough loss for him. But I feel very honoured and privileged to be here.

Certainly I found that many of my constituents will take credit for being one of those 21 votes; it seems like everyone has said that that was them. Certainly one of the things that was a factor was that I'm a farmer and Kings North likes having a farmer in the Legislature. I don't know how many farmers have been represented in the Legislature in the past, but I believe I'm the only one at the moment. I had the privilege a few days ago of speaking with George Archibald, a previous MLA who was a farmer, so I would like to talk a little bit about that.

My parents came to Canada in 1958 from Holland and they actually lived through the war in Holland. My mother lived through three months of artillery shelling and was liberated by the Canadian Army in 1944. Maybe that was one of the reasons that they came to Canada: that relationship, that special bond that formed between Holland and Canada at that time. My father was a farmer, and in 1987, I was able to take over the farm from him.

We've grown a number of crops over those years and one of the things about Kings North is that 70 per cent of the agriculture of the province is in Kings County, and Kings North certainly represents a big part of that, so I know that world really well so I'm very pleased to be here in that role.

One thing you might not realize about Kings County is that we probably have the most dynamic agricultural economy of any county in Canada. I know that through having been across Canada in many of the other farming counties in my role as a Nuffield scholar. In 1997, I was privileged to be a Nuffield scholar to study agriculture overseas, and one of the ongoing things from that experience was the relationship I had with farmers across the country. So I've been in many of the counties in our great country.

Kings County, as I said, has probably one of the strongest agricultural economies. The reason for that is because we have such a diverse economy. We have chicken farmers, blueberry farmers, wineries, summer savory farmers - as I am - and that is one of things that has led to the strength of the economy there. Also, it has led to sort of a culture of small business and a work ethic in Kings County.

I would like to talk about Kings North in particular. We have a great natural beauty in Kings North. Not to take anything away from any of the other ridings but one of the great things that we have in Kings North is Cape Split, where you can hear the roar of the moon. If you want to know what the roar of the moon is, that is the sound of the tide rushing around that channel. That whole site is considered to be one of the 50 best hiking trails in the world in some hiking trail books that you will be able to find on the store shelves. It is an absolutely marvellous, gorgeous site and possibly, maybe even in our province, underutilized or undermanaged. On any given day, in fact on Remembrance Day, November 11th, there were 27 cars in that parking lot, people hiking to Cape Split on a cold, wet day. During the summer there are many, many more people there. That's part of the community of Scots Bay.

We also have probably the most favourable climate in Nova Scotia, on the Valley floor where I farm, and one of the most favourable soils. Those two things have brought agriculture into our county.

We have in Kings North three fire departments: the Kentville Fire Department, the Canning Fire Department, and the Port Williams Fire Department. Together with Kings South and Kings West, we probably have one of the highest concentrations of fire equipment on a per capita basis of anywhere in the world. I know from my involvement with Kings Mutual Insurance Company that anywhere on the Valley floor you will get insurance based on the fact as if there was a fire hydrant right out beside your door because anywhere on the Valley floor the insurance companies will quote, giving you the best possible coverage for fire protection. That is because of the volunteers in Kings North and the commitment they have to excellence in providing fire trucks and equipment. Certainly Kentville and Canning and Port Williams are no exception; they have exceptional fire departments. I know Kings South and Kings West do too.

We have a lot of great community events in all of the many communities, and a lot of those relate around food. I found out during the pre-election period and during the election time that there were many events that I had never taken part in, as a farmer. As a farmer you tend to stay home and work but I discovered that there were strawberry suppers. If you've never had a strawberry supper, you might wonder, what in the world is a strawberry supper? I would invite you to come next summer to the Billtown Baptist Church strawberry supper or to the Pereaux Baptist Church strawberry supper.

We also have fantastic breakfasts. For instance, in the Black Rock Community Centre breakfasts, unbelievably good breakfasts in some of the rural areas, and St. James Anglican Church breakfasts, which go on, every month there is one. So there's a lot of different events in our many communities in Kings North.

We have many parades, we have of course the well-known Apple Blossom Parade. There are also parades in Canning and Kingsport and Scots Bay. There are many great things that we are doing there as a community.

What are some of the issues for Kings North? Obviously many of the things have already been mentioned here - roads and health care, the out-migration of our young people. People are looking for integrity in government.

I know that as a farmer, I can tell you that the farm community operates mostly on verbal agreements. We will make agreements with our neighbours on land rental, just based on a verbal agreement. There's an ethic there that you keep your word. I don't think that's related to just farmers, I think that's throughout the province. There's an expectation that people will keep their word. In the farm community it's critical because you never know when you need to rely on that neighbour to help you do something, so that relationship is more important than any one deal that you might be able to gain on, so you

keep your word with your neighbours. I know that there's an expectation that this Liberal Government will do that, too, in my riding, an expectation of that.

Another issue, we've talked about agriculture, I know there's the Ivany report coming out soon. Ray Ivany, of course, is in Kings South but not very far away and I've met with him. That report hasn't come out yet but it was out in draft form. There's a big emphasis in that report on investing in the rural economy of Nova Scotia in the primary industries that have fuelled the economy of Nova Scotia for 150, 200 years. Having had the opportunity to drive into Halifax as much as I do now, I see this is a different world. You realize that there is maybe a disconnect between the rural areas and the city, and I think that the rural parts of our province don't appreciate the fact that they need the city to do well. I'm not sure that the city understands that the city needs the rural economy to do well. It is a partnership and a relationship. (Applause)

I would say that we need to be sure as a House that we invest in the rural economy of Nova Scotia. The rural economy in many areas has taken it on the chin in the last number of years and we've seen that in out-migration. Even in Kings County, which traditionally had one of the strongest rural economies in the province, we've seen the beginnings of that out-migration where we see people leaving our area.

If I go back to my Dutch heritage, my parents, when they came here they were - it was a program between the Government of Canada and the Government of Holland. They didn't actually have the money to come to Canada and I was always under the belief that the Canadian Government paid their trip but they told me that it was actually the Dutch Government that paid their trip - to get rid of them, I guess - anyway, brought them here. Nevertheless, it was a partnership between the two governments, and I would say that one of my dreams for agriculture is that we renew that type of a program to bring in farmers.

If we look at the Province of Nova Scotia, we know that in the 1920s we peaked in agricultural production in many items. Maybe not in some of the new things being grown - certainly not in grapes - but in many of our products we peaked in the 1920s. The Margaree Valley was farmed and the Musquodoboit Valley was farmed and the Annapolis Valley was farmed all the way down and all down through Yarmouth - all of that was farmed at one time. I believe that we are not short on land, but we are short on farmers. We need to bring people in.

One of the other things that my father came into Canada with - he was without money, but he had an excellent agricultural education. Even though I went to the Agricultural College in Truro and to the University of Guelph and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, when I was all done and went back to the farm, Dad taught me how to farm. I believe that agricultural education system that they have in Holland is something we need to think about doing.

I know that the farmers of Nova Scotia are looking for this government to invest in agriculture; the strawberry growers are looking to see what this government will do, and the apple growers are looking to see what this government is going to do. There are many expectations and many hopes that our industry, the agricultural industry, can be more than it is. The public certainly is interested in local food and seeing all those things grow. In fisheries, too, there's a lot at stake right now for the lobster fishermen and low prices have stressed those industries. We as a House need to see that those industries are able to succeed and grow. I would say that's what we need to be working on as a House.

In terms of the election, I too had a team of people who supported me, some 35 people who were key members of my election campaign team and I would like to say thank you to them. I don't plan to read all 35 names but I will say that my co-campaign chairs Elva Heyge and Heather Tupper were key. We had a number of key people who really committed a lot of time and effort and contributed in many different ways so I would like to say thank you to them, and to Martha McQuarrie as well.

Of course, I would like to say thank you to my wife, Heather, who is not here tonight but who was very supportive in me running. Just to backtrack a little, this was a year of change for me. If you had asked me a year ago would I ever be here standing before you talking, I would have said no, I would not have thought that would happen. The year of change began for me in January when I said yes to going to Kenya and working with Farmers Helping Farmers for three weeks with two women's groups: one of 60 women and one of 100 women farmers. In Kenya, the women are the farmers. (Applause)

We were able to make a difference in small ways. When you go there you wonder what can I do, but I was able to make a difference in those in very small ways to improve the situation of those farmers, and with that I would like to say hats off to Farmers Helping Farmers.

That was January and you may recall, if you know your international news, Kenya was in the midst of an election which was going to take place. The previous election in 2008 had seen 6,000 people killed in election violence so there was some concern about that, but I was able to see, for one thing, what truly bad government can do to a country, but I was also able to see a people full of optimism, who were totally enamoured with the election process. We were able to see billboards - 100 feet high by 50 to 60 feet wide were not an uncommon site. The Kenyans were totally absorbed in politics and totally into it and maybe that rubbed off on me because when I came back it was the start of the nomination process to become elected and all of that, so that trip probably rubbed off on me - well, actually, I know it did.

Madam Speaker, I would like to say once again, thank you, it's an honour to be here and I look forward to working in the House. I know that we have high hopes for the Liberals, and I look forward to working with the Minister of Agriculture, and Fisheries and

Aquaculture. I know that will not be a problem and we'll be able to work together fine, and I look forward to serving the people of Kings North. Thank you. (Applause)

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Madam Speaker, I'm proud to address this Assembly as the newly-elected MLA for the new constituency of Clare-Digby. On behalf of the constituents of Digby, I would also like to extend my sincere congratulations to the Premier on forming a new government. I would also like to make the note that the visit the Premier made to the riding during the campaign was fully appreciated and we have an open invitation any time he wants to visit our riding in the future.

The Liberal platform that was outlined during the campaign was well thought out, thorough, and more achievable than we would have ever expected. I would like to say that this guide will ensure all Nova Scotians are given an opportunity to move forward, and for that, I thank the Premier.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. It is improper to show a document.

The honourable member for Clare-Digby has the floor.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Madam Speaker, I apologize. I will repeat that this guide will ensure all Nova Scotians are given an opportunity to move forward and for that I thank you, Mr. Premier, and all of those who worked very hard to develop our platform. I would also like to congratulate all the new members, those who have been elected to serve in the House of Assembly; to the returning members, you will be a source of inspiration and guidance to me. You have shown the ability to maintain the confidence of the voters and congratulations to all of you.

As I begin my remarks today I would like to take a few moments to talk about the elimination of the former Clare constituency. As we all know, the first report on the Electoral Boundaries Commission recommended the protection of the Acadian ridings. Unfortunately, the government of the day decided to eliminate the riding of Clare because the population of this area was too small. It is true that the former riding of Clare was smaller than most constituencies in this province. Notwithstanding its size, Clare was protected by the two previous Electoral Boundaries Commissions, in 1992 and 2002.

The protected status of these Acadian ridings reflected the principle of effective representation, as recognized by the courts, and respected the official minority-language status of the Acadian community. The elimination of the Clare constituency is a problem for the Nova Scotia Acadian community. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that on June 14, 2012, the Attorney General of Nova Scotia declared that the interim report of the 2012 Electoral Boundaries Commission was null and void. The Acadians questioned whether the Attorney General at that time overstepped his authority by intervening in the

engaging process of the boundary review. The report was supposed to be submitted to the public for feedback, not subject to the arbitrary judgment of the Attorney General. (Applause)

The people of the Town of Digby and the Municipality of the District of Digby were never consulted. Even during my campaign, people of the riding were not aware of the review or the changes to the riding, and did not understand that their riding was now gone and part of a large combined riding.

Direct requests were made to the commissioner by the former MLA for Digby-Annapolis to come to our communities to hear the people. These requests were ignored. The people of Digby and the Municipality of Digby were faced with a fait accompli. The decision to eliminate the Clare constituency is now before the courts. Suffice to say that the elimination of the Clare riding did not reflect the will of the residents of Clare or the residents of Annapolis, Digby, and the Nova Scotia Acadian community.

This specific opening remark makes reference to the very existence of the Clare-Digby constituency I was elected to represent. This is an historic moment. Not at all impressed by the circumstances surrounding the elimination of the riding of Clare, I am honoured to have been chosen to represent the new Clare-Digby constituency.

After an election an elected person has to express his or her gratitude to those who helped them get elected. In a democracy no one can pretend to be able to be a one-man show. An elected official is part of a team. My debts begin with Junior Theriault and Wayne Gaudet, who were the previous MLAs for Clare and Digby. They acted as co-campaign managers for myself. They are team leaders. They took charge of a well-organized campaign.

I guess I must speak at this time also to the fact that in their opening remarks that were made by Junior, the 15,000 forgotten people have now grown to the 20,000. I am not going to say they are the 20,000 forgotten people, because the legacy of Wayne and Junior is one that I'll say that they are remembered now, and their legacy is going to go on with me.

I'd like to take this time to thank my wife, Deidre, for her continued support, and all the campaign workers who helped me. They helped me become better known in all the areas of Digby County. My thanks also to those who contributed to the financial campaign. There's a cost associated with campaigning. A sincere thanks to you, the constituents who contributed to the campaign in more ways than one.

The rules are strict around election expenses and fundraising. I am very grateful to Pat Potts, my official agent, for her close control of expenses and record-keeping. The selection of an official agent is only second to selecting a campaign manager. This person must be trustworthy, organized, have an excellent financial background, and be committed

to working long hours after the election is over. I was extremely lucky to find such a person in Ms. Potts. I have literally known her all of my life. She was a previous office manager for two local businesses, currently retired, past town councillor and a hard-working, capable person at the young age of 81. She kept us straight during the election, and I thoroughly enjoyed working with her in this campaign. My gratitude goes to a fine lady, my mother, who took the role of an official agent - thanks to you, mom.

Most of my gratitude goes to the citizens of Digby County who made me feel most welcomed at the doors and at the community gatherings during the campaign, and more importantly trusted me with the mandate to represent them in this assembly. To you, Madam Speaker, I stand in this chamber to bring greetings from the residents of Clare-Digby, the residents of Digby County. We are blessed with a special diverse riding and I would like to take a few minutes to take all of you around our area.

We have a population of approximately 20,000 and around 14,700 voters. Our area goes from Westport, to Digby, to Bear River, to Richfield, to Beaver River. A two and a half hour drive takes you from one end to the other. Now when I say diverse, I mean diverse. I don't think I could think of another riding that can stand next to ours in that diversity. I'll start you with the Digby Gut and the sunset in the Gut, it's something you will not find anywhere else in the world. The mixing of the highest tides, linger fog, and the constant traffic of fishing boats makes this a very special place.

We're lucky to have the specular Bay of Fundy and all its natural resources touching the shoreline of our riding. Being on the southwest corner of Nova Scotia provides endless sunsets with the waters of St. Mary's Bay, the Bay of Fundy, throughout the entire year. It is sometimes interesting to reflect on the Digby Gut as the entry way for Samuel de Champlain and Sieur de Mons in 1605 and what their eyes might have seen.

Overlooking the Annapolis Basin and the Town of Digby sits one of the most specular resorts in Nova Scotia, the Digby Pines. This beautiful facility is unique and is complemented by a world class, Stanley Thompson-designed golf course. The Digby area is closely tied to the economic impact of this resort and recognizes its importance in rural Nova Scotia. I must mention that the golf course has shown some challenges with water drainage and I will continue to lobby for the need to improve this important facility.

Without detail explanation we all know how the link between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia is crucial for southwest Nova Scotia. We are very fortunate to have this ferry arriving in our community every day. The past pressures on maintaining these marine transportation links have emphasised, and more importantly identified, their overall roles. We must continue to grow new opportunities and make new partnerships with our neighbours in Saint John, throughout New Brunswick, and the New England states.

Digby scallops have been the longest standing brand representing fishing industry in Digby County. We have the best scallops in the world and continue to see this resource

remain such a crucial part of our economy. Our area sees the cold tidal waters of the Bay of Fundy as a perfect place to grow scallops. Celebrating scallops is part of Scallops Days, a tradition we are proud of. I invite all the members of this assembly to come to this great festival in August.

Clare-Digby has many fishing communities. We must never forget the brave fishermen who have lost their lives in this industry, not only in Digby County but also in many other Nova Scotian coastal communities who have lost men and women working on the sea. In Clare-Digby we have beautiful Long Island and Brier Island. These islands are a unique place not to be found anywhere else in Nova Scotia. The villages of Tiverton, Freeport, and Westport are timeless examples of fishing communities and rural coastal communities.

Madam Speaker, traveling over two ferries to reach Brier Island is an adventure into natural beauty and one of the most diverse bird and marine wildlife areas in the world. Whale watching is at its best there and I can personally attest to the quality experience and the professional captains who pilot the watchers, again, one of these captains, being the previous member for Digby-Annapolis, Junior Theriault.

Another attraction in the area of the islands is the Balancing Rock. It is one of the many destination points people from around the world come to visit. We must continue to focus on the economic pressures of our coastal communities as they face population decline, while continuing to protect their natural beauty.

The tidal village of Bear River is another beautiful destination rich in artisans, a wonderful First Nations community and a growing wine industry. Interestingly enough, Bear River is seen as the first place grapes from Europe were grown in North America as a gift to the local First Nations.

Back to the Digby area, I would be remiss not to mention the Wharf Rat Rally. Here motorcycle enthusiasts gather year after year from far and wide. This hugely successful event has become the largest mass gathering in Nova Scotia outside of Halifax; it is also the largest Canadian rally of its kind east of Ontario. Events such as these represent the necessary economic diversity rural Nova Scotia must need to sustain themselves. My sincere congratulations go out to the huge number of organizers and volunteers that make this event successful.

Madam Speaker, there is another important social fabric of our constituency. I am extremely proud and honoured to represent La Baie Sainte-Marie within the Clare-Digby riding. La Baie Sainte-Marie is representative of a large Nova Scotian Acadian community stretching from New Edinburgh to Beaver River. This area is the Clare Municipality, the only municipality that conducts its businesses and services in French. It is rich in bilingual Acadian culture that can be found everywhere you go. The music, the cuisine, the kitchen parties, the artistry, is rich in Acadian flare that will surround you and emerge you. The

communities of Church Point, Meteghan, Saulnierville, Concession, St. Bernard, are but a few of the many vibrant places where the flavour of Acadian life abounds.

You have to experience le Concert de Noel avec la Chorale du Sud-Ouest, la Fanfare régionale de Clare et Les voix dans L'Vent on a snowy afternoon to more fully appreciate the Acadian culture and to be submerged into the Christmas spirit.

Another feature in Clare is Mavillette Beach, found near the southwest end of the riding and one of the most beautiful beaches in Nova Scotia. The Clare-Digby area is extremely fortunate to have Université Sainte-Anne as an institutional educational gem. This French-language university dates back to 1890 and provides the best opportunity one can find to broaden one's French language skills and education all in one. I inform you that Digby County is a diverse cultural and bilingual community.

I had the fortune to experience the French Immersion Program at Université Sainte-Anne first-hand. I am looking forward to learning more of the speaking skills of the beautiful French language.

La Langue Française est une belle langue qu'il nous faut garder et développer dans notre région.

The French language is beautiful and it is necessary for us to keep developing it in our area.

The cultural and ethnic diversity of our region is a great asset. We must do much more to keep and promote this asset.

Le patrimoine acadien et la culture acadienne forment une richesse pour notre région et pour l'ensemble de la province de la Nouvelle-Écosse.

French immersion was one of the most rewarding experiences I have had within a learning institution. Université Sainte-Anne also has shown great leadership in its development of renewable energy opportunities from wind to biomass. This unique educational facility must continue to grow and be supported within the Clare-Digby riding.

Madam Speaker, how could one go throughout the Clare-Digby riding without also noting one of the major economic drivers in the mink industry? It is important to note that this industry employs approximately 1,000 people in the Clare-Digby riding and the industry generates one of the single largest agricultural revenues in Nova Scotia. The by-products of the mink industry now bring development in bio oil and pellets used for bio heat and fertilizers.

We are very blessed with a wealth of renewable resources in our riding. From one of the best wind regimes along the North Mountain to the endless Bay of Fundy tides, we

are blessed. We have a unique opportunity, because of these wide, diverse renewable resources, to showcase and develop renewable resources. It is important for the future sustainability of our rural communities to see the benefits of these resources invested locally. I believe that developing the renewable resources in our riding is the future, and I will work hard to promote this. Let us not forget that we were in the forefront when Le Nouvelle France, or Electric City, was built in 1895.

I am also delighted to bring you greetings - and, Madam [Deputy] Speaker, this was meant for the previous Speaker who just left - personally from one of your fellow co-workers and a good friend, Claredon Robicheau, who is known in the new Clare-Digby constituency as the founder of Le Transport de Clare. This service provides transportation to the elderly and to the people with disabilities. I'm proud to recognize Claredon Robicheau and his team in the Clare area as the birthplace of community-based transportation in Nova Scotia.

In 1997, 17 years ago, a volunteer group started what is now a national model in Clare. In 2012 it expanded into all of Digby County. What started in Clare has now expanded into 14 other similar programs in Nova Scotia. In 2011, these community-based transportation groups logged 1.4 million kilometres. They took \$520,000 of provincial investment through grants, and by partnerships with municipalities, local businesses, health care groups, fundraising, and fairs they grew that provincial investment into \$2.3 million - no small feat these days for a volunteer group.

Through you, Madam Speaker, may I take this opportunity to share with you and some of the other members of this Assembly some of the concerns I have gathered during the campaign. I visited 80 communities, four villages, one town, and one First Nation; hosted 13 community meetings; and participated in two forums. All of my observations that I will present to you came from either private conversations or public gatherings during that campaign.

Although I've painted a pretty picture of a riding to this point, it is necessary to mention some of our challenges, all of which I hope to address in my role in this Legislature. Out-migration is a major threat to all of us, and particularly to rural Nova Scotia. The riding of Clare-Digby has experienced a loss of 1 per cent of its finest citizens per year, every year for the last 10 years. We've lost a small town in 10 years. If this continues, serious consideration must be given to the impact this will place on providing essential services.

I must reflect right now also - it's kind of intriguing - this weekend I was doing interviews for my previous job as Deputy CAO, and we had six people we were interviewing. One question was, what do you see as the major threat to the Municipality of Digby? Every single one of those applicants answered, out-migration. Every single one of them answered that question, and not only did they answer it, they answered it very

quickly. They didn't have to think twice about it. What was more interesting was what they mentioned they thought might be something that was going to help us.

For those of you who don't realize, the Digby area has been very blessed, I would say in the last 10 years - in spite of the economic downturn - to turn itself into what I would call an area of optimism, an area of hope, an area that has seen a lot of things taken away from it, and an area that a lot of people are looking at and saying, how come you guys are still so happy there? Why is there still such an air of optimism? Why do you people still have so much stuff going on?

The reason is we have a lot of people there who believe in what we have. We're very blessed. If there is any one thing that I can bring before this floor today - and you don't find it in very many economic development agency documents, studies or consultants' reports - it is the fact that if there's any one thing that we can bring to our communities it is that air of optimism. We need to show that we have hope. We need to show that we believe in our communities and we need to be the ones who do that. It is the same as going to the doctor and getting a bad report, the first thing they tell you is that you've got to keep a positive attitude; the same thing as getting your hockey team up for that game, even though you know you're going to get your butts kicked, you have to have a positive attitude. The same thing goes in communities.

The Highway No. 101 from Digby to Weymouth is a rural road with all the hills, driveways and turns you would see when going for a drive in the country, yet we are faced with calling this Highway No. 101 a 100-Series Highway - Geoff has heard it already - when in essence it is nowhere close to a controlled access highway. Along this stretch of highway children wait for buses, residents place their garbage and people are forced to back out of their driveways. The residents of this area have been lobbying for over 15 years to have this death trap fixed. This missing link needs to see the work start and shine a light into this dark tunnel. I'm very proud and I'm very pleased to hear it mentioned in the Speech from the Throne and I thank the Premier for that.

The Digby area of this riding currently has two doctors for a population of approximately 13,000 people. Chronic shortages of family doctors caused a number of serious problems within the population. I am proud to see positive doctor recruitment plans within the election platform to address this issue and again I thank you, Mr. Premier.

I must also note that we have a good success example in the Clare area where there are currently six doctors serving the community of approximately 7,000 people. This was a result of several initiatives, including a Collaborative Emergency Centre being built by the community, a good doctor recruitment program, access to three seats in medical schools in Sherbrooke, Quebec, for local students who chose to study medicine in French and a locally-funded return of service offer.

Poverty has not escaped us and it is concerning that 30 per cent of our people in the Clare-Digby riding live at or below the poverty line. With poverty we also have our problems with drug dependency and alcoholism. This is not acceptable and we must keep our eyes on representing those who need us the most.

I have experienced the slow decline of another icon of our area, the clam industry. Digby clams are still seen throughout Atlantic Canada on menus in restaurants, yet this industry is in serious decline. Work is being completed to address waste-water outfalls within the Annapolis Basin and we need to work harder to see this industry return to its once flourishing past.

Madam Speaker, it concerns me also when I see people employed in this industry discriminated upon by forcing them to renew their federal clam licences through the Internet. Not only do we face shortages in Internet access in rural Nova Scotia, it is something that not all people are comfortable with and should be allowed conventional options for renewing their licences.

Our forestry sector has seen better times. This is an area I have been directly involved in as a forest technician during my career with Natural Resources. We are facing major problems with wood supply and finding places for our secondary wood products to be sold within western Nova Scotia. I believe more emphasis needs to be placed on small woodlot owners and good forestry practices for the future of our industry. Digby County is one of the best places to grow trees and it was once a primary location in the world to get red spruce for sailing-ship masts.

Some people want to know why gas prices are consistently higher in Clare-Digby than they are in the metro area. I know there is some complicated formula that takes into consideration distances from refineries as part of the cost calculation but why can't we all share in the expense of developing this great province? Level the playing field and stop putting burdens where burdens should not be. Just consider the extra cost for a local trucking company in Clare-Digby over one year or a fisherman who fuels his boat to get those delicious scallops for all of you.

Certainly we have suffered from the loss of the Yarmouth ferry. Immediately the tour buses disappeared, all of the accommodation people up and down the riding faced serious losses. The impact was far and wide and I was even told that one non-profit group had lost 30 per cent of their donations at a local lighthouse; those kinds of things don't show up in the studies. We all hope that with time this will be restored, knowing this type of loss does not recover overnight.

The nursing home, Villa Acadienne, was mentioned by many people in the riding as needing replacement and I am excited, Madam Speaker, to see plans being worked on to see this replaced during our mandate. (Interruptions) Yes, and so did the Tories before that.

I must share that during the election campaign I did receive an interesting request to meet some Université Sainte-Anne students. It was late at night, after a day of door-to-door campaigning and a community meeting. The only time I was available was around ten o'clock in the evening. This was part of a class assignment they had on a provincial election. They started by saying they had a project, I replied, so do I. Their questions were quite grilling: the Electoral Boundaries Commission, the boundary issue, the French language, how was I to represent the Acadian culture?

Out of the blue, one of them asked me who my role model was. A fair question but one I wasn't expecting. I hadn't prepared a response or experienced this question ever before. My answer was quickly, Bill Belichick, coach of the New England Patriots. Immediately, two of the students smiled - both were good Patriot fans - and the questions got easier from there.

I also would be remiss if I didn't mention my previous history with municipal government. I'm very proud to state that within the riding of Clare-Digby, we have the Municipality of Digby, the Municipality of Clare and the Town of Digby. I can see them in my experience as three of the most accommodating municipal units that I have ever seen that worked together. We have more shared service agreements, we have more sit-downs together and we have virtually no problems in working with each other. We share recreation, transportation, waste water, services for dispatching fire departments. I will say that if you want to look for a model for reforming municipal government, come to Clare-Digby.

The most important thing that I realized more than ever during the campaign was life's complexities. We're not equally fortunate with life's blessings. Some have more than others in our society - those who have more have a larger responsibility. Our collective gaze has been trained to not notice those who struggle around us. We must change this. We cannot allow ourselves to be blinded to those around us and to the environment that sustains us. We must, on a continuous basis, strive to live in harmony with those around us and in harmony with nature.

Going door-to-door, from community to community, meeting individuals with their concerns makes it more evident that no two individuals are the same. With different backgrounds and aspirations there is a uniqueness within each person. Therefore, there is no "one size fits all" solution to the many needs facing the citizens of Digby County. There are differences, we have to recognize these differences.

At times during the campaign I had the impression that government was perceived like some extraterrestrial power capable of solving all the problems. I believe it is our duty as politicians and as elected representatives to remind citizens that government exists to serve. (Applause)

Madam Speaker, I believe it is important that we spare no effort to remind everyone that government is an institution that is shaped by us all - elected and non-elected, to serve. However, there are limits to government intervention. It is important to note that all citizens are part of government. Everyone has a role to play in shaping government - not the least, to cast a vote on election day. Not all citizens take this right seriously. There must be a way to educate people and help them see the importance of their involvement.

There is more to a democratic government than Cabinet, caucus, Opposition, departments, and agencies. For a good government we need a consistent interaction between all stakeholders - human interaction and fellowship at all levels. We might not have a perfect government system. What we have in place now allows for input from all to keep government in close check and provide guidelines for private citizens. We must also not forget that human activity can't be regulated without judgment by humans. This is why government decisions are not always perfect.

To the people of Digby County I owe the privilege to sit at this Assembly, and I express to them my gratitude. Madam Speaker, to you and all the Assembly, I invite you to visit the people of Clare-Digby sometime soon. Thank you very much.

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

MS. PAM EYKING: Thank you, Madam Speaker. First off, I want to commend you and my esteemed colleagues from both sides of the House on your bids to successfully secure seats in Province House. I also want to take this opportunity to thank my fellow candidates in this election: John Frank Toney from Eskasoni, who ran for the NDP; Stemer MacLeod, who ran as an independent; and Keith Bain, former MLA for Victoria-The Lakes, who just happens to be my country neighbour - a fine gentleman and a true good community member. (Applause) We all ran clean campaigns, and no matter what the outcome, we can hold our heads up high.

I cannot express enough gratitude for the hard work my campaign team put into winning this election. The names are so many I fear that if I begin to list them I will leave someone out. From my drivers, headquarter workers, canvassers, and executive members, each helped to secure my seat in this House. They were the wind at my back, the candle in the window, and they kept me going along my vast riding of Victoria-The Lakes.

Madam Speaker, I grew up just across the water, a Dartmouth girl, with my two brothers, Scott and Dan. Our dad worked just down the road from here at the Department of National Defence, and Mom did a variety of things to supplement our income. She brought in children of parents who went out to work, she crafted, and she had four trade students boarding in our basement of our small bungalow on Erin Drive.

After graduating from Prince Andrew High School I took a trade, because although I was fortunate enough to benefit from a progressive early childhood learning program at

Mount Edward Elementary, universities of the day were not quite ready to accommodate dyslexic students. I wanted to be a social worker. I wanted to help people. It was that early childhood learning program, some fabulous mentors, my dad's inherited thirst for knowledge, and my mom's sense of determination that allow me to be standing here reading my speech in this historic house amongst my distinguished colleagues today. (Applause) That, Madam Speaker, and spellcheck.

During my teen years I was swept off my feet by a wholesome, hard-working second-generation Dutch Cape Breton farm boy. We married young, and I moved to his community on Boularderie Island in Cape Breton, an island within an island. Together we took a small vegetable farm and grew it to over 300 acres. Our staples were carrots, cabbage, and turnip, but we eventually introduced broccoli and romaine lettuce to the Cape Breton market. Soon our farm went on to sell produce all over North America. I did the books and the marketing, which I thoroughly enjoyed. This included payroll for, at times, well over 60 people, as well as TV and radio ads that featured local acting talent such as Bette MacDonald. We were the first to do in-store taste tests and promotions, Think Cape Breton First started at my kitchen table. I quickly became passionate about nutrition, especially in young children. I went into the schools to demonstrate the importance of healthy eating by showcasing a teaching tool called Reach for 5 to 10 Fruits and Vegetables a Day. Life was busy, it was fast, it was intense.

In a nine-year span, Mark and I had four wonderful children: Mieka, Joshua, Bethany and Jonah. Those kids worked alongside us on the farm from a very early age and to this day they have a strong work ethic. I could not be more proud of these four incredible young adults. Each of them is extroverted, intuitive and very well rounded. We adore their husbands Wade and Christian, fiancé Natalie, and our eight-week-old grandson Ryker. Our family is growing and I could not be more delighted.

In 2000, on a rainy Fall day, a couple of people came to our back field where Mark was cutting broccoli with a crew of about 30. They asked him to run for the federal Liberal Party in an election that was only weeks away. Mark had strong reservations about saying yes to this opportunity, but I encouraged him to give it a shot. In spite of our busy lives, together we shared a strong passion for our community. He was already involved and I did my part by keeping our bustling home life running smoothly, a priority for us both. Mark was successful in his bid and we never looked back.

Just before he was asked to run federally we did some work in Panama, introducing a greenhouse method for growing seedlings to protect them from the heavy rains. We went back two years ago to check on them and I am proud to say they are thriving. They now have over 100 greenhouses. Like yourself, Madam Speaker, I did not plan my life for farming or politics, but most of all I am indeed so very grateful for the experience and the opportunity. Most of all I am grateful for the opportunity I had to raise our children in one of the most beautiful parts of the world and don't take my word for it, take it from Travel

and Leisure magazine, which in 2011 rated Cape Breton Island the number one destination in North America.

When several months ago I was asked to represent the proud, hard-working, kind people of Victoria-The Lakes, Cape Breton, I saw it as my chance to help. Victoria-The Lakes has been very good to us and I'm grateful for this opportunity to give back.

Madam Speaker, let me take you on a drive around my riding. It's over a four-hour drive to cross and eight if we choose to loop back this evening, so buckle up, sit back and pay attention because alongside its incredible, breathtaking beauty, at any moment you may see a deer, a moose, bear, fox, eagle, coyote or quite possibly, as I did on my drive home last week, a whale.

The riding I represent is vast not only in square kilometres but in the great diversity of its people and industry here on the Island. There are so many amazing things happening in this community that I am bound to forget a few so I must apologize in advance if I leave anything out.

Our journey will now begin on Boularderie Island, where the tide comes in and out on the north side of the Island twice a day as the Bras d'Or Lakes meet the Atlantic Ocean. When we drive through Millville, you'll come across one of Victoria-The Lakes's thriving industries: Eyking Farms, our family farm. It is one of the biggest in Atlantic Canada. It sponsors many community events that bring people from communities all over the Island. The summer's Eggfest and Fall's annual pumpkin weigh-in bring crowds in from not only the mainland, but all across Cape Breton Island.

We'll move onto Englishtown where we will begin our journey up the Cabot Trail, home of Cape Breton's giant, Angus MacAskill. Englishtown is also known for its annual mussel festival. These mussels are harvested right there in the community. When we cross over the Englishtown Ferry, we start the journey to the Cabot Trail where another trail lies, the Artisan Trail. You will be sure to stop into the small local businesses which display the unique talents of the people in the riding. There are Leatherworks, Glass Artisans Studio and Gallery, Wildfire Pottery, Sew Inclined, and Salty Rose's to name a few.

The Cabot Trail is a thriving tourist destination which boasts opportunity for many outdoor adventurers. The hiking trails in the region are world-class and draw in tourists from all over the world. Not only are you able to take in the majestic views through the immense hiking trails but you are also able to take in kayaking, whale watching, amongst countless other outdoor activities. If you're feeling up to it, you can take a trip up the steep trail of Franey and take in the incredible view overlooking the entire Clyburn Brook canyon and the Atlantic coastline. The view from on top of this 430 metre elevation offers a breathtaking view of most of Ingonish and Cape Smokey. We can also take a trip to the Highland Links for a round of golf. The course has been rated as one of the top 100 golf courses in the world by Golf Magazine.

Victoria-The Lakes is home to many industries, fishing being the largest one in the region. There is no doubt that the seafood industry is vital to Nova Scotia's economy and it's extremely vital to the rural communities within the riding of Victoria-The Lakes. The seafood industry in Nova Scotia is worth \$1 billion. Within the communities in my riding, many people depend on the seafood industry for their main source of income. Those fishers who live in the northernmost part of the province, in Neil's Harbour to Bay St. Lawrence - these individuals help to maintain their small communities so that many others can come and experience the majestic beauty that they have to offer.

If you travel to the northernmost tip of the province, you'll arrive in Meat Cove - probably the smallest community in the riding. The community is home to the Meat Cove Moose Hunting Outfitters owned by Hector Hines, first cousin to my esteemed colleague, the member for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie. Mr. Hines runs an eco-friendly hunting company that is located in the designated non-motorized moose-hunting area. The guided hunt is carried out through the use of horses. These horses are used to carry in the hunters' gear and carry out the moose. The small community of Meat Cove may not be Halifax but the community saw over 4,000 travellers from around the world visit there last summer.

As we exit the Cabot Trail we will come to St. Ann's and the Gaelic College. The Gaelic College is very effective in maintaining and preserving the Gaelic language and culture. When we move on from St. Ann's, we'll travel into Nyanza where Big Spruce Brewery is located. Big Spruce Brewery is Nova Scotia's newest micro-brewery, which brews all natural unfiltered, unpasteurized organic beers with such unique names as Kitchen Party Ale. You can stop by at the brewery to buy a refill, a 1.89 litre growler, or stop by the Bras d'Or Yacht Club in Baddeck to grab one on tap.

As we drive into Baddeck, you will see many boaters. They sail through the Bras d'Or Lakes. The town is driven in the summer by the tourism industry. The Bras d'Or watershed is now recognized as a UNESCO biosphere reserve. While in Baddeck, visitors are encouraged to come and explore the Alexander Graham Bell Museum and see what Mr. Bell has contributed to society. These contributions include amongst many, the telephone and the first flight within the British Empire. When we drive through Middle River, you can make a stop at Finewood Flooring & Lumber. Most of the lumber that is delivered to this plant is from Nova Scotia sawmills. The flooring company has been in business since 1982. The hardwood is kiln dried and is top quality.

Travelling on to Iona, we'll pop into the Highland Village, which is an outdoor living history museum displaying the story of Gaelic settlement in Nova Scotia. When we leave the Iona peninsula, we'll come to Christmas Island where more than 15,000 letters and packages a year come through to be stamped with the official Christmas Island postmark. The post office itself attracts people from all over as they stop by to purchase these one-of-a-kind Christmas postmarks.

From Christmas Island we'll travel on to Boisdale, which boasts its annual pancake breakfast. Pancakes are served with Highland Gold maple syrup, the local maple syrup and products producer.

Driving through to Frenchvale, you will come across Talbot House. Talbot House is a recovery centre for those struggling with addictions. Father John G. Webb founded the facility in 1959. The facility has helped men from across Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada through recovery and rehabilitation. The centre has helped hundreds struggling with addictions through its over 50 years of service.

As we move on to Point Aconi, we'll come across Lakewind Sound Studios, owned by Freddy Lavery and Gordie Sampson. I am proud to say Lakewind is just a 15-minute drive from my home. Lakewind Studios is an award-winning facility which has hosted such musicians such as Rita MacNeil, the Barra MacNeils, Jimmy Rankin, Natalie MacMaster, and Matt Minglewood. Fred was just presented the Maritimer of the Week Award for his contributions to the Maritime community by CTV News Live at Five. The studio became part of East Coast music history when it was established in 1996. One cannot forget the co-founder. Gordie Sampson was the recipient of a Grammy Award for Carrie Underwood's *Jesus, Take the Wheel* in 2007.

Victoria-The Lakes is proudly home to two First Nations communities, Eskasoni and Wagmatcook. Eskasoni is home to the largest Mi'kmaq community in the world, and has been able to keep their culture thriving through generations as they are also home to the largest Mi'kmaq-speaking community. The community has been a leader in renewable energy, where its wind turbine was the first net-metered wind turbine of its size installed in Nova Scotia. Wagmatcook First Nation has been moving quickly into educating the youth of their community, where they have helped in the funding of a new NSCC campus that will open in April. The community has partnered with Nova Scotia Community College so that it can offer more opportunities for their community members.

Madam Speaker, Cape Breton as a whole has been decorated with numerous awards in the past, and continues to be recognized as one of the wonders of the world. In 2011, Cape Breton Island was rated the number one island destination in North America by Travel and Leisure magazine. That same year, we were rated the number three island destination in the world. These accolades show that Cape Breton is a destination of true beauty, one we should be investing in. It is our province's largest tourist destination.

The Cabot Trail, which rests in my riding, was ranked ninth in the world for cycling. Cape Breton has been recognized as one of the most charming Fall islands, and if you are lucky enough to come see us during the Fall, make sure to take in the numerous music festivals put on through the Celtic Colours.

Cape Breton is full of majestic wonders. It has received many acclamations and awards cementing its status as one of the most majestic islands in the world. One would be

hard-pressed to find people anywhere who are more proud, strong, generous, hard-working, talented, and quick with their humour and a hand. I am lucky enough to represent Victoria-The Lakes in the Legislature, where my riding is filled with reasons that help to explain the acclamations awarded to Cape Breton. If Nova Scotia is Canada's Ocean Playground, then Victoria-The Lakes, Cape Breton, is its theme park.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. That concludes the government's business for this evening. Tomorrow the House will sit from the hours of 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The order of business will be Orders of the Day, along with Question Period. Following that, we will proceed to Government Business, which will include second reading of Bill Nos. 5 and 7, and if time permits, resumption of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

With that, Madam Speaker, I would move that the House do now rise to meet again at the hour of 11:00 a.m. tomorrow.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is that the House do rise, to meet again on Tuesday between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 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.

[The House rose at 9:15 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 86**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the Municipality of the District of Argyle presented three outstanding citizenship awards to Garry Adams, Sharon Southern and Alvin Boudreau at the June Committee of the Whole meeting; and

Whereas Garry Adams of Middle East Pubnico rescued a woman and her two children from an overturned van that had slipped on the ice, hit a guardrail and landed in a brook; and

Whereas Sharon Southern, from Lower Wedgeport, and Alvin Boudreau, visiting from Lake Echo, were driving by a residence in Wedgeport, noticed flames and rescued six children from the house;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Garry Adams, Sharon Southern and Alvin Boudreau for receiving these awards and thank them for their remarkable, selfless acts of heroism.

RESOLUTION NO. 87

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Official Opposition)

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

Whereas Eldon George, a well-known Parrsboro fossil collector, has been named to the Order of Nova Scotia, our province's most prestigious award; and

Whereas George has been collecting fossils in the Parrsboro area for 75 years and has registered world famous finds during that time, including the world's smallest dinosaur footprints and numerous rare prehistoric insects, amphibians and fish; and

Whereas Eldon George was also a founding member of the Nova Scotia Mineral & Gem Society and was the founder of the Rockhound Roundup, now known as the Nova Scotia Gem and Mineral Show, one of the oldest mineral shows in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Eldon George on being named to the Order of Nova Scotia and thank him for his incredible contributions to our province.

RESOLUTION NO. 88

By: Hon. Jamie Baillie (Leader of the Official Opposition)

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

Whereas Alton Crawford was recognized in Wentworth this month for his 35 years of service with the Wentworth Fire Department; and

Whereas each year the community salutes the Wentworth Volunteer Fire Department for their courage, dedication and concern for people in the community; and

Whereas the members of the Wentworth Volunteer Fire Department put their lives at risk to serve and protect the people of their community and are always available day or night in an emergency;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alton Crawford on his 35 years of service to the Wentworth Volunteer Fire Department and thank him for his dedication to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 89

By: Hon. Andrew Younger (Energy)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation held the 2013 Football League Provincial Championship games on Sunday, November 17th; and

Whereas Prince Andrew High School defeated Auburn High School in the semi-final game to face Halifax West High School for the Tier 2 Provincial Championship; and

Whereas Prince Andrew defeated Halifax West in the championship game;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the entire Prince Andrew Tier 2 football team on their 2013 Provincial Championship title.

RESOLUTION NO. 90

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Windsor realtor Janet White died after a courageous battle with ALS; and

Whereas Janet was the owner of Full Circle Realty and an active member of her community; and

Whereas Janet was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and friend;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly send sincere condolences on Janet's passing to her husband Jim White; children Jennifer, Andrew and Matthew; her grandchildren; and her many friends.

RESOLUTION NO. 91

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas decades ago the Maxner's dairy farm operations consisted of Watson Maxner's farm on College Road and his brother Robie's farm on Chester Road, both situated in the Town of Windsor; and

Whereas when Watson retired, Robie merged the two dairy operations into one on Chester Road, and when Robie retired he sold the farm to his son Barry; and

Whereas the Maxner farm is now preparing to move into a fourth generation of family farming with Barry's daughter Janet learning the tricks of the trade from her Dad, as well as putting into practice everything she learned while attending the Nova Scotia Agricultural College;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly extend congratulations to Barry and Janet and the entire Maxner family on a fourth generation of dairy farmers, as well as for the increased production they are beginning to see due to the new computerized milking equipment they have recently installed.