



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2016

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2016

Sixty-second General Assembly

Second Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Mr. Gordon Wilson, Mr. Keith Irving

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Just before we begin the daily routine, there is no late debate this evening.

The honourable Premier.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I ask for the indulgence of the House to break from our regular routine to say a few words about what is happening to our family and friends in Fort Mac.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Province of Nova Scotia, let me say that our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Fort McMurray and their families as they cope with the impact of a devastating wildfire as it is burning in and around their town.

The ties between Fort McMurray and our province are well-known. Many Nova Scotians have worked and lived in the town and the surrounding area, and many continue to do so. They have supported families who have remained here in our province.

Mr. Speaker, we share the concerns of those families for their loved ones out West and we pray for their safety. I also want to say that we are ready to lend our support if Fort McMurray needs our firefighters, or any other resources - we are prepared to help.

Nova Scotians would also like to know that the Red Cross is already accepting donations specifically for this relief effort. Although this disaster is thousands of miles away, Mr. Speaker, it has hit very close to home. Our hearts are with those residents and their families as they cope with this devastating situation in their community.

The Province of Nova Scotia is prepared to work with our sister Province of Alberta to ensure that those families receive the support they deserve. Thank you.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: You know it is times like this, Mr. Speaker, when we are reminded that, really, Nova Scotians are all one big family. Whether you are living and working here at home or whether you are out West, you are part of the Nova Scotia family.

There is a tragedy occurring in Fort McMurray, and I can't imagine there is a single Nova Scotia family that is not directly touched in some way. Those are our cousins, our sons and daughters in many cases, our neighbours, who are Nova Scotians in Fort McMurray. There have been times when people have thought of Fort McMurray as a Nova Scotia town.

It is a town of 80,000 people, and it is under an incredible tragedy as the fire there engulfs pretty much the entire town. Today, as the winds keep rising and the temperature keeps rising, we know that the worst is not over.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Official Opposition, I would like to join our voice with those on the government side in letting our family out West, and their family who is so worried here at home, know that today we are all Nova Scotians and that we worry and that we hope and pray that our family that is in Fort McMurray is safe. The Red Cross is now starting to collect donations and we fully support that effort.

It is not lost on anyone, I'm sure, that after a generation of Nova Scotians have gone out West for work and sent their paycheques home that now we all have a chance to send a little financial help back out West in a time of need.

I am glad the government is ready to respond to the call for help. We encourage the government to actually reach out and make sure that the people of Alberta know that we

are here with the great resources that we have available, and that we are prepared to do our part. So, with those few words, we join in with the government today and all Nova Scotians in praying for the best in Fort McMurray.

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

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, I rise as well today on behalf of the NDP caucus to express our deep sympathy for the people of Fort McMurray. This includes many Nova Scotians who find themselves in the middle of this out-of-control wildfire that is threatening the entire municipality.

We are hearing that several residential neighbourhoods have been destroyed and that many people have lost their homes and possessions. No fatalities have been reported so far, but the situation does remain quite grim. There is a mandatory evacuation order in place, and residents are desperate to leave the area under conditions that are far from safe.

We are deeply aware that this fire is affecting families and communities here in Nova Scotia who have close ties to Fort McMurray. Like all Nova Scotians, we will be monitoring the news very closely, and we will work with our colleagues in the Legislature and do whatever is asked of us or whatever we can think of to assist. We send our heartfelt best wishes to Fort McMurray.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington on an introduction.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I did want to make an introduction of somebody in the west gallery joining us today. Probably a big Tory from Yarmouth County, but I know she does like the Yarmouth MLA, so I don't know how she's fixing that. I want her to rise and receive the warm welcome from the House - can you say hello to Joyce Nickerson. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We will now begin 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 the Public Service Commission.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, before I read my motion, may I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. KOUSOULIS: I would like to draw everyone's attention to the east gallery where we are joined by many young public servants, graduates, post-secondary and high school students, and apprentices who have joined us in the gallery today. Mr. Speaker, these talented individuals are gaining valuable experience in launching successful careers right here in the province. I would like to thank them for growing our business and our province. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission.

RESOLUTION NO. 3458

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

Whereas the Make it Here initiative is helping hundreds of young people get a foot in the door and land good jobs so they can build a life and start their careers right here at home; and

Whereas this initiative is making a difference with more and more young people choosing to stay and work right here in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas we are committed to continuing this trend by investing more than \$12 million in programs that provide young Nova Scotians with the skills, training, and experience to help them connect to meaningful careers;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly welcome our guests today and offer a round of applause to the many employers who are providing these experiences and helping pave a path to success for young 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?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried. (Applause)

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May is Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month, which provides an opportunity for us to recognize the terrible effects this disease has on many Nova Scotians. We are all aware of the recent MS diagnosis for the member for Chester-St. Margaret's. She sends regrets that she could not be here today. She wanted to highlight the challenges people face in everyday living and adapting to life with MS. I know everyone in the Legislature is wishing her well.

At this time, I will ask our guests in the gallery to stand as I call their names. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce staff of the MS Society of Canada Atlantic Division: Monica Jordan, Director of Client Services; Sarah Lahanky, Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator; and Jenna MacDonald, Coordinator of Marketing Communications.

I'm also pleased to introduce chapter members of the society: Theresa Denham, Dorothy-anne Brown, Mike and Judy Cullen - and I'm also reminded that they're the aunt and uncle of our member for Victoria-The Lakes - Elisabeth Fall, and Tammy Phillips.

I'm very happy that they are able to join us today, and I will ask members of the House to join me in giving them a very warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

RESOLUTION NO. 3459

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the introduction was so long that I forgot I had the important resolution.

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

Whereas multiple sclerosis is a disease that impacts the central nervous system, attacking the protective covering of the brain and spinal cord; and

Whereas symptoms include significant fatigue, weakness, dizziness, muscle spasms, blurred vision, and difficulty walking; and

Whereas nearly 100,000 Canadians have MS, and women are more than three and a half times as likely to be diagnosed as men;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize May as Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month and urge Nova Scotians to support efforts to eradicate this terrible disease.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction, sir?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. MACLELLAN: Thank you. I would like to draw the House's attention to the east gallery, where we have Gina Bain. Gina is the coordinator for the provincial Adopt-A-Highway program here in Nova Scotia. She is one of over 2,500 volunteers who have helped clean 940 kilometres of our province's highways and 15 interchanges, collecting a staggering 4,500 bags of garbage and recyclables.

Would the House give Gina a very warm welcome? (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 3460

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

Whereas hundreds of kilometres of Nova Scotia highways will soon get their annual spring cleaning with the kickoff of the 2016 Adopt-A-Highway program; and

Whereas Adopt-A-Highway volunteers have been making Nova Scotia's highways look better since 1993, and all Nova Scotians can help these hard-working volunteers by slowing down and being extra cautious when they see these groups at work; and

Whereas drivers can best support these volunteers like Gina by not littering, as litter is not only unsightly but can be hazardous for motorists, cyclists, and wildlife in the area;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature recognize May 4, 2016, as the kickoff to the Adopt-A-Highway program here in the beautiful Province of Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 176 - Entitled an Act to Maintain the Current Footprint and Certain Requirements of the Otter Lake Landfill. (Mr. Iain Rankin)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

YOM HASHOAH - RECOGNIZE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, Holocaust Remembrance Day, or Yom HaShoah, begins at sundown tonight and ends tomorrow evening. This solemn day commemorates the lives of the 6 million Jews, and 5 million others, who perished in the Holocaust.

Today Nova Scotia's Jewish community is gathering at the Halifax Public Library for the public recitation of the names of Jewish victims of the Holocaust. This is a cherished ritual that is a poignant reminder of the horrors of the Holocaust.

Yom HaShoah is a time for us all to reflect and remember, and to renew our resolve to end bigotry and hatred - in other words, never again, Mr. Speaker. Today I know that all MLAs will join us in remembering the millions of lives lost, and doing all we can to ensure those hateful deeds of the Holocaust are never repeated. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**CALDERHEAD, VINCE/MACNEIL, CLAIRE:
GRANDDAUGHTER - BIRTH CONGRATS.**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to offer my warmest congratulations to Vince Calderhead and Claire MacNeil, two of Nova Scotia's leading Legal Aid lawyers, on the birth of their first grandchild on May 3, 2016, in Antigonish. Mr. Calderhead and Ms. MacNeil have been staunch and fierce advocates provincially, nationally, and internationally, on behalf of the disabled and marginalized.

The proud parents, Georgia and Franz, will be returning to their rural home in Margaree, Cape Breton. I want to welcome this baby girl into the world, and wish her a long and happy life.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

HEBB, RALPH: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ralph Hebb has passed away at the age of 97. Ralph served in World War II in the Third Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Platoon A, Royal Canadian Engineers. A lifelong resident of Lunenburg County, Ralph was a committed community member who served on many different organizations - I don't think there is anyone in my constituency who hasn't heard the name Ralph Hebb.

The image of Ralph that I think will be most remembered by everyone who attended the Remembrance Day services in Bridgewater, is of him proudly wearing his World War II uniform every year for the service. He was proud to have done his part to make the world a better place.

I'd like to pass along my sincere condolences to Ralph's family and many friends.

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

FORT MCMURRAY WILDFIRES: FIRST RESPONDERS - RECOGNIZE

MR. LARRY HARRISON: I want to take this opportunity to recognize the brave first responders who are fighting the Fort McMurray wildfires and trying to help the residents under mandatory evacuation. Many of these brave men and women are Nova Scotians themselves. The town has been devastated and, by the sounds of it, much of it has been destroyed.

It is home to many Nova Scotians who were there for work and our thoughts are with them at this chaotic time. Firefighters and emergency crews put their lives on the line to help people in need. When everyone else is rushing away from the fire, they are the ones who are running in.

On behalf of the Official Opposition, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the first responders, firefighters, and emergency personnel. Our thoughts and prayers are with them, in hopes that they all remain safe and this devastating nightmare ends soon, before any more tragedies.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

GOSSE, GORDIE: HPV VACCINATIONS (BOYS) - EFFORTS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few moments to recognize the efforts of the former MLA for Sydney-Whitney Pier. In response to his own battle with cancer, Gordie Gosse made it his mission to have the HPV vaccination extended to boys, as well as girls. In March 2015 he introduced a Private Member's Bill calling on the government to act in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the province's Chief Public Health Officer reported that Nova Scotia now has one of the best HPV vaccination rates in the country, because it has extended the vaccination to boys.

I know the Minister of Health and Wellness will join me in praising Gordie's effort to bring this issue forward for public debate. I want to thank Gordie for his efforts and wish him all the best on behalf of the NDP caucus.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston-Dartmouth.

COLLEY FAM. - REUNION

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate the 300 descendants of the Colley family who gathered in East Preston for a family reunion this summer, with individuals travelling from all over Canada, Europe, the United States, and

Korea. The reunion began with a black tie ball and ended up with an outdoor family church service.

The Colley family has deep roots in our province as they are descendants of Sir John Wentworth, the first Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia. A generations-old family quilt with each member's name, and important stories hand-stitched, immortalizes the family's history. I applaud and congratulate the Colley family on their family reunion and for renewing their connections to Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

FORT MCMURRAY WILDFIRES: FIRST RESPONDERS/VOLS. - THANK

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I rise today to acknowledge the constituents of Pictou West, and in fact all Nova Scotians who have friends and loved ones fleeing the devastating wildfires in Fort McMurray. My thoughts and prayers go out to them as they escape the city, many with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. As difficult as it must be for them to leave everything behind, their safety is paramount. Mr. Speaker, I thank the RCMP, first responders, and volunteers as they work to keep people safe. I wish to single out the firefighters and commend them for their bravery as they face the dangers and devastation of this wildfire.

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

CAREGIVER AWARENESS MO. (05/16) - UNPAID CAREGIVERS

MS. LENORE ZANN: May is Caregiver Awareness Month. It's estimated that the labour of unpaid caregivers in Canada contributes \$25 billion a year to the health care system. Unpaid caregivers, especially those caring for seniors, are more likely to be women. When they do provide care, women are more likely than men to be responsible for care that is more intense, more frequent, and generally more stressful. As we're having conversations about health care, child care, and services for people with disabilities these days, it is essential that we consider the impacts of government decisions and policies on the many women engaged in this often invisible work.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay.

BOUTILIER, BRYAH - MINING ROCKS! CONTEST

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Bryah Boutilier, a Grade 10 student at Glace Bay High School, received a \$1,000 cash prize and the People's Choice Award for her video, which was submitted to the Mining ROCKS! contest sponsored by the Mining Association of Nova Scotia. The Mining ROCKS! contest was open to all junior high and high school

students in the province. Students were asked to produce a short video about mining and quarrying. Bryah's video entitled, Mining For Our Future, featured an interview with her grandfather and former long-time miner, Mr. Dave Boutilier. Her video captured our past and the true impact that mining has had on each and every one of us. Please join me in commending Bryah for spreading the word to our young people on what mining has meant for Glace Bay and Cape Breton Island.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

NETHERLANDS LIBERATION: CANADIANS - THANK

MR. JOHN LOHR: I am pleased today to stand in gratitude to honour the brave Canadians who liberated the Netherlands during the Second World War. Today marks the 71st Anniversary of that liberation. My parents, in their early teens, experienced that liberation. Like all Dutch citizens they were always deeply grateful to Canada for their freedom. More than 7,600 Canadians lost their lives fighting in the Netherlands. Their courage and sacrifice forged an unbreakable bond between the people of our two countries, bonds that are very personal to me. Today I know all MLAs will take a moment to remember and thank all those Canadians who played a role in the liberation of Holland.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

HEALTH AUTHORITIES - AMALGAMATION: RURAL N.S. - EFFECTS

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: The super health board was formed on April 1st of last year. The amalgamation of nine regional authorities was promised as a way to save money and improve health care. From the beginning the NDP expressed its concerns that this centralization of health administration in Halifax would shut out rural areas from the decision-making process. This is exactly what has happened. Every day someone asks me why the Roseway ER is closed, why the people of Shelburne County cannot get the health care that they need, and why promises are continually broken. Because of amalgamation, rural Nova Scotia has lost its voice at the health care table. To be continued.

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

MACLEOD, CARL - MS AWARENESS

MR. DAVID WILTON: May is Multiple Sclerosis Month, and once again Carl MacLeod will be front and centre volunteering his time for the MS Annual Carnation Campaign. Carl became involved with the MS Society just after his wife, Shirley, was diagnosed with the disease in the late 1980s. He volunteers his time selling carnations in May or raising money through their Christmas fruitcake sale, as well as being her primary caregiver for 22 years. To promote MS awareness, Carl has given all graduate nursing students from Cape Breton University in 2015 a pin to honour his late wife. With a note

attached, he asks them to wear the pin with pride for MS awareness in memory of Shirley, who was a nurse up until she was diagnosed with MS and had to end her career.

Although his wife passed away in 2013, Carl will continue to help bring awareness to MS.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MCHAPPY DAY: RONALD MCDONALD HOUSES - FUNDRAISING

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, today is McHappy Day, a day when we can support the families who rely on Ronald McDonald Houses across the country. By purchasing a Big Mac Happy Meal, buying a pair of McHappy Day Hero Socks, making a donation to the Ronald McDonald coin box or buying a paper Ronald shoe, we are supporting local children's charities and the over 20,000 families who stay at Ronald McDonald House while their children are being treated in hospital.

I know many MLAs supported this great cause by working a shift at McDonalds today and I encourage all Nova Scotians who are able to support this great cause to do so.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

CAREGIVER AWARENESS MO. (05/16) - UNPAID CAREGIVERS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize May as Caregiver Awareness Month. One in three Nova Scotians is a caregiver. Unpaid caregivers provide essential support and care to parents, spouses, children, friends or other family members. They may care for someone at home or in a care facility who has a physical or a mental health condition, is chronically ill, frail or elderly.

Caregivers are indispensable to the people they care for and caregivers contribute to society in many ways, Mr. Speaker. This month provides an opportunity to learn more about the role of unpaid caregiving in our health care system and to think about the ways we can support those doing this critical work.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

R&R POOLS: BUS. SUCCESS - CONGRATS.

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize R&R Pools of Timberlea. Since 1983, R&R Pools have been providing Nova Scotians with excellence and quality in the pool industry. Over the last 30 years Derek Redden has installed hundreds of pools, specializing in in-ground pools.

R&R Pools is a family-owned and run business that services what they sell. Their employees are great to work with and are all knowledgeable about the work they do. Whether you are looking for someone to install your pool or fix your pool, you have the right place for service at R&R Pools.

I would like the members of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Derek Redden and his staff at R&R Pools on their success in the business world and wish them very well in the future.

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

**LE VILLAGE HISTORIQUE - ÉCOLE DES SOEURS:
ACTEURS/ÉQUIPE/VOLONTAIRES - MERCI**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Le Village Historique Acadien de la Nouvelle Écosse à West Pubnico a présenté leur diner-théâtre annuel du 8 avril à 16 avril 2016.

Le thème de cette année est l'École des Sœurs qui est basé sur l'ancienne école du centre de Pubnico-Ouest ses élèves et les enseignants religieux mais pourrait être une école rurale de cet âge l'époque. L'histoire est une comédie/musical qui se concentre sur la religieuse qui tombe victime des gestes des ses élèves.

Kathy Nickerson est la directrice de la programmation du Village et a également écrit et réalisé les productions pour les dix dernières années. Les participants bénéficient d'un bon repas tout en profitant de l'interaction de la troupe au cours du repas.

J'offre un grand merci à la troupe, l'équipe et de nombreux bénévoles pour amener cette comédie musicale à la vie.

In English, Mr. Speaker, the Village Historique Acadien de la Nouvelle Écosse in West Pubnico presented their annual dinner theatre from April 8th to 16th. This year's theme is École des Sœurs or the Catholic Sisters School, which is based on an old school from Middle West Pubnico, its students and religious teachers - it could be any rural school of the time. The story is a musical comedy that centres on the nun who falls victim to her students' pranks.

Kathy Nickerson is the Director of Programming at the Village and has also written and directed the productions for the last 10 years. Participants enjoyed a great meal, all the while enjoying interplay of the cast during the meal. I'd like to offer thanks to the cast and crew and numerous volunteers for bringing this musical comedy to life.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Lucasville.

HASEY, NICK - NSCC ACCEPTANCE

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, it is with great happiness that I acknowledge the hard work and perseverance of Nick Hasey, recently accepted at NSCC. Nick is a great example of how the drive to overcome adversity and pursue one's passion can lead to success.

Nick is graduating from Sir John A. this Spring and has always been drawn to art and design. He is a long-time devotee to the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic's filmmaking courses where he develops his craft.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge the support of Nick's parents, Rod and Angela, and the work of the Registrar office staff at NSCC to help Nick work towards his dreams. I would like to wish him the best of luck and success in all his future endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

CARMICHAEL-STEWART HOUSE MUSEUM - NEW GLASGOW

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, the Carmichael-Stewart House Museum, a late Victorian-style home from 1880, formerly owned by the Carmichael family, prominent New Glasgow ship builders, is located on Temperance Street in the heart of New Glasgow.

This historic residence contains original hardwood floors and beautiful stained glass. The museum is home to an extensive photo collection, Trenton Glassware, china, an amazing clothing collection, and numerous unique Pictou Country treasures. During the summer season the museum houses different exhibits and holds a variety of events, including functions in the historical garden located on the beautiful property.

This historic house continues to inspire and educate visitors. Everyone leaves knowing something about an item, time period, or interesting facts about families who helped build this community.

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

STAR WARS DAY (05/16) - ACKNOWLEDGE

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to acknowledge today as Star Wars Day. The Star Wars film series began with A New Hope in 1977 and is still going strong with legions of dedicated fans. In fact, my dogs are named for the Star Wars series, one of them is called Aayla Secura, who was a blue character in the background.

If there was ever any doubt about the incredible impact that film and the arts can have on peoples' lives, just ask Star Wars fans. Today will be marked by millions of people around the world viewing movies, parties, and costumes.

I encourage all members of this House to find their inner Jedi. May the Fourth be with you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Whitney Pier.

ECMA: ARTISTS/VOLS. - THANK

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise for a moment to talk a little bit about the East Coast Music Awards. Last month Sydney was the host to the East Coast Music Awards and for that week we had artists from all over Atlantic Canada converge on Sydney and surrounding areas, to celebrate music and to congratulate artists from across the region.

To host events like this, as many communities know, it takes a tremendous amount of work from volunteers, from sponsors, and from the folks involved with the East Coast Music Awards. I just want to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers, to thank all of artists for coming to Sydney and providing our community with a great week of music and I hope to see you again soon. Thank you.

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

EMMA VAN NOSTRAND MEM. RUN (4th ANL.) - ACKNOWLEDGE

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 4th Annual Emma van Nostrand Memorial Run, which was held on May 1st in Coxheath.

Emma passed away three years ago, as a result of a rare and undiagnosed heart abnormality, while running in the Toronto Marathon; she was eighteen. Every year since her parents Steve and Katherine van Nostrand have organized a run in her honour. Proceeds go to the Emma van Nostrand Memorial Scholarship. A total of \$32,000 was raised Sunday, bringing the total amount raised in the run's four years to \$120,000.

Today I salute and thank the 560 registered participants who took part in this very worthwhile event.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

**SMALL, BRENDA/FEYE, MARGARET
- THE MARSHMALLOW ALMS HOUSE VOICES FOR HOPE**

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise the efforts of Brenda Small and Margaret Faye, who recently formed the group The Marshalltown Alms House Voices for Hope.

In the Digby area, as in most communities in the late 1800s and in the first part of the 1900s, the local government built a poor house for the people who could not take care of themselves or make a living. The Marshalltown Alms House, or Shelter of Last Resort, was built in 1891 and would operate until the early 1960s.

The site that was subsequently sold included the unmarked graves of some former residents. In life they may have been invisible, but in death they disappeared, at least until now. The group, headed by Ms. Bell and Ms. Faye, is determined to locate the graves of the residents and to honour their memory. They also want to ensure that in the future these graves will not be disturbed. Though we cannot change the past, this group is determined that those buried on the former site of the Marshalltown Alms House will be remembered from now on.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

**WALKER, LAUREL:
MENTAL HEALTH FDN. (N.S.) - OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL AWARD**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I was introduced to Laurel Walker last October. Her story of perseverance, her passion, and her conviction to help others who suffer from mental illness, is truly inspiring.

Laurel fights her own mental health battles, yet she uses her knowledge and experience to help others. After losing a friend to suicide, Laurel helped start the Halifax Suicide Prevention Week. In recognition of her efforts, Laurel was honoured last night with the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia's Outstanding Individual Award.

I congratulate Laurel on this award, and thank her for her dedication to helping others in our community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

ROSEWAY HOSP.: ER CLOSURES - UPDATE

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: For over two weeks now I have been giving the House updates on the Liberal Government's failed attempt to address the increase in ER closures at Roseway Hospital. Let's review.

First the Premier campaigned on a promise to have a doctor for every Nova Scotian; he has failed. The new super Health Authority was promised to save taxpayers \$15 million - another failure, this super DHA has cost taxpayers \$15 million more. The Health and Wellness Minister announced a plan to decrease ER closures; the closures have increased. In August 2015, the Premier announced Roseway Medical Centre would start building this Spring, and this week we learned that now TIR has said the new medical centre will be delayed another 18 months.

You may be thinking, can this story get any worse? Mr. Speaker, to be continued.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

OAKE, CHERYL/VOLS.: SYRIAN REFUGEES - HOME FURNISHINGS

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: I rise today to speak of amazing work done by Cheryl Oake.

Cheryl, a resident of Dartmouth, became aware of four Syrian families in the Dartmouth area who were in need of some furniture for their new homes. Cheryl rallied a group of volunteers and managed to completely furnish the homes of all four families. Since then, Cheryl has helped another 14 families in the Cowie Hill and Spryfield area furnish their homes. Cheryl has spent every weekend for the last couple of months arranging furniture drives for the families throughout HRM. Her network of volunteers has grown on her Facebook page, Nova Scotia Welcomes Syrian Refugees.

To date, they have managed to furnish about 30 apartments, and the numbers are increasing weekly. Not only to the volunteers work to gather, sort, and deliver furniture to the families, they also get to know the families and share countless cups of tea and coffee with them.

I would like to congratulate Cheryl and her network of volunteers for stepping forward and taking on this huge project. They are true ambassadors of a wonderful project that managed to make the Syrian families feel at home.

To you, Mr. Speaker, and to the guys upstairs in the booth: May the Fourth be with you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

JOYCE, VINCENT - CARIBOU SCOUT TROOP

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I rise today to recognize Mr. Vincent Joyce as the founder and chairman of the First Caribou District Scouts. Notably, the Caribou District

Scouts were the only troop in Canada that was officially allowed to wear a non-traditional neckerchief made of the Caribou tartan.

Mrs. Elizabeth Mackenzie, of Three Brooks, designed the Caribou tartan and registered it in Scotland in 1990. The tartan is comprised of green, white, grey, blue, red, and black, with each colour having a personal connection for Mrs. Mackenzie with Caribou.

Membership in the Caribou Scout Troop dwindled as children grew, and the local community began experiencing a decline in population. The Scout troop was active for six years. Many youth benefited from Mr. Joyce's leadership, and I thank him for his work with the Caribou Scout Troop.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

COSTLEY, JEAN: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: I'd like to take a moment to recognize Jean Costley, who has been a PCW and CCA at Dykeland Lodge Seniors' Residence in Windsor for the past 41 years. Jean has been a valued employee at the facility since they opened their doors in 1974.

One of the reasons Jean was so great at her job was her love of the residents and her sense of fulfillment when she made them smile each and every day. She enjoyed lifting them up when they were down, and would take the extra time to listen to their stories, which meant so much to them. Jean will be greatly missed at Dykeland Lodge not only by the residents, but also by the staff she worked with day in and day out. In 2014, Jean was recognized as the facility's longest-serving employee when they celebrated their 40th Anniversary. Jean just recently retired from her position with Dykeland Lodge and will be enjoying her retirement at home in Three Mile Plains.

I would like to invite all members of this House of Assembly to congratulate Jean Costley on her retirement and wish her all the best.

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

PAR-EN-BAS SHARKS - NSSAF BOYS HS HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: The Par-En-Bas Sharks, of the Valley High School Hockey League, entered the 2015-2016 season as defending champions. But like any hockey team, they must face rebuilding years as well.

That's exactly what the Sharks did this season, winning the John Wright Memorial Trophy for being the least penalized team in the league. Under the guidance of head coach

Julien Boudreau and his assistants Daniel LeBlanc and Stephen Surette, the Sharks put on a commendable performance at the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Boys High School Hockey Championships in Inverness, the first week of April.

I'd like to congratulate the Par-En-Bas Sharks on an outstanding season of high school hockey, and look forward to the 2016-17 season.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg on an introduction.

RIPLEY, ROBERT: PROV. SERV. - THANK

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave for this introduction. It is not really an introduction. Mr. Robert Ripley who is a commissionaire here - would you stand, Robert. I have a member statement to make about Robert. I hope this is not considered your lunch hour, the time you have sat in the gallery waiting for me to do this member statement.

I would like to take this time to recognize a face we all know, a face we often see when we enter this historic building when the Legislature is in session. I am speaking of Commissionaire Robert Ripley. Robert, as I am sure my colleagues know, has an affinity for the South Shore, particularly Lunenburg and Mahone Bay which happens to be my home. In fact, he addresses me as the MLA who lives in the most beautiful town in Nova Scotia and who represents the most beautiful constituency in Nova Scotia. Well, beauty is in the eye of the beholder; but, he's right.

We all have our memories of Robert. He has brightened the days of countless MLAs both past and present. Robert, who also works tirelessly to promote Nova Scotia as a tourism destination as a motor coach tour guide, was recently featured in the travel e-zine MadebyMark . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Time allotted for the member's statement has expired.

The honourable member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg.

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to give my time back to the member. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

MS. LOHNES-CROFT: Thank you, honourable member.

In Lunenburg, Robert is affectionately known as the man in the kilt; and, I am just waiting for the day when he forgets to change out of his other uniform and shows up here in a kilt.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of the House join me in thanking Robert Ripley for his many years of service to the province and for being recognized as a great ambassador for the Province of Nova Scotia. (Applause)

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

SHAW, RON - HUGH A. NOBLE DISTINGUISHED SERV. AWARD

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Riverview High School teacher Ron Shaw who is the winner of the Hugh A. Noble Distinguished Service Award. This award is given by the Nova Scotia School Athlete Federation.

Ron Shaw has been involved in coaching basketball and soccer at Riverview for 34 years. He has served as head coach over nine Highland Regional Division 1 girls championship teams and three NSSAF girls Division 1 provincial winners. Ron is also the regional director and district coordinator of the NSSAF and has served as president of the Cape Breton Division 1 High School Basketball League.

Today, I am proud to thank Ron Shaw for his dedication and the many years he has given to all the youth who have benefited from his coaching.

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

GROOVY GOAT FARM & SOAP CO. - PRODUCT DEV. AWARD

MS. PAM EYKING: I rise today to acknowledge the Groovy Goat Farm & Soap Company in Ingonish for recently being awarded the Product Development Award at Destination Cape Breton's Industry Day. This year's Industry Day was held at The Royal Cape Breton Gaelic College in St. Ann's on April 7th and the awards are to recognize success, leadership, and innovation in the tourism industry on Cape Breton Island. The Product Development Award is presented to a tourism business that has gone the extra mile to deliver an outstanding and innovative visitor experience.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Groovy Goat Farm & Soap Company on their award and wish them the best of luck this season. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MACINTOSH, COLIN - MINING ROCKS! VIDEO CONTEST

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, the Mining Association of Nova Scotia recently announced the winners of its Mining ROCKS! Video competition, and my buddy Colin MacIntosh of North Nova Education Centre had a solid showing, just completely smashing the competition. He was the winner in the Best 30-Second Commercial, runner-up in the Best Comedy, and runner-up in the Best High School video.

Colin is a remarkable young man. He's very active in Junior Achievement, and after playing high school basketball for a couple of years, he stepped down from the basketball team this year to fulfill his responsibilities as president of the student council, which was a campaign promise he had made to the students: if they elected him president, he would focus completely on the student council. He's fulfilling his campaign promise in that respect.

I ask all members of this House to congratulate Colin on his victories in the competition and wish him continued success. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, since I'm on my feet, I'm wondering if I may make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. IRVING: Thank you. Today we are joined in the east gallery by Sue Hayes, a successful businesswoman and entrepreneur. She's the past-president of the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce, and today had the official opening to launch her new business, Two Men and a Truck, with her husband, Kevin.

I'd like the House to ask her to stand and give her a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

ENO, SELENA DAVIDSON - LT.-GOV.'S TEACHING AWARD

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, today I bring to the floor of the House of Assembly the name of Selena Davidson Eno, the recipient of the 2015 Lieutenant Governor's Teaching Award.

Selena hails from the Gaspereau/Forest Hill area, and has two generations of family members still living in the area who are extremely proud of her achievement. She's a graduate of Acadia University and now teaches at Bayview Community School. Her passion is teaching physical education, and she runs half marathons; plays soccer,

basketball, and hockey; and is a certified yoga instructor, which she integrates into her teaching.

Ms. Davidson Eno also organizes an award-winning recycling program and house league activities for elementary students, and has developed an after-school program for junior high students. She's an exemplary role model as a teacher and mentor.

I ask the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Selena Davidson Eno on her award, and thank her for her dedication to the students of Nova Scotia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Beaver Bank.

GUN VIOLENCE - HFX. RATE (2012)

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, in 2012 Halifax had the highest rate of gun violence of any major city in Canada. The past few weeks indicate we may be attempting to live up to that reputation.

Individually, we can ensure that any firearms in our possession are properly secured. Secondly, we can talk to our children, not just about the danger of guns but also about the sanctity of life and the responsibilities, keeping in mind that children learn what they live.

Is the violence a symptom of the greater problem of a growing desensitization of our society as a whole? Perhaps we need to return to and restore collective values.

There is no quick fix, and while new laws and harsher penalties can serve as a deterrent, I suggest that our own individual priorities and attitudes need to be scrutinized in terms of our own behaviour and what we accept as societal norms. Thank you.

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

OCEAN VIEW CONTINUING CARE CTR. - NEIGHBOURHOOD PROG.

MS. JOYCE TREEN: Mr. Speaker, Ocean View Continuing Care Centre has launched a very special program to enable seniors to live independent lives in their homes longer.

The Neighbourhood Program is one of a kind, and Ocean View is the only facility that offers this innovative program in Canada. It will offer coordinated access to affordable services, including a list of vetted and discounted service providers, health and wellness programs, and social and educational activities for ages 55-plus.

I was thrilled to be present at the official launch of the announcement, along with the honourable Minister of Health and Wellness, at Fisherman's Cove this past March. I ask all the members of this House to join me in wishing Ocean View Continuing Care Centre success in their new venture. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank.

JEFFERY, CAROL ANN - RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

MR. BILL HORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to acknowledge recently-retired crossing guard Carol Ann Jeffery, who patrolled the crosswalk on Rocky Lake Drive every afternoon for 15 years. Jeffery, now 72 years of age, made sure that the children safely crossed the street, no matter what the weather was like.

A special retirement celebration was held where many friends, parents, and students dropped in to wish her well. Carol hung up her stop sign at the Waverley school on December 18th and will be moving to live with family in Mount Uniacke. Carol Ann gave her all to every child who crossed the street. She will be missed in the community.

Please join me in thanking Carol Ann Jeffery for her dedicated service and in wishing her a very happy retirement.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

SUTHERLAND, BRENTON - STRAIT REG. SCIENCE FAIR

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Let us recognize Brenton Sutherland, who was awarded first place in the 18th Annual Strait Regional Science Fair for his project, Safe Skies. Brenton is a Grade 12 student at Dalbrae Academy. We wish him well as he advances to the Canada-Wide Science Fair, scheduled for later this month at McGill University in Montreal. He will also be participating in the Nova Scotia Science Fair here in Halifax this weekend.

Best of luck, Brenton.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

NETHERLANDS: CAF LIBERATION - ANNIV. (75th)

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Today, May 4th, marks the 71st Anniversary of the Canadian Armed Forces liberation of the Netherlands during the Second World War. From September 1944 to April 1945, the First Canadian Army successfully fought to liberate the Netherlands, clearing the way so that food and other needed supplies could reach the

millions of desperate people who had suffered sickness and starvation throughout the occupation.

In total, 7,600 brave members of our Armed Forces gave their lives to free the Dutch people, and to this day our country is remembered fondly throughout the Netherlands for their sacrifice. Tulips are sent every year to Ottawa as a symbol of gratitude, and the bond between the countries is celebrated annually.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that we all take a moment to both remember and thank those soldiers who fought and, in many cases, gave their lives to free the Netherlands from Nazi control. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**C.B. HIGHLANDS EDUC. CTR.: ENVIRO CLUB
- DRINKING WATER FUNDRAISING**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: I want to tell members of the House about students at Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre in Belle Cote. The Enviro Club decided they wanted better-tasting and less-expensive drinking water at their school, so they spent months fundraising until they had enough money to purchase a water bottle filling station that dispenses cooled, filtered water. This has reduced the amount of water being brought to the school in plastic water bottles. Now they are drinking local water and wasting less energy and plastic.

Let us recognize the Enviro Club members for their leadership on this initiative: Avery LeLievre, Julia Curley, Sophie Carmichael, Laura Schneeburger, Ben Forsyth, Jessie Daley, Darcie LeFort, Kiera Doyle, Jana MacKinnon, Jesse MacKinnon, Kohl Clarey, Ryan LeLievre, Brandon MacKinnon, and Alex Poirier.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

BREAKFAST IN TEAL: WORLD OVARIAN CANCER DAY - AWARENESS

HON. LENA DIAB: I rise today to recognize an important event that I've been invited to attend this Friday, Breakfast in Teal, to celebrate World Ovarian Cancer Day.

Ovarian cancer is the most fatal female cancer, and there's no reliable screening test available. Awareness of this disease is vital; we lose five Canadian women a day to this disease. The Breakfast in Teal event is a tremendous opportunity to learn more about this disease, learn about the Lady Ball scheduled for this coming September, and the fabulous work of Ovarian Cancer Canada.

I ask all members of the House of Assembly to join me in commending Emilie Chiasson, Atlantic Regional Director; Ally McQueen, Director of Community Engagement; the sponsors Stuart McKelvey, Grant Thornton, the Courtyard by Marriott Halifax; and all volunteers for their commitment to raising awareness and helping many women living with this disease.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

BLOIS, KODY: E. HANTS SPORTS HERITAGE SOC. - INCORPORATION

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, sport holds a special place in the heart of the community. Pride in competition, skills, dedication, and leadership - even homegrown heroes - are all born of local sport programs. As in the case of all communities, this is all made possible by dedicated and passionate volunteers. Today, I rise to recognize a special volunteer who is a champion at East Hants Sports Heritage, as well as the recognition of all those who make local athletics possible.

Mr. Kody Blois successfully incorporated the East Hants Sports Heritage Society in October 2013. The society honours past and present athletes, coaches, and volunteers, and their contribution to our sports legacy, from Olympic athletes and hockey stars and inspiring coaches to those who made sure that the ice was right and the rink lights were on. The society, under the leadership of Mr. Blois, is preparing for the 3rd Annual East Hants Sports Awards to be held May 7th at the Riverside Education Centre. This is a wonderful event and is an inspiration to all.

I extend the thanks of our community to Mr. Blois for his ongoing efforts . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for members' statements has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

PREM.: FERRY TERMINAL (ME) - UPGRADES

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. You know, every day it seems like there is more news about how bad the Yarmouth ferry deal is for the taxpayers of Nova Scotia.

A few days ago, we learned there were nine blackout days during the sailing season. Yesterday we learned that Nova Scotia taxpayers are going to pay for terminal upgrades in Portland, Maine - our tax dollars are going to upgrade the terminal in Portland.

I would just like to ask the Premier, why does he believe it's okay for Nova Scotia taxpayers to pay to upgrade the terminal in Portland, Maine?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I also want to thank Bay Ferries, who have been working diligently with the Department of TIR to ensure that that international link is here to continue to bring tourists. We're excited about the growth we had last year in the tourism season, and we're looking forward to an even better season.

I want to thank all those small businesses, particularly across southwestern Nova Scotia but indeed across the province, who stayed with us through those lean years when that ferry was not running. I want to thank them for their commitment, and for continuing to show their appreciation to the government to ensure that that service is still going.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, Portland was very quick to approve their deal. They don't have to pay a cent, but they're going to get an upgraded downtown terminal and the benefits of the ferry for nothing. It's going to cost Nova Scotia taxpayers at least \$100 million, probably more, including our money going to upgrade the terminal in the City of Portland, Maine. That is an expense that is going to infuriate those Nova Scotians who think they went way too far.

I hope the Premier knows how much the terminal upgrade cost is, since we're going to pay for it. So I'll ask him, how much of our tax money is going to go to upgrade the terminal in Portland, Maine?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. He again is simply wrong when he throws around the \$100 million figure, I know it helps his story and it helps him create fear amongst people in the province, but the actual reality is that the province has a jump-off point in year 2. We actually have very conservative numbers . . .

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

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we thank you very much. I want to thank the honourable member. He knows that the \$100 million figure he is throwing around is absolutely wrong. We have a two-year jump-off point. We're still working with our developer to make sure that we continue to grow on those conservative numbers that we have in terms of ridership. I'm looking forward to continuing to welcome more people, and I'm looking forward to getting out and continuing to walk around communities where the optimistic Nova Scotians are living, as opposed to the pessimists that are on the other side of the House.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, that deal is going to cost Nova Scotians at least \$100 million - at least \$100 million. Everyone knows it, and every day it gets more and more. What Nova Scotians are fearful of is they have a Premier who was willing to sign a blank cheque for that boat, without any regard to our ability to pay. That's what's fearful for the people of Nova Scotia.

It just goes on and on. Every day there's something new. So I'll ask the Premier, is there any limit to the taxpayer expense that he has committed Nova Scotia to?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Again, I want to thank all those hard-working Nova Scotians working with this government. I told the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party many times that this proposal has a two-year review point, a jump-off point at any time, but I also want to tell the honourable member, the business community that I talked to, the men and women who were downstairs for the announcement about our investment, and young people are optimistic about the future. More young people are finding opportunities in the province of Nova Scotia. They're excited about our future. Business confidence is high. The population is growing. We're seeing all kinds of positive signs . . .

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

THE PREMIER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're continuing to see all kinds of positive signs. I know it doesn't help their story, but the reality of it is that Nova Scotians are looking forward and leaving their pessimism behind.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: WAIT TIMES - PRIORITIZATION

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, increasing wait times for health services in Nova Scotia over the last two and a half years is cause for serious concern. Meanwhile, this government has been focused on amalgamating the health authorities and agitating health care workers.

Nova Scotians expect more from their government when it comes to the delivery of health care in this province. So I ask the Premier, why has this government not prioritized addressing increased wait times for health services in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to thank all those health care workers across the province who have been working with our government to ensure that we have a single system across the province, that wherever the access point, you can receive - no matter what community you live in is a positive thing. As the honourable member would know, there are wait times - I think

5,000 new surgeries we did for hips and knees this year in our province. We're continuing to work with the people in the province.

Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the Minister of Health and Wellness for the work he has been doing on behalf of the people of the province. I say to you, as I travel this province, health care workers are grateful for the direction this province is moving.

MS. MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, wait times for hip replacement in Nova Scotia highlight a need for attention. A government graph depicting wait times for hip replacement surgery shows that in the months following the amalgamation of the health authorities, wait times increased by over 300 days. I'll table that.

I ask the Premier, can he explain why wait times for hip replacements in Nova Scotia soared by more than 75 per cent in the months following the amalgamation of the health authorities?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'll ask the Minister of Health and Wellness to respond.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, as the NDP caucus would know, what happened was we changed to a true wait period from the time that a patient comes in to a doctor, in terms of their hips and knees, as opposed to the number of days after a surgeon says you will be scheduled for surgery. So we have the entire period of time meeting the national standard so that our benchmarks can now reflect a true wait period. It had nothing to do whatsoever with the amalgamation of the health authorities.

This year we will do over 500 hip and knee surgeries in the province, at the same time reducing MRIs by 12 per cent across Nova Scotia, and the news will get better if I get more time to respond.

MS. MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Institute for Health Information posts benchmarks for treatment and wait times across Canada. Sadly, Nova Scotia is dead last in the country for hip replacements. I'll table that.

Mr. Speaker, with an aging population, there is a serious potential for this situation to worsen. I ask the Premier, what is the government's plan to address Nova Scotia's position as last in the country for meeting hip replacement benchmarks?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. It gives me an opportunity to talk about the great work the Minister of Health and Wellness is doing. It is about tearing down walls across our health care system. Orthopaedic surgeons across this province are coming together to collaborate and to deal with the challenges facing Nova Scotians requiring hips and knees.

Mr. Speaker, we know there's more work to do. Thankfully there are people out there who want to work with government to find solutions to deal with the issues that Nova Scotians are having.

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

JUSTICE - CUSTODIAL DEATH: LEBLANC CASE - INFO.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: My question is to the Minister of Justice. Mr. Speaker, a Cape Breton father, Ernest LeBlanc lost his son Jason while his son was in the custody of a provincial jail. Mr. LeBlanc has been unable to find out how or why his son died while in provincial custody. In addition to dealing with his unimaginable loss, Mr. LeBlanc is haunted by the idea that he doesn't even know what happened.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Justice, will she provide some peace to Mr. LeBlanc today and share with him the cause of his son's death while he was in provincial custody?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the question you've raised. It's always a tragedy when we lose any Nova Scotian under any circumstance but the questions that arise losing somebody in custody certainly I know leave the family with a lot of questions and a lot of concerns.

I'd like to certainly give my deepest sympathy to the family and let the family know as well that this has had a big impact, a profound impact really on the correctional staff as well. They take their roles very seriously.

In answer to the member's question, we certainly have an investigation underway within Correctional Services and the police as well are investigating, so perhaps I can provide more in a second question.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that answer. There is an internal investigation going on. Questions have been raised about what happened to Jason that awful day while he was in the custody of the provincial correctional system.

Mr. Speaker, hopefully that investigation will provide the answers that Ernest LeBlanc and his family need to have for their own peace of mind. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice, will she commit that the results of that internal investigation will be shared with Ernest LeBlanc and his family as soon as they are available?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, in fact we have been keeping in touch with the family. I understand our Director of Corrections has been in touch with the family right along. It does take some time to get the results. What I will commit to the family and to the member opposite in asking, is that when the results are available, we'll release whatever we can to them personally and sit down with them. We always post a higher level synopsis

of the findings, which are made public, but there are often some aspects that we can't, for example, if there is personal information or security risks that might be revealed from that, but we will release whatever we can in a meeting with the family.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - MENTAL HEALTH WAIT TIMES

MS. LENORE ZANN: Wait times for community-based mental health services are on the rise. This is deeply concerning because the minister and the Nova Scotia Health Authority are both directing people to this exact same care. The minister has claimed time and time again in this House that mental health services are better today than they were a year ago; but just ask the people who are suffering, those who find themselves waiting to see a health care professional or, even worse, families like the Glodes in Millbrook First Nation whose loved one, Cody, tragically just couldn't wait any longer. Mr. Speaker, can the minister please detail specific actions he is taking to take care of mental health wait times?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, first of all we had here in the House an explanation yesterday in estimates on the number of clinicians, psychologists now in our schools who were never there before. We all know that starting out with our youth to provide more direct professional services, through the 20 clinicians who are working with our family of schools, the SchoolPlus program, the work that it is doing, we have expanded that program every year in our budget. As people who have gone to tour the Garron Centre at the IWK know, we are at the lowest level of wait-lists in many years for adolescent services.

MS. ZANN: Well thank you, Mr. Speaker, but I didn't really hear an answer in that response. The minister seems to ignore that in the past two years community-based mental health wait times have increased by 25 per cent under his leadership. I'll table that graph.

In an op-ed penned by the minister himself, he asserts that most people benefit from outpatient or community treatment. Mr. Speaker, if the minister truly wants to stand behind these claims, he must explain to the people in my riding, in Pictou County and across Nova Scotia, why it is that our wait-lists are growing.

Mr. Speaker, how can the minister justify encouraging families and individuals to access community-based mental health services, while the wait-list just continues to grow?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, it's certainly to me to provide the full provincial picture. We can look at a particular county or area of the province and absolutely find that we still have to build capacity. I look at the South Shore, for example, where the wait-list has been eliminated. We are moving those best practices across the province and I know

that we are making gains every month, under this provincial approach. I would suggest that the member opposite also work with updated statistics.

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

TIR: HWY. TWINNING STUDY - COMPLETION

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. The government paid almost \$900,000 for a study looking at the possibility of twinning eight sections of highway across Nova Scotia. That study was supposed to be completed by the end of April. I'll table that.

My question for the minister, could the minister confirm that the study is complete and will he make the study public and table it during this sitting of the Legislature?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I'd like to thank the member opposite for the question. Now with respect to the study, we're working with the consultants on the final details of the financial modelling, which is the second phase of the very comprehensive study, with the first being the overall infrastructure modelling on what the corridors would look like. We are in the final details of that, so the consultants are back getting that work complete so that we can keep on schedule to get into the communities. We have 12 meetings identified across the province to get into the communities and talk to people directly. We're hoping to kick them off by mid-May and have them fully completed by the end of June.

We're still on schedule for that. At that time all the information will be presented to Nova Scotians, and we certainly look forward to them having their say and getting opinions on all sides.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his answer. The findings of the studies would be very important for helping Nova Scotians understand what is at stake. I understand that the minister wants to hit the road - and he just confirmed that - in mid-May. Consultation will be much more meaningful, sir, if all the information is on the table.

My question is, will the minister confirm that the study and any other reports will be publicly available before consultations begin?

MR. MACLELLAN: I thank the member opposite, and I couldn't agree more. The fact is that we're going to be fully engaged and participating at the community level, myself and the senior people at my department, to get this right. The information is critical so, for us, the more we can provide to Nova Scotians on both sides of the conversation the better.

So with all of the reports that are being compiled with respect to what we have now with the current consulting work and anything else we can provide, when we're finished

this process, as we've set out to do from the beginning, it's about getting a full and accurate reflection and understanding of what the people who put us here want us to do with respect to our twinned highways and the toll options moving forward.

All information will be presented. We'll give people every single shred of data, material, evidence, that we have and then, ultimately, we'll let Nova Scotians guide our path.

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

TIR: BLUENOSE II - CONSULTANTS' REPT.

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: I want to thank the minister for that answer, but we're going to change direction a little bit in this question.

In February, media reports said that the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal said that *Bluenose II* had been given a clean bill of health - and I'll table that - we know absolutely definitely there's nothing short-term we have to worry about, said the minister.

My question to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, who gave the boat a clean bill of health, and will you table that document?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I thank the member opposite. The vessel was given a clean bill of health by way of the consultants' report that was issued from our government. The issue of the rudder is about the long-term viability of the vessel and the stability. To prevent any premature hogging of the vessel, the report recommends that we replace the steel rudder with a wooden or composite rudder, which work is being done by those very same consultants at this point.

So the vessel is safe and secure with the steel rudder on. We'll have a tremendous season in 2016. There are no safety or mobility concerns at this point. This decision was made entirely about the long-term future and stability of *Bluenose II*. We'll get that rudder right once and for all, and we'll have her out at sea for all Nova Scotians and all the world to enjoy.

MR. MACLEOD: That was a great answer, but it still didn't tell us who did the report - and it didn't tell us if he was going to table it. I'm sure he'll get around to that in this answer.

Last year, at Public Accounts Committee, we learned that Lloyd's Register would not take on the *Bluenose II* certification and that the government had then chosen the American Bureau of Shipping. ABS asked for the steel rudder to be installed, and the steel

rudder is now going to be replaced with a wooden rudder or one made of glass composite with a carbon stock.

My question to the minister is, has *Bluenose II* been certified and by which organization this time? It would be really nice to know who did, or didn't do the . . .

MR. MACLELLAN: Just for clarification, ABS at no point indicated that this had to be a steel rudder. There were a number of options that were presented, and the steel option was okay and acceptable for ABS. In fact, it wasn't ABS that were forcing a steel rudder. Again, the steel rudder resulted in the entire decision-making process that started way back in 2008 with the lack of oversight project management. That's why we ended up with a steel rudder. It certainly wasn't at the request of ABS.

So again, with respect to the rudder, there would be no reason why we cannot table the consultant's report. Everything we've done has been upfront and open and accountable. We want to make sure that Nova Scotians have the full picture on how we got here, and we certainly want *Bluenose II* to be safe for the future and the long-term health of the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: LONG-TERM CARE – WAIT-LISTS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Government has made it clear to seniors in Nova Scotia that they're not committed or concerned about the long-term care system that we have in place. Since this government came into office, wait-lists for nursing home placements have risen by over 23 per cent. The government has ignored our province's long-term care system for more than two and a half years, and the outcome of this is that seniors and their families are waiting longer and longer for care that they need. How can the minister justify a 23 per cent increase in long-term care wait-lists under his government?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. The day that he left office the wait-list was almost 2,600 seniors waiting to get in; today, it is almost touching 1,400.

MR. WILSON: That's easy to do with an eraser, Mr. Speaker. The minister's answer does nothing for seniors and families who are waiting for long-term care. Across this province, wait times for long-term care are staggering. In Cape Breton, on average, seniors are forced to wait 608 days, and in some facilities 901 days. In Richmond, seniors are being forced to wait an astonishing 1,088 days, one week shy of three years. What does the minister have to say to seniors and their families who are waiting for placements in long-term care, some of them almost up to three years?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I can say is that under the previous government the list stagnated at 2,500, four and a half years. We've brought it down by 1,000 on the list, and the list is getting shorter every day. (Interruptions) I gave the Leader of the Official Opposition . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness has the floor.

MR. GLAVINE: . . . this yesterday for Cumberland County: there was only one either long-term care nursing home or alternate that had any number over five people on the wait-list. (Interruptions)

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

COM. SERV. - HAIR-STRAND TESTING

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services. Yesterday, the CBC reported that the Department of Community Services had suspended the hair-strand drug and alcohol testing in child protection cases. Three other provinces stopped using the test altogether.

In March, at the Standing Committee on Community Services, the deputy minister said Nova Scotia was continuing to use hair-strand tests but sending them to another lab. Testing continued, even though in January a Supreme Court of Nova Scotia Family Division judge said testing at both labs was reliable. So what made the minister change her mind on strand testing?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: I thank the member for that question. It's a very important question because anything that has to do with the protection of children in Nova Scotia is always a priority for any government.

The decision to suspend and end the hair-strand testing was made after more science and more questions around the science came to light between then, when the deputy spoke at the Public Accounts Committee, and now. I would just like to make it clear that hair-strand testing is just one tool in the tool box that is used to determine whether or not a child comes into the care of the province. It is never - and I have to emphasize "never" - the lone reason a child would be taken into care. There are other mitigating circumstances around that decision, but we will no longer be using hair-strand testing in Nova Scotia for the foreseeable future.

MR. HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, more than 300 people in Nova Scotia receive positive hair-strand drug or alcohol tests - tests that may not be accurate. Until now, the department has only retested samples if a person requests that.

The question is, given that hair-strand testing will no longer be done, how does the department intend to deal with the past positive samples?

MS. BERNARD: Again, I thank the member for that question. There has been one case that has come forward and asked for a review, and that has not made a difference in the decision that was made by the judge.

As I reiterated previously, hair-strand testing in no way, shape, or form is the only indicator of why a child would be taken into care. We will rely on the great social work practices that we have and the other ways that we can certainly test for drug analysis in Nova Scotia. If anybody in those 300 cases has any concerns about the decision, they can come forward and we will do an investigation into their individual case.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

BUS. ACCOMMODATION LEVY - ALLOCATION

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Business. In many areas across the province, tourism operators include a marketing levy on accommodations that goes toward tourism promotion. It is rumoured that the government intends to impose such a fee province-wide.

My question for the Minister of Business, who has a responsibility for tourism is this: if it goes forward, would Tourism Nova Scotia collect and use all the revenue from these fees, or would it still be allocated to the region it is collected in?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, once again, the Opposition is basing their questions on rumours. There's no such work on the part of government to apply a levy in these circumstances. There are existing levies within different municipalities. There are municipalities who have talked about levies and chose not to advance them. Our position is quite simple: if there's a need for a levy, the industry will lead. We'll wait for the industry.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'll take it that if the minister says no, that rumour is not true, then that the province is not going to do it.

Mr. Speaker, my second question for the minister is this. These marketing fees are based on the size of the business, and in this day and age we see more and more small operators springing up, such as Airbnb. Does the minister have any plans to accommodate enterprises like this into these types of levies?

MR. FUREY: I'm not sure what my colleague didn't hear, Mr. Speaker, but this government is not going to base their work on rumours, that's for sure. (Applause)

Specific to the shared economy and my colleague's reference to Airbnb, I've communicated both in this House and externally that the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness has seconded a resource from their office to Tourism Nova Scotia. They are working on and reviewing all of the components of the shared economy, but it's safe to say that the shared economy is here to stay. The industry recognizes that, and it's time that we give it a true analysis to determine how we can manage that within the existing environment and reap as many benefits as we possibly can for all Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

HEALTH & WELLNESS - HOME CARE: WAIT-LISTS - ADDRESS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Well, it's not just seniors waiting for long-term care, Mr. Speaker. Under the Minister of Health and Wellness and this government, people are waiting longer for health care they desperately need.

According to a recent CBC story, Nova Scotia home care wait-lists are up over 50 percent in the past two years. Since the government put a moratorium on new long-term care homes, more and more seniors are depending or need to depend on home care services.

What is the minister doing, and what is the government doing, to address the growing wait times we see for seniors and people to access home care services?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, that's another good news story to tell Nova Scotians, having just eliminated the wait-list for home care in Cumberland County, Pictou County (Interruptions)

We have now the lowest wait-list in the Annapolis Valley in a decade, getting down to about 100 people needing home care. I can give him the exact number of hours if he requires that, but I would suggest that maybe he could FOIPOP my office before asking a question.

MR. DAVID WILSON: It might be funny but the people who were waiting on home care aren't laughing. The reason we have to FOIPOP is because the minister and the government don't give any information. They hide almost everything in government - not the transparent government they promised to be, Mr. Speaker.

Seniors are waiting for home care. He likes to cherry-pick a few of the areas but there are many, many seniors waiting for home care and that answer won't help them at all, Mr. Speaker. What is he doing to address the wait times for home care here in Nova Scotia?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I think the member does realize an area that his government never, ever approached to improve; we've made dramatic improvements - \$55

million we've invested since starting in 2013. Wait-lists are coming down every month; they will continue to come down. The new contracts will have deliverables. Home care is in a very good state in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - PICTOU CO. MENTAL HEALTH CARE:
PSYCHIATRISTS - RATIO**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: My question through you, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. In general the health care in Nova Scotia is in a crisis but particularly mental health. Pictou County has a population of 46,000 people with 1.8 psychiatrists; in Truro we have a population of 67,000 with eight to nine psychiatrists. Does the minister believe this ratio is fair when addressing the mental health crisis in Pictou County? A yes or no answer will do.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I can say today, and the people of Pictou County are realizing, is that they have very strong community-based mental health services, that creating those hubs of expertise is what is taking place under the leadership of Dr. Courey and people of Pictou County who need mental health are getting mental health support.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, Linda Courey, the senior director of Mental Health and Addiction Services, stated in an article which I will table that "... the shuttered unit's fate won't be known until more province-wide decisions are made about providing mental health care."

What we do know is that financial resources have been taken away from the Aberdeen Hospital to cover the costs of increasing beds from 10 to 14 at the Truro hospital. When the minister and his department finally decide the fate and what health care model they'll use to implement at the Aberdeen Hospital, will he also ensure that financial resources that were taken away be redirected back to the Aberdeen Hospital?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, that was a perfect lead-in because as the new ER is developed at Pictou, there will be two beds dedicated totally to those who come in, in some kind of mental health trauma and crisis. That certainly is an improved service over putting somebody in a room for six months without psychiatric care.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS:
C.B. MOBILE HEALTH MENTAL CRISIS TEAM - UPDATE**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness as well. People all over the province are struggling with mental health care. The people of Cape Breton have spoken up about the need for a 24-hour mobile mental health crisis team. The charge is being led by Brenda Lee MacDonald, a mother who tragically lost her son who had been struggling with mental illness. Ms. MacDonald started a petition and now has more than 1,200 signatures.

Ms. MacDonald has presented the petition to the Minister of Health and Wellness and now the people of Cape Breton are waiting for an update. My question to the minister is, can the minister provide an update on the status of creating a mobile mental health crisis team for the people of Cape Breton?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: It is a service that I know has made a tremendous difference here in HRM to have a mobile crisis team that is available 24/7, 365 days a year. I know that the Health Authority is looking at how services can be improved, those of an emergency nature, and as soon as that report and that information is available, I'll certainly make it known to the member and to all the people of Cape Breton.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, they have a mobile CEC in New Waterford; I'm just wondering if that could be helped to adapt to the mental health crisis. The minister has said that he has spoken with the Health Authority about the proposal to deal with service delivery. However, the minister is in charge of all health services and provides the budget to the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

So, my question to the minister, was funding for a mobile mental health crisis team included in this year's budget for the people of Cape Breton?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, we know that, you know, one crisis that leads to any kind of tragic circumstances is certainly one too many. I know that across the province now, having a crisis line available to Nova Scotians, is certainly a first entry point, and I know that a unit for Cape Breton is being investigated, and that work will continue. Certainly the mobile CEC, whether or not people can be trained to be part of that unit, I like the suggestion the member has brought forward.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: GYNECOLOGICAL SERVICES - WAIT TIMES

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, access to gynecological services is extremely important to the women of this province. In the Fall our caucus tabled a briefing note

prepared for the minister that stated surgical wait times in gynecology has increased by 20 per cent in the last two years.

When asked about this by my colleague a few days ago, the minister could only state that they are now able to move residents from one part of the province to another for service.

So, my question - I ask the minister again, what is being done to address the increased wait times for women's gynecological services in Nova Scotia?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, as we implement a provincial approach to many of our services, making sure that in our regional hospitals we have the availability of OB/GYN specialists to carry out that work - at the present time we are still recruiting for another one or two, the complement for the province, based on the population that requires this service. We in fact have met those services and requirements during the past year.

MS. ZANN: Mr. Speaker, well, having patients travel great distances to receive health care services on their own dime seems to be a part of this government's health care strategy.

So, yesterday we found that not only are sexual assault victims being forced to travel long distances to see special nurses, but women may need to move around the province to see a gynecologist.

So, my question for the minister is, how far will women have to be expected to travel to receive gynecological services in Nova Scotia?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, in reference to the SANE programs that are being developed across the province, what I can tell the member opposite, unlike the picture she is trying to portray, those leaders in the communities who will take this on, they are excited about, for the first time, a government that is developing a provincial plan and we will finally have services available at many sites across Nova Scotia - and what I hear from women who require those services, they want to be getting the care from our top specialists if it is a little bit of a distance away.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: DIALYSIS UNITS - SATELLITE COMMUNITIES

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to stand a few moments and speak about something very important in my constituency.

Last summer the Minister of Health and Wellness had the opportunity to visit my constituency where he met with an interested group of individuals wanting to bring a

dialysis unit to the Barrington area. At that time, I would've thought that the minister was pretty open to the idea. Unfortunately, the letter did come that they did get turned down. But I can also say to the minister, you know, they were ready to do some fundraising and they would've actually paid for the majority of that as well.

So, I'm just wondering, where is the minister with dialysis units in small areas like Barrington Passage?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I would correct the member for Argyle-Barrington just a little bit. The people who met with me weren't just interested - they were passionate about what they wanted for their community. Since then the Premier and I have met with the renal dialysis program. I know that the smaller satellite communities have not been given strong attention. The Premier and I have now directed the program to take a second look at a number of small sites across the province to see whether or not they could support that service.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I can also say to the minister that many of the individuals who are receiving this lifesaving service might not be around if we continue to wait and think and study and all the things.

I'm just wondering, when would the minister think that we would have a decision on how satellite dialysis units would work, especially the one for the great people of Argyle-Barrington, the people in Woods Harbour, the people in Cape Island, so that they could receive the service so much closer to home?

MR. GLAVINE: As the member probably knows, the experts in this program now go to Yarmouth to do education on home dialysis as opposed to having people come in to Halifax to the renal program. That's certainly a step in the right direction. What I can say is we do need more smaller sites, but the input from the provincial program has served us well. We've moved dialysis across the province, but there remains work to be done.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

BUS.: PORT HAWKESBURY PAPER - NAFTA APPEAL

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: My question is for the Minister of Business. In October, the U.S. International Trade Commission upheld a Department of Commerce decision to charge a tariff on imports from Port Hawkesbury Paper to the United States. Port Hawkesbury Paper has indicated that an appeal will be filed under NAFTA.

It is good to see the province has indicated it will offer assistance with that appeal. Can the minister update the House, respecting any needs for confidentiality, on the status of that appeal and how the government is assisting Port Hawkesbury Paper?

HON. MARK FUREY: I appreciate the question from my colleague. I don't have the specifics; that particular area of responsibility falls under the Minister of Energy. I will certainly reach out and gather that information for my colleague and provide it to him.

MR. MACMASTER: I think we'll have to wait for the Minister of Energy's answer on these questions, so I will take my place.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

HEALTH & WELLNESS - LIFEFLIGHT DISCONTINUANCE: DECISION - DETAILS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Talking about parking lots, on Friday the Minister of Health and Wellness went public with news that the LifeFlight helicopter could not land on the helipad at the IWK, the QEII, and the Digby General. In making the announcement, the minister gave the impression it was Transport Canada's decision to pull the plug on these landings. However, yesterday it was reported that Canadian Helicopters made the decision to discontinue the helipad use. I wonder if the minister can explain this discrepancy.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: In terms of LifeFlight, which is an important service, 2007 was when this regulation changed. There was a grandfathering, is what I'm being told, in terms of the helicopter and LifeFlight. I think the member opposite - a former minister - probably never had any discussions, perhaps even no knowledge, of this regulation, as Canadian Helicopters and EHS provide the service.

We know, however, that Transport Canada did make an ultimatum that April 1st, the service that we were using was no longer possible. As soon as I found that out, I supported the changes that needed to be made, direction given to start to look at a future LifeFlight service.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Canadian Helicopters has indicated that there were three options to choose from in response to the Transport Canada ruling. These options included buying another helicopter, asking for an operators' exemption from Transport Canada, or mitigating the risks.

I'd like to ask the minister, what role did the department play in choosing any of these options, and what were the considerations that were made?

MR. GLAVINE: As quick as possible we made the decision that the utmost safety would be in place and that we would replace the helicopter.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

BUS.: DAEWOO FACILITY - TENANT REPLACEMENT

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Business. In March 2010 Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering made an agreement with the Province of Nova Scotia to open the Trenton facility as a world-class wind tower manufacturer. June 2011, DSTN had their grand opening. DSME Trenton Limited officially announced its decision to stop operations at the Trenton facility on February 2016. My question to the minister, would the minister give the members of this House an update to any progress that may have occurred to secure a new tenant for this facility?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, as my colleague knows, and we've spoken on a number of occasions, the province was and remains the primary secured creditor. We acted quickly when circumstances were brought to our attention of the financial status of that facility. The receivership process has commenced and I know there has been a significant number who have expressed an interest in the facility and the equipment. Each and every one of them have been referred directly to the receiver to further their interests through that process.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, TrentonWorks is an industrial manufacturing facility located on the banks of the East River on a 160-acre site. It is known as the first steel plant in Canada, the birthplace of the first pouring of steel in British North America in 1883. The member for Northside-Westmount keeps asking me if I was there in 1883 when they poured that steel. In fact two members in this House worked in this facility. I had the opportunity to work there and the Minister of Internal Services, with Greenbrier, I believe, worked there for a short time.

My question to the minister, how many employees are currently working at the plant and in what capacity during this transition between the closure in February and hopefully securing a new owner?

MR. FUREY: I don't have the exact numbers but I know there is a small group employed at the facility to ensure maintenance and operations in a sense that the facility remains warm or in idle and creates the best opportunity, through the receivership process, for another party to advance some business model in that particular environment.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**BUS. - AUDITOR GENERAL:
RECOMMENDATIONS - COMPLIANCE RATE**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Business. Can the Minister of Business explain his department's 3 per cent compliance rate with the Auditor General's recommendations from 2012-13, which is a very dismal rate of compliance, I must say - 3 per cent.

HON. MARK FUREY: There are two components to the recommendations from the Auditor General's Report as it relates to the Department of Business. There are 18 recommendations that were specific to the Jobs Fund. One of those was completed. There are 17 that the AG believes should be applied to Invest Nova Scotia. They are two different funds and the recommendations, until such time as the fund is active, aren't relevant to the fund, although the spirit and intent of the recommendations are being applied in Invest Nova Scotia.

The 11 remaining, Mr. Speaker, are recommendations that have either been transferred to other departments or Crown corporations. We've transferred those, in the process of transferring those for follow-up.

MR. LOHR: I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. I would like to point out that in every case where an action is no longer considered to be required or appropriate that it states in the report the Auditor General does not agree with this assessment. That may be the minister's assessment but not the Auditor General's.

I notice looking at the report here that last year \$7 million more was spent on the Jobs Fund than was anticipated. To me that is a signal that there needs to be better management of what's going on in this Jobs Fund. This is exactly what this report is addressing.

Can the minister confirm that Recommendation 3.27 on Page 65, which says that third party corroboration is needed to confirm that these projects are occurring as intended, can he confirm at least that that's being done?

MR. FUREY: I'll give an example and just try to reinforce with my colleague . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers has expired.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Private Members' Public Bills for Second Reading.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 172.

Bill No. 172 - Psychologist Services Tax Credit Act.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I won't ask you to say "Private Members' Public Bills" three times fast because we've had enough trouble with that already this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, early intervention in mental health is so important and so key to closing the gaps that exist in our mental health care system. It can literally save lives. I'm sure every MLA has a story about their own constituency and when they were first confronted with issues in our mental health system. In my case, as a brand-new MLA, I will never forget the day that the family of Courtney Brown of Parrsboro, showed up in my constituency office, her mum and dad. They had lost Courtney to suicide just the week before.

Young Courtney had been showing signs of depression. Her family had been reaching out for help, including counselling, but while they were waiting to get that service, Courtney succumbed to her mental illness, to her depression, and she died by suicide. I know these are difficult things to talk about, but they are a reality of life in Nova Scotia. In fact, it seems today like every family has a story, or an experience, or a loved one who has in some way fallen into mental illness. The fact of the matter is we can help them. We have people, trained psychologists who through counselling can actually heal people before they reach a state of crisis.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is one step in a plan that can help address the gaping holes in our mental health care delivery system, and hopefully address them with Nova Scotians who are mentally ill before they reach a state of crisis.

Eric Morrison is another example of a young Nova Scotian who five years ago died by suicide as a result of his mental illness. His mother, Fran Morrison, has been working hard to tell the story of Eric and their family, what they went through, and what they continue to go through, to look for answers - not to bring Eric back, which of course can't happen, but to prevent these kinds of tragedies in the future. Getting young men like Eric the counselling help they need before they reach a state of crisis is an urgent imperative of our time.

Mr. Speaker, mental illness truly is the great mental health crisis of this decade. We have the tools to help people, and this bill presents one of them. I know that just a month ago we were all struck by the story of Cody Glode, the young man from Millbrook, outside Truro, who actually did everything that was asked of him, or anyone like him in that situation where they know that something is wrong. They know they are mentally ill. He knew the voices he was hearing was an illness. He knew his thoughts of suicide was an illness.

I say this because everyone needs to know what that means. Just as surely as a broken arm or a heart attack or cancer - it is an illness, and just as much as we try to intervene early in those chronic, awful cases of physical illness, we should intervene early with mental illness.

Cody Glode did everything we asked of him. He self-diagnosed that he was ill. He went to his family doctor first. He was told the wait-list for psychological counselling was three months long, and he died before he ever got to the end of that wait.

He called the Mental Health Crisis Line, and I know the people on the other end of that phone are doing their best, Mr. Speaker. I know they're trying to keep up with the demand, but he was told about the wait that he would have to endure before he got the professional medical help he needed. He did everything we asked of him.

Just this week, we hear of people who realize they are mentally ill and they go to our emergency rooms, as we encourage people to do when they've reached that crisis. I know that the medical professionals there are doing their best trying to triage all the crises that they see every day in our ERs. But sometimes people are sent home; they are sent home while they are still ill to the point of crisis, and sometimes that leads to tragic results.

All of this points to the urgent need to get people the help they need earlier, before they reach a crisis, before they call a crisis line, before they present themselves at an emergency room. Mr. Speaker, we can do this. We can do this.

This bill allows for our registered psychologists to spend more time out in the community with people who need help, providing counselling service. It increases the supply of counselling hours available to all Nova Scotians who need help, regardless of their income. This idea came from the psychologists themselves, who see the need, who see the hurt, who can help, who can heal. They do a lot of pro bono work now for people who can't afford their services. They want to do more, and we want them to do more.

What's unique about psychological services is they're not part of our health care system. These are private registered psychologists in private practice. That's the way the system is set up. When you are mentally ill, and you need counselling, if you can afford to pay the \$160 an hour or more to see a psychologist, you will get the help that you need - or if you're part of a group insurance plan through work, if your work provides you with insurance, and you are mentally ill, you will get the help that you need early.

We want that for all Nova Scotians. For too many Nova Scotians, the cost of counselling is out of their reach. It is a barrier that they can't get over.

This is an area where we truly do have a two-tier health care system in Nova Scotia. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, we don't want a two-tier health care system. We don't want it in mental health either. Nova Scotians, whether they're young or old or in between, if they

can't afford mental health care counselling services from registered psychologists, we want them to get the help that they need.

This bill provides for that by providing a tax credit against provincial income tax for registered psychologists who are out doing pro bono work for low-income Nova Scotians. It fills a gap in our mental health care system for people who need it the most.

Just imagine if we were able to match up every Nova Scotian who is showing signs of mental illness, who is suffering from schizophrenia or from extreme anxiety or from depression, who hears thoughts in their head that encourage them to hurt themselves or worse, imagine if we could match them up with a registered psychologist, regardless of their income, and heal them and make them better before they show up in an emergency room.

I know that there are some who ask, how much will this cost? I will address that, but before I do, just imagine the benefits of matching psychological services up with people who are mentally ill. We don't need a study to tell us that the benefits to that person, to that life saved, to that life at risk, which is put back on a path of productivity and of participation in our society, the benefits are huge. Compared to those benefits, to that person, to his or her family, to our society, compared to those benefits the cost is trivial, Mr. Speaker.

There are a little over 250 registered psychologists in Nova Scotia today. A detailed review of the number of hours that they could provide of free counselling to Nova Scotians that need it in the run of a year, shows that around \$500,000 is the cost of the tax credit. Mr. Speaker, this is a rounding error in the government's budget. That's the cost. The benefit, of course, is that we reach low-income people who are mentally ill, we reach them, we help them, we put them on the road to healing, and then they become productive Nova Scotians, growing up, working here, going to school here, and starting a family of their own. That's what we all want, and we can start on the road to doing that.

The cost of not doing these things is enormous. The cost in lives that go astray, or even worse, in lives that are lost to suicide, is incalculable. The cost of a citizen who is mentally ill, who does not get the help they need, who does not go on to live a full and productive life, is enormous. In very direct and real terms, the cost of trying to save someone when they reach the point of crisis and they are in an emergency room, or in the back of an ambulance, is huge. It's huge, Mr. Speaker.

Let's pass this bill. Let's call this bill and let's pass it, and do something for those Nova Scotians who can't afford the counselling services that they need, who we can help. I'm not going to suggest for a moment that this is the entire solution to our mental health care system. It is not, but it is a step forward. It may not be, in some people's minds, a big step forward, but it is a step forward. It is a step along the way to closing the gaps in our health care system. Isn't that what we all want to do? Isn't that something that we can all come together and see happen?

I know my time is coming to an end. I just want to say that when you travel the province, when you speak to parents who have lost a son or daughter to suicide, when you speak to any Nova Scotian who fears they're losing a parent to dementia, when you speak to a co-worker who wonders what's wrong with the person that works at the desk next to them - Mr. Speaker, you know something has to be done. They are the greatest advocates for this bill. They are the ones who are telling us on both sides of this Chamber that this is a health care crisis of our time, mental illness, where we see there are tools we can use to address that crisis. They are not just asking us to use them, they expect us to use them and this bill starts us down that path. I encourage every member to participate in the debate and let's do something good together for people with mental illness.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, I want to begin my remarks today by thanking the member opposite for bringing this very important issue to the attention of the House. The issues surrounding mental health weigh very heavily on our society. I'm not sure if you are aware but one in five Canadians live with some sort of mental illness or some kind of addiction in any given year. That makes it a very serious issue. It makes it one that obviously touches the lives of each and every one of us, probably every single day of our lives. It's something that we are all aware of and definitely something that everyone, not just the sufferers of mental illness but each and every one of us is interested in a solution for this problem.

The member opposite has brought this bill forward and indicated that he sees this as the solution or the closing of a gaping hole in our system. I have to respectfully disagree with that characterization of this situation, Mr. Speaker. To call this a gaping hole or to say that there is some kind of a crack or a fracture of that magnitude in our system, I really don't think gives credit to the people who are working to support those who suffer with mental health issues. I don't think it gives credit to the hard work that is being done every day by all the individuals in Nova Scotia and across the country who form part of the mental health services safety net that is there for people each and every day.

Now in saying that, Mr. Speaker, I'm not saying that everyone is caught by that net. I'm not saying that the web is a perfectly sound web that saves everyone and provides everyone with exactly the kind of service that will prevent harm from resulting. I am saying that the providers in this system are strong, aware, competent, professional. They are out there and they are providing an amazing service under very difficult circumstances.

Those difficult circumstances don't always just come about as a result of a lack of resources, Mr. Speaker. In thinking about this bill and in thinking about it as a proposed solution, it occurs to me that the member opposite who introduced the bill is thinking of it from his very particular point of view and proposing this as an accounting solution, if you will - a solution that involves numbers but trying to apply that to a very human problem.

With all due respect to him and his efforts to provide service in this way, I think it's missing the point.

The more we talk about the supports that are available in our community, the more we acknowledge the challenges that people are facing in our society, Mr. Speaker. The more we think about it and work at this as a society in general, the more we're going to be able to help people to feel comfortable and seek treatment. Seeking treatment is something that my colleague has touched on in his remarks and he has brought to the attention of the House some examples of people who he feels came forward boldly and strongly to seek treatment and may not have been well-served by the system.

I guess I'm not personally aware of those individual circumstances and I think if that is indeed what happened, I think it's kind of tragic - it's not kind of tragic, it is definitely tragic - but I also question that account. I question the practice of bringing forward that kind of tragedy in these types of political situations, Mr. Speaker, because I know from my background and from experience that people fail to receive treatment for a whole number of different reasons. Sometimes they feel that they are coming forward and presenting issues, but for a whole variety of reasons those things just don't work and it's often not the fault of any one person, it's quite often not the fault of the system or of a lack of resources, but just the circumstances of the particular illness that might inflict that person, or the circumstances in which they come forward.

Every day people are seeking help and getting it. As I say, I'm not saying that the system is perfect, and it can always improve, but I'm just not sure that this legislation is the thing that's going to do that - trying to apply this accounting situation to this very, very grave human issue. We're working diligently as a government, Mr. Speaker, and we're making great strides in offering services in the communities all across the province.

So this year we're going to spend a mental health budget of \$274 million. This includes physicians, medicine, and all types of services, and one of the things that I think is most important, and that we're putting emphasis on here, is focus on community supports and intervening early before people are actually in crisis. It's being implemented in a number of different ways.

Early intervention is a very good example of that, Mr. Speaker. The trained interventionists who are working in our community are there to spot all kinds of psychological, mental health, and intellectual disabilities that may occur in young children. So, they're trained and they're out there working with children from a very, very young age, prior to them entering school, to work to identify all of those things and provide those children with services at as early an age as possible.

The Early Years Centres and the early education piece that has been worked on so diligently by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development under the leadership of the minister gives a new level of recognition to the importance of formal

education at an earlier age, where all of these issues can be identified and dealt with before a child reaches what has traditionally been school age in the past. So, those are some very important things, Mr. Speaker, that will help with what might be the single most important piece of this, which is early identification by trained people who can then in turn either provide services themselves, or direct those young, young children to other service providers who can assist with those issues at a very early age.

We also have the Together We Can Mental Health Strategy, and under this plan 50 family doctors, more than 50 family doctors actually, have been trained to help people with mild to moderate mental health problems in and around the community. So, our family physicians tend to be Jacks of all trades, and Jills of all trade, if you will.

Mr. Speaker, they really cater to our every need. They're specialists in their own way because they are specialists at recognizing whatever conditions or afflictions that we may have, and most of them are very, very good at that, but we've acknowledged that recognizing and treating mental health issues is a particularly important skill, and we've taken this, once again the Together We Can Mental Health Strategy, and we've given them particular training to help them to treat and support people with mild to moderate mental health problems.

Family doctors are definitely the first line of defence. They are where people will go to first for help in their communities. They are aware of our needs from our very youngest of ages, Mr. Speaker. Family doctors are critical to this equation and we've recognized that and provided them with some very particular training.

Group sessions also exist, Mr. Speaker, and over 200 family members have been trained in these sessions and it helps them support their loved ones. Families also all across the province are receiving support on a one-on-one basis to help them deal with the mental health issues that are present in their own families.

There are peer supporters, Mr. Speaker - people who themselves have experienced mental health problems and mental health issues are trained to not only live successfully with their own illness but to help others in their community through their experience. I think we've seen this pretty strongly in the addictions treatment field and in the addiction support area.

Many people who I have encountered in my professional career over the years who are successful addiction counsellors, who have the greatest success in their field and the greatest support of their clients, are themselves recovering from addictions. They have experienced the feelings and the challenges and the trials that go along with that and they are able to bring that to their work. They are able to relate in a particular way to their clients and they are able to provide that service in a very effective way. The peer supporters who are being trained across the province in mental health support are, in fact, in that category and are able to do that in the same way.

There is expanded support for the Strongest Families program. It's telephone coaching and it helps kids ages 4 to 12 who are experiencing anxiety and behavioural problems. Those are things that maybe in the past weren't necessarily recognized as mental health issues - anxiety and behavioural problems in younger children. I know when I was growing up, the worst behavioural issues we saw in our community or in our schools were - they were just bad kids, that's what we thought. They were labelled that way and they were treated that way and many of them never got away from that label and they never got away from that type of treatment in the community. Many of them have ended up in unfortunate circumstances as a result of that, Mr. Speaker.

I know some of them were able to come through that and come beyond it and succeed but in many cases children who I grew up with would definitely have had a very different path in life if they had had supports like Strongest Families who could recognize their behaviours and their anxieties for what they were, mental health issues that could be assisted with support and treatment.

Of all these programs, Mr. Speaker, families are reporting back great results. They are acknowledging these things. They are recognizing the issues. They are using the skills that are being provided to them and they are reporting back to us that these things are working. These kinds of fundamental things that maybe we're not going to see results overnight and maybe we're not going to see statistics right away that are going to show that these problems are being eliminated from our society but we're seeing recognition, acknowledgement, and with time we will see success from these types of programs.

Education - as I said, the education system is a very important aspect in this. At the later parts in the secondary school system we have invested this year - this is an existing program, I'm not sure how much we had into it in the first place - this year in the budget an additional \$500,000 has been put into the SchoolsPlus program, and this is going to go to hiring 29 clinicians who are going to support students in more than 200 schools. When I was practising law, I recognized many of my clients who were involved in the youth criminal justice system who worked with the social workers and the other workers in the SchoolsPlus system, and it definitely, definitely helped them to stay in school, get an education, and turn things around.

I don't think that a band-aid accounting solution like the legislation that is before us here today is the answer. I think that all of these other things that we are doing are going to work together to change . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for the member's comments has expired.

The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to rise today to speak for a few moments on Bill No. 172, the Psychologist Services Tax Credit Act. I sat here and listened intently to both speakers. I do not agree with the member opposite that suggestions that are brought forward to the House are band-aid solutions to mental health. I think government needs to recognize that they do not have all the answers.

The world did not start in October 2013 when the current government took over power. There has been a lot of work over the years involving mental health and ensuring that services are being improved. We know that mental health services in Nova Scotia have been put on a backburner by this Liberal Government. I say that because the province's first Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, which was introduced almost five years ago, was put on hold when the current government came in.

It was put on hold because of the sheer magnitude of the project and the work that was needed to amalgamate the district health authorities. The Minister of Health and Wellness has indicated that, yes, that took some time, and I think the focus was not entirely on where Nova Scotians want the government or any government to be placing their time, and that is trying to improve access to services in health care.

This piece - we know that community-based mental health wait times actually have risen by some 25 per cent over the last number of years under this current government. We hear from the government that changes like at the Aberdeen, that it was not meeting the needs or the criteria was not there or it did not meet the standards. I think what is frustrating for the members of the House who represent that area and the people in the Pictou County area is, if that was the case, then why wouldn't the government implement something before they pulled those services that were there? They were receiving services in that short-stay unit - services that were important and were needed when people in Pictou County found themselves in a mental health crisis.

Government needs to make sure that they are looking outside the box when it comes to ideas that might improve services, like this piece of legislation potentially could do. It is not the answer - it will not solve all the problems in mental health that we see today - but it could potentially support and improve the access to care. I think that is what is important.

We have heard so often over the last number of years about collaboration and collaborative clinics, a collaborative approach to health care delivery. I understand that as trying to maximize health care providers, the different services that many of them provide, utilizing the scope of practice of many health care clinicians. I think the use of psychologists very much could help with that as we look outside the box in trying to address and hopefully improve services in mental health.

The NDP caucus welcomes any effort to strengthen mental health services and believes this bill has the potential, as I said, to fill the gaps in our mental health system, especially in rural Nova Scotia.

With that said though, the NDP caucus also believes that first and foremost, government must work tirelessly to strengthen our public health care system that Nova Scotians hold so close to their hearts. We know that there are significant issues related to psychologists and psychiatric recruitment and retention here in Nova Scotia. It was that that initiated the Aberdeen short-stay mental health unit to be reviewed. I know those residents feel that the government did not and has not met the needs of that service in that area.

We need government to look at, hopefully, new ideas and new ways of approaching an issue that has been facing our government and our province for many years. I was very proud, and I continue to be very proud, to be part of a government that brought in the province's first Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. By doing that, it gave a road map forward on how to address mental health, and services within mental health, that had been ignored by many governments.

Mental health was that area in health that we didn't talk about. It was funded but we didn't really discuss what was going on there because of the stigma of mental health. I come from a profession that has worked extremely hard to try to break that stigma, a profession, as paramedics, who have worked extremely hard to educate the clinicians within the profession to deal with mental health crises. Often, for too many years, you're trained to deal with those health crises, those health emergencies, and often it's learn as you go when you came across a mental health crisis.

We know today that that cannot be the way forward to address mental health. The mental health strategy brought in professionals from all aspects in the spectrum of health delivery, especially in mental health delivery of services. It brought in individuals who were affected by mental health.

The strategy brought forward many good ideas. The member from the government side mentioned a number of them that resulted from the strategy that's in place today, meeting the needs of Nova Scotians. Strongest Families, as it was called - now I believe it's called Family First - was a recommendation and a program that came out of the strategy to try to help families cope with situations that escalate and hopefully allow for that family to deal with a crisis or an issue in the home, over the phone, through an education program, and support along that way.

SchoolsPlus is running today, and I think the government is announcing, today or tomorrow, an increase in the budget so that more health care professionals will be in the school system trying to catch issues at an earlier age so that it's much easier to deal with and help people deal with mental illness. SchoolsPlus is something that came out of the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, and I'm glad to see that government has continued to see the benefit in that and see the importance of funding that as we move forward.

Peer Support was one of the programs and one of the recommendations out of the mental health strategy that I think is often not thought about as maybe one of the highest priorities when you're looking at mental health services. Peer Support brings together people who have dealt with mental health illnesses or emergencies or crises with people who are currently going through that.

It's amazing how important that is. When you're dealing with a mental illness, you feel like you're the only one dealing with that; the whole world is against you, the whole world looks down on you, that you should be ashamed of what you're going through, and through Peer Support you realize there are so many other residents - not only here in Nova Scotia but across the country - who have felt the same way, who have dealt with mental health issues in the past.

I would rank that Peer Support program one of the more key services that are needed. It needs to be in place in association with, of course, the professionally trained services and clinicians that we have, but Peer Support is extremely important. I know I've talked to so many who have benefited from talking to someone else who has gone through what you've gone through, or they've gone through. The ability for them to lend support is huge.

I know that that program and that support alone has saved lives in this province. I know that people felt there was nowhere else to turn and they were looking at potentially ending their life, committing suicide, leaving behind despair for not only their families but their friends and colleagues and co-workers. Through Peer Support, they were able to get through that crisis at that time. That needs to be something that the province continues to look at.

The government has to look outside what they think is the norm. That was the problem, I think, for so many years - governments just said, okay, let's just give a budget line item to mental health. We have the Nova Scotia Hospital over in Dartmouth; patients can go there if they find themselves in crisis, and let's just not talk about it. It was through the development of the strategy that we realized as a government that we can't function in that way, and future governments should not function in that way.

That's why I hope the government will look at this and do a proper assessment of what this change and this legislation could potentially do to improve access to mental health services in our province. The government needs to be looking at what we can do next, not just supporting the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy and the recommendations in that, not just bringing a new strategy forward, or a continuation of it - but what can we do to improve?

Around the globe, there are jurisdictions that are thinking outside the box, that are taking mental health services to a new level, to hopefully address a serious problem in our population, and that's access to appropriate mental health services. I spoke about this often

as a paramedic, as a former Minister of Health, and as an MLA. Manitoba, in the last couple of years, did just that, I think. They looked outside the box on what they could do to improve services for people with mental illness.

Far too often people who are struggling, people who are going through a crisis, end up in emergency rooms. I've seen it first-hand, transporting patients going through a mental health crisis and giving my report to the attending hospital and putting that patient in the emergency waiting room - not a place I think that most who are going through this crisis would find is the most appropriate place for them to be if they're contemplating committing suicide, if they have thoughts of hurting somebody.

Manitoba took the leap and opened up a mental health emergency room. Government could learn a lot from that. There were growing pains there, but they were able to divert somewhere in the vicinity of 10,000 emergency room visits that normally went into the regular ER, regular emergency room. It doesn't have to be a stand-alone emergency room. We know through the evaluation in Manitoba that we don't want to stigmatize people even more by saying, oh, they went to that hospital, not this one. A mental health emergency room could be facilitated within the ERs we have now. I think it needs to be an area that people can go to if they're brought into the emergency department and are going through a mental health crisis.

London, Ontario, just recently opened a quick-access mental health walk-in clinic. They unofficially opened in January, but this Tuesday, I believe, officially opened. They're only open one day a week for now, but they look at mild to moderate mental health problems. The clinic will, I think, be a benefit for access for people who are struggling in their daily lives. Some of them may be dealing with financial crises, relationship problems and they can get into these walk-in clinics.

These are just a couple of examples in the remaining few seconds I have. I think the government needs to open their eyes. They need to look at potential changes and look outside the box on how we improve mental health services. A start would be to look at Bill No. 172 and do a proper evaluation to see if this could help improve access to mental health services in Nova Scotia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to stand and speak for a few moments on Bill No. 172. The benefit of being the last speaker is you are able to listen to all the speakers and try to synthesize what you heard and maybe get a better feeling of where each Party is, where as a Legislature we are on a particular issue.

Last July our caucus began calling for an inquiry into Nova Scotia's mental health system. What you would hope is you would have a government that would say okay, listen, we know there's a problem in our system, maybe we should have a look at it.

Now do I expect the government to fully institute a public inquiry? No, but what I would expect the government to say is to agree that our system is broken, that our system has gaps, that our systems in a lot of cases are failing Nova Scotians and that we can do better.

I can say that since we made that announcement back in July, since we began putting a focus on mental health, we have received many phone calls. We've had many meetings with individuals, families, and loved ones about mental illness. I can tell you that on each and every one of those cases that we have had the honour of meeting and representing, all of them talk about timely access to mental health services.

Mr. Speaker, it's uncanny how it is in every single one of the stories that have been brought forward, whether in Question Period, whether in press releases and even in opportunities to speak to the minister on this one. I can say that many of the stories are heartbreaking, absolutely heartbreaking: anguished parents who feel helpless, knowing that people need help, people who know they need help, who do all the right things but face long waits to get it, or actually don't get the services they need at all.

It's the government's own data, Mr. Speaker, that says that the average wait time for an outpatient of community-based mental health services for adults is 101 days. For children and adolescents, the average wait is 105 days. That's more than three months. We have to do better. We cannot expect one of our constituents, one of our family members to go through the anguish of having a mental illness, to finally say I need help - which by far is the first step - to say sorry, we don't have any room for you right now; you're going to have to wait.

Can you imagine if you had a heart patient who needed a by-pass or a valve replaced, that you would say sorry, you have to wait over three months. Or you would have somebody who presented to an emergency room who needed a lifesaving surgery that you would say to them "sorry, you have to wait over three months."

Now, Bill No. 172 and I'll speak to that in a few moments, I just wanted to sort of take issue maybe with the statements of the member of the Liberal Party - and I do hope that not all members of that Party agree with all the things that that member had to say. There were a couple of statements there that show to me that this bill was not considered by the government. It was not looked at by the government, nor did they seem to care.

What I heard from the member who spoke to this was that, hey, we've got a lot of programs but, hey, circumstances are different. Mental illnesses are different, so maybe because of that some patients can't get the help that they need. Mr. Speaker, that's blaming the patient for their own mental illness. I cannot fathom why someone would say something like that and I take extreme offence to somebody suggesting that it's because of your depression that you didn't get the help you needed, that it's because of your, whatever, that you didn't get the help you needed.

That's not what this is about at all. Had the member truly looked at what this bill is, he would see it's, again, a suggestion of a way to help and try to fill some of those gaps in a system that is broken. Is it the only solution? Is it the solution? Absolutely not. This is but one idea that not only comes from us, but comes from the Psychologists Association. So, let me give you a quick rundown of what kind of work has been done on this, what kind of consultation has been had with psychologists.

So, Bill No. 172, the Psychologist Services Tax Credit Act, will expand access to psychologists for people suffering with mental illness, and this bill is a brainchild of the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia – so it wasn't thought up on one of our desks, as much as the member for Cumberland North would want us to believe. It actually comes from the association themselves. They told us that too often their clients' insurance benefits ran out before their treatment was complete, or there are people who have no insurance and cannot afford the services of a psychologist.

The bill that is before us right now provides a tax credit for private psychologists who treat clients with inadequate, or no insurance. It provides some benefit to psychologists who treat people who need them. Dr. Victor Day, past president of the Psychologists Association of Nova Scotia, estimates that this measure would cost government about 30 cents on the dollar, and we believe that it would pay for itself over time. It will allow people to access the help that they need before they reach a crisis, and it will help, Mr. Speaker, relieve our emergency rooms.

So, what kind of examples? You know, Dr. Day says if you can see a psychologist early on, which the member for the Liberals said, "early intervention." So, Dr. Day says this: If you can see a psychologist early on that's beneficial; if you can deal with things earlier, it helps prevent people from needing more emergency, or more expensive treatment later. It saves the whole system money.

So, as much as this is not about a money thing, it is a money thing. It is not an accounting trick that makes things go away, it is not about the budget. It's about getting help, using the resource that we have so we're not going out and hiring a hundred more psychologists or psychiatrists - it's at least using the people that we have today to provide extra service. Can you imagine that if you're one of those underserved individuals in Nova Scotia who do have a mental illness, who do reach out, who do finally get some of the help that they need only to be told by that psychologist, "Sorry, your insurance has just run out, and I can't treat you anymore." The amount of money that they pay for might get two or three treatment visits and then runs out.

I know, and I'm sure you do, too, Mr. Speaker, that it takes more than that to treat a mental illness. When we finally identify and treat and follow up on those issues, it probably takes four, five, six, maybe eight, or maybe 10 visits with that psychologist.

What this bill tries to do is free up some more hours so that those private practice psychologists, for the most part, can lend their time to the public system to be able to offer more services to our clients. It's as simple as that.

Research shows that treatments from psychologists are not only effective in improving mood and function but also reduce medication costs and improve productivity. More importantly, they save lives. How could we turn our nose to something that possibly could save a life?

Many of our psychologists already do pro bono work. They help people who need them without being financially compensated. We believe this legislation will encourage more psychologists to do pro bono work and encourage those who already have pro bono clients to take on more. The bill provides a tax credit for up to 100 hours of pro bono work.

Psychologists are an important part of our health care system. They are trained to assess and diagnose problems in thinking, feeling, and behaviour, as well as to help people overcome or manage these problems. A psychologist is uniquely trained to use psychology tests to help with assessments and diagnosis. Psychologists help people to overcome or manage their problems using a variety of treatments and psychotherapies. In short, our psychologists help people.

Unfortunately, as we've said before, too often people have to wait far too long for that treatment. We believe that Bill No. 172 will allow more people to see psychologists, shorten those wait times, and decrease the number of families who feel helpless, afraid, and frustrated by our mental health care system.

I personally want to thank Dr. Day, Dr. Heather Power, and everyone at the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia for their assistance in bringing this legislation to fruition. I also want to thank the hundreds of Nova Scotian psychologists who are willing to take on pro bono clients because it is the right thing to do.

This week is Mental Health Week. The government can signify that mental health services are a priority for them by passing this bill or at least acknowledging that this continues the debate or underlines the importance of mental health services in this province, and maybe admitting that maybe they don't have it right. Maybe we don't have it right, but maybe together, with a whole bunch of ideas and interest in our communities, we would be able to get it right together.

That's all we ask. That's what Opposition business is about in this House. In my mind, it's not about attacking one another. It's about trying to find solutions to problems that our communities have today.

I don't want another family to have to come to one of our offices to tell us the story of one of their loved ones not receiving service or, even worse, dying from taking their

own life. That's not something that we need to be hearing on a regular basis. It's not something that should be happening in our communities.

You only have to see the news to see that this is happening all across Canada. We are not alone in this problem. We are not alone in our challenges.

All we ask is that when a bill like this comes forward in the House of Assembly, that government at least thinks about it and maybe looks at the merits that are coming forward; that the Minister of Health and Wellness, the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board can consider these options when they are putting together their budgets, that they can consider the help that is required across this province.

This one, again, as I said earlier, I think is something that is cost negative or at least saves the system money in the long run because we know that when somebody presents to an emergency room, that is the most costly kind of service, and we want to keep them out of there in the first place.

I want to thank everybody for their comments today, and I hope that at least we have opened minds of MLAs in this House to at least consider this when putting together programs for the Province of Nova Scotia. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, by the way, if you notice, I did make a bit of a mistake on the times that I did there. Of course, those threes should be fours in that. So, again, 15 minutes each.

Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 175.

Bill No. 175 - Healthier Schools Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise today to speak to this very important bill, Bill No. 175, Healthier Schools Act.

This is Mental Health Week in Canada, certainly a time to educate people on the stigma that too often accompanies mental illness. It is also a time to take a look at our system to determine what we can possibly do better. I think we can do better for our young people.

I have taken the opportunity to visit numerous schools. I have called to speak with school personnel in other schools. I have talked to educational assistants, to teachers, to

administrators, to custodial employees in our school system, and I have also spent 30 years in the school system at the junior/senior high level.

Today when I talk to anyone on the school staff, administrators and teachers, and I ask them what their greatest challenges are, there are two things that usually surface. Guess what is the first one? The first one, of course, is the need for resources to help students dealing with mental health issues; then seeing trained personnel or having the ability to see a psychologist at school to deal with some students who are dealing with mental health issues; providing more resources in our schools; and looking after our most precious resource, which, of course, we would both agree is our youth. I encourage all members to speak with teachers who work in our schools. Teachers are doing everything they can to assist these students, but we must remember that the majority of teachers are not trained to deal with these issues.

Some educators have suggested there is a silent crisis in the educational system. There is a significant number of mental-health related issues in our schools. There is an increase of students looking for or seeking assistance. There definitely is a need for more support, resources, and trained personnel.

School composition has changed dramatically over the last number of years. Incidents range from bullying, intimidation, threats, cyber-attacks, and physical and verbal abuse that occur perhaps too often. We have even experienced lockdowns in our school system.

All school staff should receive a reasonable level of training in mental health issues. To complement the staff in servicing, there is an urgent need for trained and qualified health professionals to assist schoolteachers and also be available in the school system to assist students who are dealing with anxiety, depression, low self-esteem or other mental issues.

Mr. Speaker, I must commend the government for expanding funding for the SchoolsPlus program. I know in my area, in my constituency, the SchoolsPlus program is in the schools of New Glasgow Academy, A.G. Baillie Memorial, and North Nova Education Centre. It's a great program.

The spinoffs from this program are very obvious and very noticeable. Again, I'm encouraged to see this program expanding and the government's willingness to continue to expand it in the future. The funding for this SchoolsPlus program is money well spent and students certainly are the benefactors of this particular service.

We can and we should do more, we owe it to our youth. There are so many other spinoffs, Mr. Speaker, dealing with youth with mental illness. Sometimes, unfortunately, the police have to be involved and we have many occasions where sometimes two police officers have to accompany someone to the Aberdeen Hospital, for safety reasons. Sometimes they have to transport this particular person to another location in the province.

Bill No. 175 is a step towards providing mental health services for young people sooner, especially in an environment that is very familiar with them, where they spend most of their time, in a junior high or high school setting. Bill No. 175 calls for school-based adolescent mental health services and programming in all schools in the province, not just regional hubs. It aims to provide access to in-school health services, including mental health services by qualified health professionals, to all students. It also makes mental health training programs available to all teachers. Again, Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important that all of our teachers get some sort of training to help students who need the assistance.

We have a leading expert here in Nova Scotia in Dr. Stan Kutcher, who has been advocating for changes like this for quite some time, Mr. Speaker. We know that many mental health disorders can occur when young people are entering junior and senior high school, or university for that matter. Mental health problems may lead to school dropouts, difficulties in learning, sometimes behaviour difficulties and school failure. Schools can be a great location for mental health promotion, a place for early identification, a place for early intervention. The quicker we train more staff, more professionals, more teachers, I think we'd be doing a great service to our youth.

We want to see every child reach their full potential. Identifying young people who are struggling with mental illness and providing them with early interventions will certainly give them a better chance to succeed. It is also a critical age for students to learn that it is okay to talk about mental health challenges and seek help. This was not always the case, Mr. Speaker. For many years in the school system these students felt the stigma that was there and would not come forth to seek help. They didn't know who to come to, to seek help, because we didn't have the trained personnel in our schools. We may have had guidance counsellors, favourite teachers, administrators, but, again, they didn't have the background, they didn't have the professional training to help these students. So, often these students just kept it inside.

So, it is a critical age for students and it's very pleasing to me to see that we are starting to have some trained personnel in our schools to deal with these challenges that students are having - especially the ones who are seeking help and others who maybe will not come forward, that we can help them also.

Mr. Speaker, by addressing the problems associated with stigma at a young age, as students grow into adults it is the hope that they'll have no hesitation to seek out this help. Again, an example through the SchoolsPlus program, which I said earlier is a great program, teachers are often the first to recognize youth at risk for mental illness. I'm sure if you talk to any teachers who are in any school, elementary, middle school, or high school, you go to them and they can identify students who are having these types of issues very quickly - and after a short time, just because of their experience in the schools.

So, it makes sense to provide both students and teachers with the support and resources to help, and perhaps intervene, before a crisis situation. If we can save one life,

it's certainly worth it. Teachers see their students on a daily basis and are often positioned to see changes in behaviour, changes in attitude with these students in mind. It is also important for students to be educated on mental illness so they can support their peers.

So, we have finally arrived at a situation, Mr. Speaker. Many students are finally coming to accept this help because they know in their particular school, not all schools, but in their particular school there are trained personnel and they are willing to go to seek help. Again, some positive spinoffs from that - some of these students are actually talking to their peers and encouraging them to seek help, or at least talking about it themselves to try to help one another.

There are many demands placed on our teachers in today's classrooms. We need to support teachers so that they can better understand, support, and direct students to the appropriate places to get the help they need. When I think of the last school I was in, Mr. Speaker, it was North Nova Education Centre, a new school that opened up in 2003. It was the first school I was in that actually had a very nice, large health centre, and this particular health centre was used each and every day during the week. We had the luxury of having a nurse arriving at the school for a full day, or during the week we had other health officials, health personnel, coming in from the Pictou County Health Authority to deal with issues in the school with students.

So, again, some people had talked about perhaps a health centre was an important thing to have in their school, but what actually did happen was that the health centre was utilized to the fullest. It continues to help many, many students and is one of the greatest additions to this particular complex.

So the new program will cover all the bases, education, diagnosis, and treatment. It empowers teachers and students, and connects youth who need help with the right community resources. We know that much more can be done to improve access to mental health in our schools.

Yesterday, I had the chance to discuss this issue with the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development during the estimates process. As noted by the minister, there are currently 29 mental health personnel working with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and boards. I agree with her when she states that this number is not enough. It may be more than the previous year, but we know there is so much more to be done to meet the current and future mental health needs of our students.

I think that this bill is certainly a step in the right direction to address the concerns that a lot of families, a lot of administrators, and a lot of schoolteachers have. It's certainly a concern for me after speaking to so many teachers and administrators who work in our schools.

With those few words, I will take my place.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: I'm pleased to rise in my place to address Bill No. 175, and I want to thank the honourable member for Cumberland South for highlighting the importance of student health and wellness.

I couldn't agree more with the member for Pictou Centre; this is an issue at the forefront of our schools today. I'm proud to say that it's something my government has been addressing since we came into power in 2013. I've been a student, a parent, a volunteer, and an employee of the school system, and I've seen many changes over the years.

I was so happy, Mr. Speaker, to see that this government undertook the first major education review in a generation. It was clear from this review that the needs of students in the classroom were not being met, given the seismic shifts in our society with technology and information. We put an action plan together to build a better school system that reflects the needs of today's students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

Student health and wellness was an area where more work was needed. We took action to target this, and we have found that mental health concerns are being addressed now from elementary grades and onward.

I want to talk about the SchoolsPlus program. The current budget includes an additional \$500,000 to expand the SchoolsPlus program in Halifax, Tri-County, Chignecto-Central, and the CSAP school boards. SchoolsPlus is now available in eight school boards and every county in Nova Scotia. This is providing services to families in more than 200 schools.

Last month, Ministers Casey, Churchill, and Colwell had the opportunity to join students and staff at the opening . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. I remind the member not to use proper names when addressing members of the Legislature.

The honourable member for Lunenburg has the floor.

MS. LOHNES-CROFT: The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and the Minister of Agriculture had the opportunity to join students and staff at the opening of the new hub sites in Milford, Lake Echo, and Hebron, which will support the families of schools in providing students and families with a wide range of support.

SchoolsPlus brings mental health services and other health programs together with mentoring, homework support, social work, and justice services into the school where children and families can easily access them.

This is no band-aid, Mr. Speaker; this is action and it is solid programming. We are providing \$672,000 to place six more mental health clinicians in schools. This brings the total to 29. Mental health clinicians are an important part of a successful SchoolsPlus program. They provide care and support to students who are experiencing a mental health issue or a mental health illness, and help parents to connect to the resources they need to help their son or daughter. With these additional mental health clinicians, now more students will have access to critical services.

Mr. Speaker, there is often a lot of stigma around mental illness, but I'm here to encourage you to talk more openly about this. We know that many people will face a mental health issue at some point in their life and that one in five people will experience a mental illness during their lifetime. It's also important to know there is help. Now there is even more help in our school systems and that's a wonderful thing.

Mr. Speaker, I know we are helping more students than we ever have before. Penny Gill, with the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board, told us a few weeks ago that being a mental health clinician in the school has allowed her to significantly reduce barriers to youth accessing services. It has allowed her to support students who would have otherwise not had access to the treatment they needed, due to transportation issues, fear, and other barriers. Being in the school has also allowed her to support school staff in developing their skills, their knowledge, and procedures that support mental health, and the social and emotional learning of our students is growing. Teachers are being trained on-site by peers. Being part of the SchoolsPlus team is allowing her to truly provide a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of our most vulnerable students effectively and efficiently.

Mr. Speaker, Megan Saunders, a SchoolsPlus mental health clinician for the Annapolis-Bridgetown family of schools, told us that having a mental health clinician in school reduces barriers that rural families face each and every day, like transportation and the stigma of accessing mental health services.

Mr. Speaker, I know families have been very challenged taking their children to mental health facilities in my area. I know sitting in a waiting room full of people - sometimes it's their neighbour, sometimes it's another parent at a school - the privacy around this issue has concerned a lot of parents. Having the safety of the school environment, and the privacy that goes with it, has really helped open the doors to mental health services for some families. Also, many students are reluctant to go to a stranger, and having the comfort of a person who they see day-to-day in the school has been so beneficial for accessing services.

Through the program, Ms. Saunders is also able to see students and their family in her school where they are most comfortable. Her role is helping to build the capacity in the school community about mental health and mental wellness. We see that working really well in her school.

Mr. Speaker, we have 29 mental health clinicians and 27 SchoolsPlus facilitators, who are qualified health professionals, supporting our students and their families. We recognize that a growing number of Nova Scotians need mental health support and we are working to strengthen the support we offer in our communities. We are providing support to our teachers and our school board partners. There are more than 9,000 teachers who work hard every day to help students reach their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Stan Kutcher has trained lead teams in school boards that in turn have trained over 900 school board staff in how to identify mental health problems and what to do about them. He has developed a Grade 9 curriculum that we are using in our schools, and that work is continuing today. All school boards have trainers for the go-to program and have go-to lead teams. This is also a program developed by Dr. Stan Kutcher. The teams provide the training on mental health literacy as it is needed for school staff.

We are also working closely with Dr. John LeBlanc of the IWK, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is funding to put evidence-based, social, and emotional learning programs in the schools. This is a program that is here in Nova Scotia, created by a practitioner in Nova Scotia, for the schools in Nova Scotia.

Each year, \$300,000 is spent to provide support to this program. This year there are more than 70 school psychologists in our eight school boards. In 2015, funding was provided for 212 school guidance counsellors in our eight school boards. There are 93 speech language pathologists available to schools across the province. In partnership with the Department of Health and Wellness, EECD support youth health centres.

Significant changes and improvements were made to Early Childhood Development Intervention Services to improve the outcome of children with developmental delay. Our Childhood Development Intervention Programs were being underfunded. Many parents of preschool children with special needs, including autism, were facing wait-lists for critical services. We made an investment in direct services for families in need to eliminate this wait-list and make sure children get the help they need to succeed.

A \$2.1 million investment was made by this government, Mr. Speaker. With that investment we have eliminated the wait-list, and families now have access to services with supports within 30 days of a referral.

There is at least one Early Years Centre in every school board. These centres provide a space to bring together programs and services delivered to families of young children from prenatal to school entry. Family support and resources can include parenting supports, health service, and early identification and intervention programs.

New Germany Elementary School, in my constituency, was one of the recipients of one of these new programs, and it has just been a blessing for our community. It has provided an early childhood program that was nil in that community and it is really helping some children catch up, so that when they enter school they will be on par with their other peers that are entering school who have come from enriching backgrounds. So you cannot even put a value mark on what these early programs are doing for children, especially in rural Nova Scotia.

IDI data is being collected every two years by Primary teachers who complete a questionnaire for each child in their class on five developmental areas: physical health and well-being; emotional maturity; communication skills and general knowledge; social competency; and language and cognitive development. This data is shared with local partners such as school boards, the provincial Health Authority, child care centres, family resource centres, and early-intervention programs, to understand how well children are doing in support planning. It will also help government, communities, and partners supporting children in the early years before they start school. The data identifies 25 per cent of students entering Primary with some form of vulnerability.

It is clear that student health and wellness is and needs to be a priority, and it is by this government. I can say that we, along with the Department of Health and Wellness, are making mental health support professionals more accessible to students and their families than ever before.

Education is and will continue to be a priority for our government. We have made it clear from the beginning that education is not a line item in the budget; it is our future. We will continue to invest and modernize our education system this year and in future years.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is investing an additional \$34.9 million to renew, refocus, and rebuild our education system. That includes supporting student health and wellness. The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development has consistently stated that every step in the action plan is to be in the best interest of our students, and she will continue to work and help change the system.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill No. 175, the Healthier Schools Act. This bill would require all school boards to provide students with

access to in-school mental health services on a regular basis and make mental health training programs available to all secondary school teachers.

The NDP caucus is firmly committed to enhancing mental health services in Nova Scotia. We established the province's first Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, and we intended to do more work on that if we had been re-elected.

In addition, the Liberal Government has also been tremendously supportive of the NDP initiative SchoolsPlus. SchoolsPlus was something we initiated that provides in-school supports that go beyond the traditional education model.

Even with the success of SchoolsPlus, we know that gaps still exist across Nova Scotia, so we're happy to see legislation that attempts to fill these gaps. We know that the earlier children and youth gain access to mental health services, the better, and our caucus welcomes any legislation that supports the health and well-being of Nova Scotia's children and youth.

Too many times, I'm sure, many of us have seen what happens when young people in schools - who are often suffering from depression - choose to take their own lives. Many of those times, these children are also being bullied. We have found that there is a correlation between being bullied and children who have depression. Obviously the earlier that this can be examined and helped, the better.

For a number of young children in my riding, I've had to attend their funerals; I've had to attend candlelight vigils. It's very, very sad when you see how much talent these kids had and how beautiful they were. They really, really didn't even know it themselves. They had been brought down so low by their own depression and by the bullying that they were receiving.

Another important piece of this bill is the requirement for all secondary school teachers to be able to receive training in mental health. This is critically important, and I'm pleased to see this added into the bill.

As Truth and Reconciliation Commission Critic, I would like to see this training pay specific attention to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action. It called on teachers to be trained in cultural competency and the lasting impact of residential schools on students of indigenous descent. The intergenerational trauma experienced by our province's First Nations community cannot be underestimated. This has serious consequences on children and on youth's mental health.

Mr. Speaker, I remember when my mother was a teacher in Nova Scotia back in 1968-69, she would come home and tell horror stories of some of her colleagues who at that time, when school would start, they would hold up a list of the kids' names and they'd say, Oh look at that, there's a Syliboy, or there's a Borden, or Jones, or some name,

Googoo, and they'd say, oh well I can see where I'm going to have my troubles this year. There was so much systemic racism in Nova Scotia that no wonder so many kids dropped out early, or were depressed and had problems, had anxiety issues, because they would come into a school feeling that they were being treated less than everybody else. This helps to contribute to an already underlying problem that could have come about through being one of a family of people of survivors of residential school abuse.

Mental health is such an intriguing issue, even when it comes to things like addictions, alcoholism. Being an alcoholic, I realize that there's no cure for that disease, and I do recognize that it is a disease. I also believe that it's genetic; it runs in families, sometimes skips generations and the only thing we can do for it right now, Mr. Speaker, is to abstain from alcohol. When you're a younger person in school and the drinking age is coming about and all your peers and friends are partying and drinking and starting to do drugs, it's very hard to say no, because you want to fit in. You want to be perceived as being part of the in-crowd, and the in-crowd are oftentimes the ones that are partying the hardest.

I want to tell a little story about a friend of mine named Johnny Rivers, who was a 1960s pop star. He was a vegetarian actually, for about 50 years, and he runs every day. He's in his 60s now, still performs all over the country, all over North America. He didn't waste his money; he put his money into good investments. He's a multimillionaire, and he told me one time, he said, you know when he was a young kid starting out he just had his little black suit, and a guitar, and he would go on tour. The people he was touring with oftentimes were smoking and drinking, and doing all kinds of drugs, had all kinds of women around them and he said, Crosby Stills, Nash & Young were some of these. He said they used to look at him and make fun of him because he wouldn't drink. He would stand there, wait to go on, and he wouldn't get involved in any of that. He said all you have to do is look at them now, and see how they look and what they've done with their money and their lives, and he said, who's got the last laugh?

These days what he's doing and what he did, we approve of that, because we know how hard it is to fight against the stigma that you're associated with if you don't want to let go, have fun, let your hair down, that sort of thing. The other thing that came to my attention is when it comes to various different cultures, there are various different mental states that people can be affected by. Actually there was an article that came out about various different cultures and how sometimes people will have mass hysteria:

“In the fall of 2011, a mysterious illness came over the pupils of Le Roy Junior/Senior High School east of Buffalo, N.Y.

Student after student and one single adult - 20 individuals in total - inexplicably began stuttering, twitching and exhibiting other involuntary movements. The alarming spread of the bizarre symptoms captured national and international media attention, as

environmental activists, including the famous Erin Brockovich, hypothesized that toxic contaminants were to blame.”

But, Mr. Speaker, it turned out that after, “. . . all tests conducted by school and state officials ruled out potential physical causes, including pollutants, side effects from drugs and vaccines, trauma and genetic factors . . . The diagnosis? Mass psychogenic illness, also known as mass hysteria.” They needed to bring in many health officials there and mental health experts to try and deal with the issue.

It also talks about an interesting epidemic, a mental health epidemic that is tied with your mental health, also with your cultural experience. This particular one, you never know when it’s going to hit, and it hits certain different areas. It says it was called “koro” and it sounds particularly scary because the other name for it is “vanishing penis syndrome.” In fact, Mr. Speaker, what it says is that this particular phenomenon called vanishing penis syndrome is “where men perceive their penises shrinking, vanishing or being ‘stolen’ from them” as it goes inside their bodies. “As unbelievable as koro may sound to North Americans, Bures tracks down sufferers . . .”

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River has the floor.

MS. ZANN: Thank you. I wondered if that might wake up a few people, Mr. Speaker.

Koro is “. . . a condition where a person feels his, and sometimes her, genitals are being pulled into their body, and there’s a fear that they’ll die if that happens. It’s sometimes called genital retraction syndrome. You’ll find different versions of it in different countries around the world. In some countries, it’ll be kind of contagious and spread among people in a mass-panic way.”

I think that means that education, they say, will eliminate some of these types of syndromes. The author of the book about this particular - his book is actually called *The Geography of Madness: Penis Thieves, Voodoo Death, and the Search for the Meaning of the World's Strangest Syndromes*. Perhaps we might be able to get a copy through the library at some point in time to take a read.

It does talk about the fact that education is very important in dealing with these types of syndromes, but it doesn’t necessarily mean that they will go away entirely. They talk about how cultural syndromes, even in our society, are still around and can actually affect us in ways such as anorexia. They say that anorexia is actually another example of something that is like a syndrome because we, in our society, look at being thin, we look at all these magazines with models who are skinny, and we feel that that is the only way to

be beautiful. So in that sense he is saying that this is a syndrome that we need to take a look at.

Also I would say, on the note of anorexia, bulimia, any of those kinds of illnesses, that this is something else that is quite serious that we need to be aware of in schools. I think that having experts available all the time for our students would be a big step forward.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP does welcome this Bill No. 175, the Healthier Schools Act, and any pieces of public policy that seek to strengthen the health and well-being of Nova Scotians, especially our young Nova Scotians.

I would hope that the House takes good note of my speech and that we all stay healthy and none of us are affected by any of these syndromes that I've discussed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I would ask the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River, who was reading from documents during her presentation, to please table those documents.

The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues for Pictou Centre and Lunenburg and Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River for their comments on Bill No. 175. I'm not sure that I do acknowledge the activities that my colleague, the member for Lunenburg has addressed, but I'm not sure I have as rosy an opinion of what's happening in our schools as that member. I'm not sure what to say about my colleague, the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River's comments, and I don't intend to drill down into particular illnesses.

I rise today to speak about Bill No. 175, the Healthier Schools Act. In doing so, I would like to focus on the truly pragmatic approach that this bill puts forward. The majority of our children spend much of their time under tremendous influence in school. Teachers have been entrusted with increasing responsibility, not just for our kids' education, but for their well-being. I wonder at times whether we have allocated enough resources and truly understand the realities of what teachers face.

The first objective of this bill is to acknowledge that teachers are often the first to recognize an emerging issue or change with a child. They are also very often the person our kids seek out when they need help - that is quite a responsibility, especially when we are talking about mental health.

Mental health is broadly defined as an individual's capacity to adapt to life's circumstances and to develop the ability to do so in a manner appropriate to their age and capabilities. It does not mean the absence of negative mental states. All people, including

children and youth, will go through these. Helping them develop resilience is a fundamental purpose of this bill.

In 2013, the World Health Organization released a ranked list of health indicators. They noted that health literacy is a stronger predictor of an individual's health status than income, employment status, education, or racial or ethnic group. Our caucus has been reaching out to Nova Scotians, seeking their views on our health system, positive and negative, asking what is working well and what needs improvement.

Right across this province and country every family has been touched by mental illness, and the ability to access help is a growing problem. According to Statistics Canada numbers from 2014, our major challenge is providing equitable access to evidence-based health care. We're simply not making enough progress. For example, youth access to mental health care was one in four in 1978; in 2015, it is incrementally better at one in three. With that has come an increasing use of emergency rooms for common mental disorders, anxiety or depression, that are effectively treatable in primary health care settings - that from the Canadian Institute for Health Information 2015. This is even more acute in pockets of our population such as homeless youth, youth in poverty, refugee youth, justice system youth, and First Nations youth.

Last year we invited Dr. Stanley Kutcher to speak with our caucus. I can honestly say that it was one of the most frank and purposeful presentations that we have received. The goals of the bill emanate from that meeting and stay true to the pragmatic intent.

In summary, we seek for Nova Scotia to be a leader in adolescent mental health: (1) to provide kids and teachers with literacy training to give them the language and tools to identify an emerging mental health issue, alleviate the stress and angst that comes with knowing something is wrong and being unprepared to act, or afraid of making it worse; (2) to make a direct link for teachers and students to people with professional training in mental health; (3) in doing so, to get our kids the help they need as early as possible, knowing that the majority of these challenges can be managed by family doctors; and (4) this alleviates the pressure on teachers and emergency rooms, and it could also cut wait-lists for specialists such as psychiatrists, who can then deal with more serious mental illnesses more quickly.

At the very heart of it, the PC caucus believes that every Nova Scotian child deserves a chance to reach their full potential - 98 per cent of mental illnesses present themselves before the age of 25, and the strongest attachment to the labour force occurs by the age of 25.

Mild mental illness episodes caught early avoid deterioration of not only mental health, but of physical health, of drug and alcohol use, of weight-related illness, et cetera. The cost of not addressing mental illness in this province is leading to a staggering, unplanned financial cost and increasing human toll. It is a very complex problem, and the

cost of not intervening early is huge - \$1 spent in early treatment reportedly avoids \$17 at later stages, and it often means a difference between in-community recovery versus hospital stays.

Our bill then specifically seeks to ensure the existing curricula of mental health literacy training, and train-the-trainer modules are made available to teachers and students of all school boards. Teachers and students would also have access to periodic refreshers and the support of mental health professionals in school-based health centres. SchoolsPlus is a positive step forward. We support all the new investments. I agreed with the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development when she said we do not have enough mental health professionals in our schools.

The cost of this program is not high. The curriculum for these programs is web-based and available. Its developers will help, and have even developed train-the-trainer modules to ease access in delivery. The cost would be the teachers' time. Expanding the availability of people with mental health training in school-based health centres is integral and arguably the area representing measurable cost increases. But the savings, at a minimum, are 17 to 1 for every one of the 98 per cent of our kids with mental illness that are diverted from early ER plus long wait-lists and deteriorating mental health - and this does not even factor in the long-term likelihood of getting a decent education and jobs that contribute to our province, fulfilling their own dreams and potentials.

Our caucus seeks the support of all members of this House. The evidence is available; the material is available; the teachers want the resources; our kids need it. We can put all these objectives first and then pass this bill.

When we met with Dr. Stanley Kutcher, we learned that this program, as I understand it, has been implemented in British Columbia, and it has been implemented in Mali, West Africa, by Dr. Stanley Kutcher. In fact, Dr. Kutcher invited me to go to Mali, but I never had the opportunity; it just did not work out.

The World Health Organization in the United Nations has recognized Dr. Stanley Kutcher as a world expert in this type of program. It seems a shame that the program that has been developed here in Nova Scotia by a chairman of a mental health board, Dr. Stanley Kutcher, who has a chair in mental studies for adolescents, that this program has not been adopted in Nova Scotia.

According to Dr. Stanley Kutcher, it is very cost effective and seeks to interact with students at a young age knowing that, as I mentioned earlier, 75 per cent of all mental health episodes occur before the age of 25. Most of these present themselves initially as a not-that-serious event, and there is opportunity to intervene then at that moment and change the course of the outcome of that child's life by having dealt with that mental health issue right then and there - not that every one of those will be successful, but for a large number of them this early intervention could be very life altering.

So that is the gist of the bill. The bill is asking us to adopt a program developed here in Nova Scotia, recognized around the globe by the United Nations, the World Health Organization, implemented in some of the poorest parts of West Africa, in Mali, a very large country in West Africa bordering on the Sahara, and implemented, as I understand it, in British Columbia. A program that has the potential to, I believe, not compete with SchoolsPlus but to work in concert with SchoolsPlus to change the lives, to intervene in a very concrete way in the mental health issues of Nova Scotia in a way that is long-term and has the potential to raise the literacy rate for mental health issues in the province. I believe that would be a great factor not in solving today's problems but in solving tomorrow's problems in mental health.

If implemented, I believe it will pay immediate benefits but also very huge long-term benefits. I believe this is something that we should - given that it is a local program, it's right here, and something that can be done. It's not that expensive, and I would ask for your support for this bill. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the Opposition business for today. Thanks, everybody, for the thoughtful input on all these bills.

I'll call it back to the Deputy Government House Leader to call business for tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. At that time we'll call Public Bills for Third Reading, Bill Nos. 149, 152, 154, 156, 157, 158, 160, 161, 162, 165, and 168. We'll also call Public Bills for Second Reading, Bill Nos. 174 and 176; Committee of the Whole on Supply; and such other government business as may arise. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House rise until tomorrow, Thursday, May 5th, at 1:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

The House now stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, May 5th, at 1:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 4:47 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 3461**

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Adam Wile graduated in 2010 with a Master's degree from the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Bible Hill and, though still early in his career, has participated in research and education that already has made significant contributions to the development of agriculture in Nova Scotia, including the understanding of the importance of nutrient management on farms and the social acceptance of renewable energy technologies; and

Whereas Mr. Wile joined the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture in 2012 as an Agriculture Transition Officer and in 2014 moved to the position of Agriculture Resource Coordinator for the Eastern Region covering Antigonish, Pictou and Guysborough Counties, where he has gained a strong and positive reputation with the department's clients for his hands-on, no-nonsense approach to providing them with advice and support; and

Whereas Mr. Wile was named the Outstanding Young Agrologist for 2016 by the Nova Scotia Institute of Agrologists on April 28 in recognition of his contributions and achievements so early in his career through research, education and service to the agriculture sector:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature congratulate Mr. Wile on receiving this award and thank him for his dedication to enhancing agricultural practices and the understanding of the importance of agriculture in Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 3462

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Dustin Barker is a long-time resident of Nova Scotia's beautiful Eastern Shore; and

Whereas Dustin obtained his diploma in professional auctioneering in 2006 and has been practicing his unique trade all over Nova Scotia ever since; and

Whereas Dustin has owned and operated Mariner Auctions in the Dartmouth area for the past 5 years, while doing countless volunteer auctions for local charitable causes in our communities:

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Dustin Barker for giving of his time and talents for the betterment of our communities in the greater metro area.

RESOLUTION NO. 3463

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Brian Barker is a native of Bona Vista Newfoundland and Labrador, and a long-time resident of Porters Lake Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Brian obtained his diploma in professional auctioneering in 1975 and has been practicing his unique trade literally all over the world ever since; and

Whereas Brian has owned and operated Mariner Auctions in the Dartmouth area for the past 5 years, while doing countless volunteer auctions for local charitable causes in our communities:

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Brian Barker for giving of his time and talents for the betterment of our communities in the greater metro area.

RESOLUTION NO. 3464

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Denise Goodwin, nominated by the Town of Clarks Harbour for her devotion of time and many contributions to her community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Denise Goodwin on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank her for her dedication to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3465

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Eileen Cunningham, nominated by the Town of Clarks Harbour for her devotion of time and many contributions to her community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Eileen Cunningham on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank her for her dedication to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3466

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Curtis Smith, nominated by the Town of Clarks harbour for his devotion of time and many contributions to his community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Curtis Smith on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank him for his dedication to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3467

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Bethany Nickerson, nominated by Row for Nanny's Cure for her devotion of time and many contributions to her community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Bethany Nickerson on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank her for her dedication to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3468

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Kim Messenger, nominated by the West Head Wesleyan Church for her devotion of time and many contributions to her community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Kim Messenger on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank her for her dedication to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3469

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Leigh B. Stoddart, nominated by the Friends of the Cape Sable Lighthouse for his devotion of time and many contributions to his community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Leigh B. Stoddart on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank him for his dedication to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3470

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Lynn Atkinson, nominated by the West Head Wesleyan Church for her devotion of time and many contributions to her community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Lynn Atkinson on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank her for her dedication to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3471

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Marlene Smith, nominated by the Town of Clarks Harbour for her devotion of time and many contributions to her community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Marlene Smith on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank her for her dedication to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3472

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Robbie Newell, nominated by Friends of the Cape Light for his devotion of time and many contributions to his community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Robbie Newell on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank him for his dedication to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3473

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Sheldon Bell, nominated by the Cape Sable Island New Horizons for his devotion of time and many contributions to his community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Sheldon Bell on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank him for his dedication to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3474

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Sherrill Stoddard, nominated by the Cape Sable Islands New Horizons for her devotion of time and many contributions to her community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Sherrill Stoddard on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank her for her dedication to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3475

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Shannon O'Sullivan, nominated by the Clarks Harbour Elementary School for her devotion of time and many contributions to her community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Shannon O'Sullivan on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank her for her dedication to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3476

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 volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, who generously give their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on April 11, 2016, the Clarks Harbour Legion hosted the Annual Volunteer Banquet for the Municipality of Barrington and Town of Clarks Harbour; and

Whereas among the volunteers to be honoured was Kyle Smith, nominated by the Town of Clarks Harbour for his devotion of time and many contributions to his community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Kyle Smith on being honoured by the town of Clarks Harbour and thank him for his dedication to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 3477

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Jim Field from Great Village, Colchester North, has learned the benefits of staying fit and exercising and encourages everyone to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle; and

Whereas when Jim became short of breath back in 2007 AND a biopsy showed he had scar tissue on his lungs left from untreated pneumonia, causing the inability of his lungs to absorb oxygen; and

Whereas while in Alberta waiting for a lung transplant, Jim took part in a rehabilitation program involving exercise and diet to the point his oxygen levels improved so much that he was taken off the transplant list;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jim Field for having the determination once he returned home to work out and stay in shape and, through this determination, he can continue to care for his wife who has MS.

RESOLUTION NO. 3478

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Eric MacKeen, general manager of Tri County Ford in Tatamagouche, Colchester North, has worked at the dealership for the past 26 years; and

Whereas for the past 80 years Tri County Ford has been known for its service to the community, for its contribution to countless fundraising initiatives and for its support of the Student of the Month program at North Colchester High School; and

Whereas under MacKeen's leadership, the company has earned Ford Canada's top honour in Atlantic Canada; the President's Award, eight times in the past 10 years; and the President of Ford Canada's Diamond Club Sales and Service Award for the 15th time;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Eric MacKeen for being selected and honoured recently at the Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce annual gala dinner as the BDC Business Person of the Year.

RESOLUTION NO. 3479

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Daniel Smith is respected and admired by his teachers and peers because of his numerous character traits, especially his kindness and consideration of others; and

Whereas Daniel, an accomplished pianist, is very active in the local theatre group as well as the musical productions at the Tatamagouche Elementary School; and

Whereas Daniel can add athlete - playing both soccer and basketball - as well as a gamer to the list of his achievements;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Daniel Smith, this multi-talented Grade 7 student at North Colchester High School in Tatamagouche, for being named the March 2016 Student of the Month.

RESOLUTION NO. 3480

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Lacey Ferguson has shown her scholastic ability by earning honours with distinction in Grades 9, 10 and 11; and

Whereas Lacey's organizational skills are not only shown by her academic excellence but also by her ability to volunteer in her community, work at a part-time job, participate in Girls' Leadership, and serve as a valuable member of the yearbook staff; and

Whereas her maturity, independence, reliability, self-confidence and pleasant personality all contribute to her popularity with her teachers and her peers;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Lacey Ferguson for being chosen as Student of the Month for March 2016 at North Colchester High School in Tatamagouche, and wish her continued success during her Grade 12 year.

RESOLUTION NO. 3481

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who show their dedication to serving others by contributing hard work, skills and time, often risking their lives, taking on the role of first responders and dealing with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the additional responsibilities of members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas the members of volunteer fire brigades seldom receive the accolades they deserve, an annual banquet is usually held to thank all their members and to present special awards;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tom Pearson Jr. for five years of service for the Valley-Kemptown Fire Brigade in Colchester North at the 2016 annual banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 3482

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who show their dedication to serving others by contributing hard work, skills and time, often risking their lives, taking on the role of first responders and dealing with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the additional responsibilities of members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas the members of volunteer fire brigades seldom receive the accolades they deserve, an annual banquet is usually held to thank all their members and to present special awards;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate John Dunbar for 25 years of service for the Valley-Kemptown Fire Brigade in Colchester North at the 2016 annual banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 3483

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who show their dedication to serving others by contributing hard work, skills, and time, often risking their lives, taking on the role of first responders, and dealing with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the additional responsibilities of members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas the members of the volunteer fire brigades seldom receive the accolades they deserve, an annual banquet is usually held to thank all their members and to present special awards;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ed MacLean for 30 years of service for the Valley-Kemptown Fire Brigade in Colchester North at the 2016 annual banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 3484

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who show their dedication to serving others by contributing hard work, skills, and time, often risking their lives, taking on the role of first responders, and dealing with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the additional responsibilities of members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas the members of the volunteer fire brigades seldom receive the accolades they deserve, an annual banquet is usually held to thank all their members and to present special awards;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jeff Berry for five years of service for the Valley-Kemptown Fire Brigade in Colchester North at the 2016 annual banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 3485

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who show their dedication to serving others by contributing hard work, skills, and time, often risking their lives, taking on the role of first responders, and dealing with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the additional responsibilities of members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas the members of the volunteer fire brigades seldom receive the accolades they deserve, an annual banquet is usually held to thank all their members and to present special awards;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Andrew Vocke for the Firefighter of the Year Award, as well as the John MacAulay Training Award at the 2016 annual banquet of the Valley-Kempton Fire Brigade in Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 3486

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who show their dedication to serving others by contributing hard work, skills, and time, often risking their lives, taking on the role of first responders, and dealing with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the additional responsibilities of members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas the members of the volunteer fire brigades seldom receive the accolades they deserve, an annual banquet is usually held to thank all their members and to present special awards;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Darlene MacKenzie for 20 years of service for the Valley-Kemptown Fire Brigade in Colchester North at the 2016 annual banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 3487

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who show their dedication to serving others by contributing hard work, skills, and time, often risking their lives, taking on the role of first responders, and dealing with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the additional responsibilities of members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas the members of the volunteer fire brigades seldom receive the accolades they deserve, an annual banquet is usually held to thank all their members and to present special awards;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tom Pearson, Sr., for 15 years of service for the Valley-Kemptown Fire Brigade in Colchester North at the 2016 annual banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 3488

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who show their dedication to serving others by contributing hard work, skills, and time, often

risking their lives, taking on the role of first responders, and dealing with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the additional responsibilities of members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas the members of the volunteer fire brigades seldom receive the accolades they deserve, an annual banquet is usually held to thank all their members and to present special awards;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bill MacLeod for the Officer of the Year Award, as well as 25 years of service for the Valley-Kemptown Fire Brigade in Colchester North at the 2016 annual banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 3489

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who show their dedication to serving others by contributing hard work, skills, and time, often risking their lives, taking on the role of first responders, and dealing with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the additional responsibilities of members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas the members of volunteer fire brigades seldom receive the accolades they deserve, an annual banquet is usually held to thank all their members and to present special awards:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Darren Ping for 20 years of service for the Valley-Kemptown Fire Brigade in Colchester North at the 2016 annual banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 3490

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who show their dedication to serving others by contributing hard work, skills, and time, often risking their lives, taking on the role of first responders, and dealing with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the additional responsibilities of members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas the members of volunteer fire brigades seldom receive the accolades they deserve, an annual banquet is usually held to thank all their members and to present special awards:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brandon Slack for being named Fire Officer of the Year at the annual banquet of the Debert Fire Brigade in Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 3491

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 epilepsy affects over 300,000 Canadians and 50 million people worldwide, which makes it more than multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, and Parkinson's disease combined; and

Whereas four-year-old Nathan LeBlanc, who suffered from Dravet Syndrome, a rare and catastrophic form of epilepsy, earned his wings during the early hours of the morning on Monday, February 29, 2016, the day before Epilepsy Awareness Month was to begin; and

Whereas Nathan was a bright and happy little boy who always greeted you with a smile and lit up a room as soon as he walked into it:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly show their support on Dravet Syndrome Awareness Day on June 23rd as Nathan's parents, Janet and Phillip LeBlanc, along with Nathan's little brother Noah, continue to raise awareness about Epilepsy.

RESOLUTION NO. 3492

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 the Brooklyn Fire Department Auxiliary recently donated \$5,000 for the purchase of three new defibrillators, which will add to the complement of equipment the fire department already owns and put them closer to their goal of having an AED in each emergency vehicle within the fleet; and

Whereas the auxiliary group holds several fundraisers throughout the year, from dances to flea markets and their very lucrative catering fundraiser for weddings, reunions, etc.; and

Whereas several time a year the auxiliary group and members will showcase their acting talents to perform dinner theatres at the Brooklyn Civic Centre, which continues to be a favourite fundraiser throughout the community:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank the Brooklyn Fire Department Auxiliary for the many hours they spend to support their local fire department and wish them the greatest success into the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 3493

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 the Don Johnson Memorial Cup is the Junior B ice hockey championship for Atlantic Canada, which was named in honour of a sports enthusiast who dedicated his efforts to the growth of hockey in Atlantic Canada; and

Whereas after winning the Nova Scotia Junior Hockey League championship title on April 9th in Glace Bay, the Valley Maple Leafs, a team that has been in operation for just four years, had their sights set on the Don Johnson Memorial Cup at the end of April; and

Whereas the Valley Maple Leafs were victorious after a seesaw battle in defeating the host, the Avalon Capitals, 5 to 4 at the CBS Stadium in Kelligrews, Newfoundland:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the entire Valley Maple Leafs team and coaches and wish them all the best in their future games.

RESOLUTION NO. 3494

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 Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2015 by Terra Firma Development Corporation, in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board, to provide the opportunity for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph; and

Whereas after making the decision in the winter of 2015 that it was time for change, Jake Bilsborrow started attending the West Hants Education Centre where his presence was immediately felt as he jumped right into a leadership role among students; and

Whereas Jake ultimately set out towards attaining his educational goals and will be graduating at the end of this semester with his sights set on entering the Canadian Navy;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jake Bilsborrow on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award, and wish him all the best in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 3495

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 Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2015 by Terra Firma Development Corporation, in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board, to provide the opportunity for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph; and

Whereas since entering the Options and Opportunities Program through Avon View High School in Grade 10, Dakota Hartt has developed tremendous resilience to overcome many challenges at school, at home, and with her peers; and

Whereas surrounded by inspiring and positive influences, Dakota is achieving her true potential and has gained great admiration from the staff at Avon View High School;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dakota Constance Hartt on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award, and wish her all the best in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 3496

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 Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2015 by Terra Firma Development Corporation, in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board, to provide the opportunity for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph; and

Whereas Jacob (Jake) Douglas made his turnaround after Grade 10 and is making decisions today that are indicative of a high-achieving student and positive role model, while encouraging other students to achieve their best at school; and

Whereas Jake's involvement in the sport of wrestling has been instrumental in helping him with challenges at school, and he is now a peer coach with the school wrestling team and holds a part-time job after school;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jacob Travis Douglas on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award, and wish him all the best in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 3497

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 Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2015 by Terra Firma Development Corporation, in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board, to provide the opportunity

for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph; and

Whereas over the past several months, Kassidi Lockhart has developed a great deal of confidence as she has become increasingly involved with activities both at school and in the community where she recently applied for a job and now holds a leadership position with the Girls Get Active Program; and

Whereas Kassidi, once shy and uncertain about herself, has become a very important role model at Avon View High School, and takes pride in sharing her artistic talents in decorating “Buddy Benches” through Avon View’s Options and Opportunities Program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kassidi Shyanne Lockhart on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award., and wish her all the best in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 3498

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 Nova Scotia’s first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2015 by Terra Firma Development Corporation, in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board, to provide the opportunity for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph; and

Whereas Brett Maddox has become a very successful Grade 8 student with the support of his family after a bit of a difficult transition to the West Hants Middle School last year; and

Whereas Brett has really turned things around in a positive way and has become more engaged at school where he is now “Rocking Grade 8”;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brett Maddox on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award, and wish him all the best in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 3499

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 Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2015 by Terra Firma Development Corporation in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board, to provide the opportunity for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph; and

Whereas Jonathan Chandler has become a valuable member of the school leadership program at West Hants Middle School, which has earned him the admiration of his peers; and

Whereas from volunteering, to coordinating presentations, to DJ'ing school dances and mentoring other students, Jonathan has been offered work opportunities through the Windsor Recreation Department as a result of his positive attitude and work ethic;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jonathan Chandler on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award and wish him all the best in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 3500

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 Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced 2015 by Terra Firma Development Corporation in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board, to provide the opportunity for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph; and

Whereas John MacDonald, a Grade 7 student at West Hants Middle School, always has a positive attitude and works hard to achieve success despite facing academic challenges in middle school; and

Whereas you'll find John is always smiling and eager to try something new when asked, making him an inspiration to others;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate John MacDonald on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award and wish him all the best in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 3501

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas I was pleased to attend the Happy Sinhala-Hindu (Tamil) New Year Celebration 2016 on May 1st; and

Whereas the celebration featured cultural activities, delicious food, and entertainment with music, singing, and dancing; and

Whereas popular Sri Lankan actor Ajith Jinadasa, leading musician of La Lankans, Dr. Lashman G. Dias, and local musician Thilak Tennekone led the music and singing performances;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate P.J. Kapilan, chair of the organizing committee; Wimal Rankaduwa, PhD, President; and members of the Sri Lanka Canadian Association of the Atlantic Region, and wish them continued success.

RESOLUTION NO. 3502

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas on May 3rd, during Mental Health Week the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia hosted, Let's Keep Talking, with keynote speaker Margaret Trudeau; and

Whereas Mental Health Week is designed to start a candid discussion about mental health and wellness, and to once and for all put an end to stigma around mental illness; and

Whereas we honour all those Nova Scotians living with mental illness or addiction who have courageously shared their personal struggles and those who provide support in the mental health community helping to create a conversation based on compassion and empathy;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia and its President and CEO, Starr Dobson, for striving to keep the conversation going and continuing to share the vision of seeing Nova Scotians with mental illness thriving in our communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 3503

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas on May 3rd, during Mental Health Week, the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia hosted, Let's Keep Talking, with keynote speaker Margaret Trudeau; and

Whereas Mental Health Week is designed to start a candid discussion about mental health and wellness and to once and for all put an end to stigma around mental illness; and

Whereas we honour all those Nova Scotians living with mental illness or addiction who have courageously shared their personal struggles and those who provide support in the mental health community helping to create a conversation based on compassion and empathy;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate keynote sponsor Bell Alliant and Dan McKeen, Bell Atlantic senior vice-president and vice-chair, for their commitment to keeping the conversation going and continuing to share the vision of seeing Nova Scotians with mental illness thriving in our communities.