



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2016

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, MAY 12, 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. We'll 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 Community Services.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, may I do an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. BERNARD: If everyone would turn their attention to the east gallery, it's my pleasure to welcome Ms. Dee Dooley here today and, also, beside her is the Executive Director of the YWCA, Miia Suokonautio. Ms. Dooley is being honoured with the Governor General's Award in commemoration of the Persons Case, for her outstanding work for the equality of women and girls in Canada.

Please give her the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 3865

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

Whereas Ms. Dee Dooley is a passionate community leader, educator, volunteer, and advocate for social justice and equality for women and girls, who has demonstrated her commitment over the past decade through her efforts to develop programs with children, youth, and marginalized populations; and

Whereas in her current role as Youth Programs Coordinator at the YWCA Halifax, Ms. Dooley advocates tirelessly for increased support to young women across their spectrum of experiences and needs, and works to deliver innovative programming on cyber-violence, sexual health, sexualized violence, and social justice for young women; and

Whereas Ms. Dooley has recently been recognized with the Governor General's Award in commemoration of the Persons Case, for her tremendous work in making an outstanding contribution to the goal of equality for women and girls in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Ms. Dooley on her tireless efforts and great achievements.

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 Immigration.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction before my Government Notice of Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw your attention, and the attention of all colleagues in the House, to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us today two individuals I have personally known for many years and whom recently I've had the pleasure to work with on this crucial Immigration file: Dr. Colin Dodds and Honorary Consul Wadiah Fares.

I'd ask them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

I'd also draw everyone's attention to a number of the wonderful staff representing the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration who have been working tirelessly under a very demanding minister. I will ask them to rise and remain standing until all names have been called.

I want to welcome Director of Stakeholder Engagement MaryJane MacKinnon; Director of Strategic Policy and External Relations Rachel Henderson; Senior Policy Analysts Louise Van Wart and Mary-Jo MacKay; Research and Statistical Officer Moira Clancey; Nova Scotia Nominee Program Manager Nadene MacAulay; Business Stream Officers Mahmoud Talaat and Serena Cassidy; Nova Scotia Nominee Program Officers Mireille Fiset, Denise Marsman, Jessica Jung, and Arianne Wentzell; Communications Officer Kelly Bennett; our Masters of Public Administration student intern, Mariana Carrera; and my executive assistant, Anthony Zibara. I ask all members of the Legislature to please give them the very warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Immigration.

RESOLUTION NO 3866

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

Whereas Colin Dodds and Wadiah Fares, joint chairs of the Premier's Immigration Advisory Council, have worked tirelessly to champion immigration and negotiate favourable policy at the federal level; and

Whereas the mandate and work of the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration has grown substantially over the last two years to include more robust program delivery,

integrity services, an integrated approach to settlement services, policy development, communications, administration, and stakeholder engagement; and

Whereas the province has made significant progress on immigration, launching four new immigration streams including being the first province in Canada to take advantage of Express Entry and launch a unique, innovative business stream for international graduates, which does not exist anywhere else in the country, while also securing 1,350 nominations for our Provincial Nominee Program for 2016 and welcoming more than 1,000 Syrian refugees to Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature thank Colin Dodds, Wadih Fares, and the staff of the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration for helping our province push forward on immigration.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: May I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: Joining us in the gallery this afternoon, it's my pleasure to introduce representatives from the QEII Foundation, representing the volunteer board of trustees of the foundation. They can rise when I announce their names: Dale Godsoe, chair; Victor Goldberg, vice-chair and former chair of the QEII Foundation's successful Cancer Never Waits campaign; representing all QEII Foundation donors, Fred Fountain, honorary trustee and former chair of the QEII's successful Working Miracles campaign. As well, representing staff of the QEII Foundation: Bill Bean, president and CEO; Julie MacKean, vice-president of philanthropy.

The QEII Foundation is currently conducting two campaigns. The From the Heart campaign is for new heart patient care equipment and infrastructure, and the Simulation Learning Centre campaign is for a world-class simulation training centre for health care

professionals. I will ask all members of the House to give them a warm welcome this afternoon. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Immigration.

RESOLUTION NO. 3867

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

Whereas people across Nova Scotia and the Maritimes rely on the specialized expert care provided at the QEII Health Sciences Centre; and

Whereas government and the Nova Scotia Health Authority announced a plan to move the services from the aging Centennial and Victoria Buildings to locations that will improve access to health care; and

Whereas the QEII Foundation, its staff, and its generous donors pull together to help fund new technologies, new research, and new construction that support the health care needs of Nova Scotians;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature thank the QEII Foundation for its work, and wish staff the best of success with fundraising efforts in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Just one more introduction, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, joining us in the gallery this afternoon, it is my pleasure to introduce representatives from the Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation: board members Diane Burns and Georgia Lloyd; Vickie Sullivan, Nova Scotia Health Authority Operations Executive Director, who sits as an ex officio on the board; and Adrienne Malloy, President and CEO of the foundation. I would ask members of the House to join me in giving them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 3868

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

Whereas the next generation of improvements and expansion are currently under way at the Dartmouth General Hospital, which will take on an increasingly important role in sustaining our health system for the broader community; and

Whereas the Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation has committed \$1.5 million to this current \$6 million project, which will bring the hospital up to modern infection control standards, make patient washrooms modern and accessible, and revitalize patient care units; and

Whereas the foundation has helped fund three major building expansions, investing more than \$40 million in equipment, facilities, and programs at the Dartmouth General Hospital;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature thank the Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation volunteers for their successful fundraising efforts, and wish them the best as they celebrate their 40th Anniversary.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Kings North on an introduction.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the west gallery where we have Josh Fraser. His family owns Milne Court Petro-Canada in New Minas. I'm in there frequently, often to help them with a fundraiser of some sort, so they are very active in the community as a local business. I'm very pleased to be able to introduce Josh here today. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: Just before we move on to Introduction of Bills - if there are any - I want to advise the House that since our Chief Legislative Counsel, Gordon Hebb, Q.C., started acting as our Chief Legislative Counsel in 1994 he has supervised the drafting by his office staff of a staggering 2,308 bills that have now been introduced in this House, not to mention a large number that have been drafted but not introduced and not counting any that may be introduced today.

Now, why am I mentioning this today? Well, it just so happens that today is Mr. Hebb's 39th birthday. (Laughter) So I would encourage the House to give Mr. Hebb a warm welcome and birthday wishes today. Happy Birthday, Mr. Hebb. (Applause) I think you will all agree he doesn't look a day over 39.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 183 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 246 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Labour Standards Code. (Hon. David Wilson)

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 Argyle-Barrington.

JACQUARD, DONNIE: CONSEIL ACADIEN DE PAR-EN-BAS VOL. DE L'ANNÉE (2016) - FÉLICITATIONS

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: M. le président, le 21 avril, 2016, Conseil acadien de Par-en-Bas (CAPEB) a honoré Donnie Jacquard comme bénévole de l'année. Chaque année, la CAPEB honore un de leurs membres pour leur travail et leur dévouement à la communauté acadienne.

Donnie Jacquard originaire de Wedgeport, est un enseignant à la retraite, qui a consacré sa carrière d'enseignant professionnel ou la direction d'école. Il est actuellement l'un des trois membres élus de la région d'Argyle au sein du Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP)

Donnie a été reconnu pour son travail infatigable tout au long de la municipalité d'Argyle recevant dont : Argyle Township Héritage Award, un certificat de l'Assemblée Législative en reconnaissance du CSAP, et un certificat d'appréciation par Sports Nova Scotia entre autres.

Grace à ses recherches, il a écrit quatre livres basés sur la généalogie, l'industrie de la pêche locale et son village natal. Félicitations Donnie Jacquard sur la réception de ce dernier honneur.

In English, on April 21st the 2016 Conseil acadien de Par-en-Bas honoured Donnie Jacquard as Volunteer of the Year. Each year, the CAPEB honours one of their members for their hard work and dedication to the Acadian community.

Donnie Jacquard, a native of Wedgeport, is a retired teacher who has dedicated his professional career teaching or in administration. He is currently one of three elected members of the Argyle region within the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial. He has been recognized for tireless efforts throughout the Municipality of Argyle, receiving the Argyle Township Heritage Award, a certificate from the Legislative Assembly by the CSAP and a Certificate of Appreciation by Sports Nova Scotia, just to name a few.

Donnie has researched a great deal, resulting in writing four books based on genealogy, local fishing industry and his native village. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Donnie on receiving this special honour.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West on an introduction.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, if I can have the members' attention to the west gallery, I would like to introduce - they can stand as I mention their names - from the Pictou County Injured Workers we have Mary Lloyd, Larry Maloney, Candace Huntley, Elaine MacKenzie, and June Labrador. If they would all stand. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

BEALS, ARCHIE & CARLOTTA: DISASTER ASSISTANCE - THANK

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, without much warning, a fire destroyed the home of a single mom of six children on Regent Street in Dartmouth. Apparently the fire started from the exterior of the home but when the flames made contact with the propane tank, the fire quickly moved to the interior and destroyed it. It was a complete miracle that no one was hurt, but everything inside was destroyed.

Fortunately for this family, they are neighbours with Archie and Carlotta Beals, who in no time at all took the family in and set up various fundraising events for the family. Carlotta said to me, we are community, we take care of each other.

Today I want to congratulate and celebrate Archie and Carlotta Beals for their quick action. They didn't just observe the disaster, they acted to remedy it. They are true champions of Dartmouth.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect on an introduction.

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, if the members could draw their attention to the east gallery, we have with us the very talented and hard-working co-op student Kristina Shannon. Kristina, if you want to rise to receive the warm welcome of the House before I read my statement. (Applause)

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

SHANNON, KRISTINA - LIBERAL CAUCUS CO-OP STUDENT

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize Kristina Shannon, the newest addition to the Liberal caucus office staff. Kristina is a student at Nova Scotia Community College and has joined our communications team as part of her co-op program. Starting less than three weeks ago, Kristina has already proven herself to be an invaluable member of our staff. Whether she is handling our social media platforms or creating graphics and advertisements, Kristina's work has been exemplary.

Mr. Speaker, students like Kristina gain valuable work experience during co-op terms that can often launch them into fulfilling and meaningful careers. Employers also benefit from great work that these students perform, so it's a win-win for everyone.

Again I'd like to welcome Kristina to the team and wish her continued success in the future, wherever that may lead her.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

LOCKHART, BONITA: EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARDS CEREMONY - RECOGNITION

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, Pictou East is blessed to have many stellar teachers and Bonita Lockhart, who teaches Grade 4 at Frank H. MacDonald, is certainly one of them. Bonita was recently recognized by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and her school at the annual Excellence in Teaching Awards Ceremony.

Chosen by administration, she is a teacher-mentor. She adjusts and refines her instructional practice to ensure each student has every opportunity to succeed. She runs a knitting club and a ukulele club for students and is active in the Association of Teachers of

Exceptional Children (ATEC). Information from ATEC is graciously shared with her fellow teachers.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you first-hand that I've seen her in action with both of my children. She's an absolutely wonderful teacher and I wish her my sincere congratulations. I ask all members of this House to congratulate Bonita on her well-deserved award.

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

ROSEWAY HOSP. ER CLOSURES: CONSTITUENTS - ANSWERS EXPECT

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, during this session I have tried repeatedly to highlight the health issues that have been ignored by this government. As I said yesterday, ER closures are up, wait times are up, more and more Nova Scotians cannot find a family doctor, and rural Nova Scotians are feeling abandoned by the creation of a single health authority.

I want to remind everyone that when I stand in this House to ask a question I am doing it on behalf of 17,599 people of Queens-Shelburne. They aren't interested in hearing the Premier thank the minister, they want a plan to address the ER closures at Roseway Hospital. This government may not think that I deserve answers to my questions, but I think they owe it to the thousands of people I represent. Mr. Speaker, to be continued.

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

HORNE, LOUISA/SYLVAN LEARNING CTR. - SUCCESS WISH

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to congratulate Louisa Horne, owner and operator of the opening of the new Sylvan Learning Centre satellite location in Fall River.

As you may know, Sylvan provides an opportunity for students to receive individual help in improving their skills in such areas as mathematics, science, and reading. Having this asset available in our community we will provide our young people with the extra help some need to meet today's challenges.

I would like to wish the team at the Sylvan Learning Centre every success, and may it lead to greater achievements in the years to come.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

DOGS - HUMAN INTERACTION/ASSISTANCE

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, evidence suggests dogs and humans began sharing their lives about 13,000 years ago. Dogs are naturally affectionate, there are incredible stories of the loyalty dogs have shown to their human friends. Their instinct is to want to bond; in fact, they usually give owners unconditional love every day.

Studies have indicated that dogs can express empathy to humans. In other studies, researchers have found dogs can understand verbal and physical expressions from humans, as well as their facial expressions. Dogs protect our borders at airports, bring independence to people with sight issues, soothe autistic children, recognize seizures in their owners, assist law enforcement personnel, locate bombs, and numerous other positive returns. In return, they ask for recognition and kindness from the owner.

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

**FED. OF SENIOR CITIZENS & PENSIONERS
- NDP SOCIAL INVESTMENT PROG.**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday evening I had the welcome opportunity to give the keynote address to the meeting of the Federation of Senior Citizens and Pensioners of Nova Scotia, in Truro, and I'm pleased that the President Bernie LaRusic and the First Vice President Alma Johnston, will be here in the gallery today.

The hundreds gathered for Tuesday's banquet were very receptive to the message that I had to deliver about the NDP program of social investment, with a clear focus on reducing income inequality and eliminating poverty. In Nova Scotia the number of older adults living on low incomes is rising. In the first quarter of this century the senior population of this province is expected to grow by nearly 71 per cent, and the basic idea behind social investment is that people have to live. If we want to achieve this thing called prosperity it's time we actually started to invest in people.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

GERO, RICHARD (BUZZ) - BIRTHDAY WISHES

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge a long-serving staff member here at the Legislature, who so happens to be celebrating his birthday today, Mr. Richard Gero.

Richard, or Buzz as we like to call him, has been a member of the Commissionaires since his retirement from the Royal Canadian Navy in 2007, and has served as the site supervisor here at Province House since 2013. Richard has always worked hard to ensure

that all of our staff and us members of the Legislature have felt safe and secure anytime we've stepped into this building. He, along with all our Commissionaires, show a great deal of dedication to their duty, which enables the rest of us to do our work here in the Legislature.

On behalf of all Nova Scotians, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the House join me in commending Richard for his hard work and dedication, ensuring that anyone who comes into Province House is safe, as well as join me in wishing him a very Happy Birthday. Happy Birthday, Buzz. (Applause)

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

JONES, DEIDRA - ATHLETIC/ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour volleyball player Deidra Jones of the St. Thomas University Tommies, who has been named an Atlantic College Athletic Association Second Team All-Star for 2016. Deidra is from Coxheath. She was also named the top offensive player for her team. She recorded 82 kills and 95 digs this season. The hitter and Riverview High School graduate is in her third year of university volleyball, after spending two seasons with the Cape Breton Capers.

Congratulations to Deidra Jones on her athletic and academic achievements, and we wish her well and the very best in her promising future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

SYRIAN REFUGEES - FOOD BANK USAGE

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, as Syrian refugees begin to settle into their new homes in Nova Scotia, there is a troubling trend emerging: Syrian refugees are now making up a larger and larger portion of food bank users. According to CBC, Syrians now make up to 60 per cent of clients at home food banks.

With prices for fresh fruit, vegetables, and meat skyrocketing this year, it is becoming difficult for all Nova Scotians, including our new neighbours, to afford a healthy diet.

Mr. Speaker, much more needs to be done by our government in order to ensure that these new families have the opportunity to thrive in Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

CDN. CANCER SOC. RELAY FOR LIFE - ANNIV. (10th)

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important upcoming anniversary in East Hants. This year marks the 10th Anniversary of the Canadian Cancer Society Relay for Life in our community. This is a highly successful annual fundraising event, having raised, on average, \$45,000 to \$50,000 per year. This year the funds raised will help renovate The Lodge, which provides accommodations for those who must travel to Halifax to receive treatment for cancer. The relay will also have a local survivor as an event ambassador.

Ms. Crystal Conway-Gottwald is an inspiring woman who is a four-time cancer survivor. She has battled Hodgkin's lymphoma, a cancer of the nervous system, a form of thyroid cancer and, most recently, breast cancer. Her first fight was when she was only 14 years old. She has recently told her incredible story of resilience and zest for life in a book aptly entitled *Never Lose Hope*.

Mr. Speaker, it is these inspiring people and dedicated volunteers who truly make our communities great, and I wish them much success.

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

WILSON, LISA/NURSES - THANK

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I understand that this is a time to recognize nurses, and I want to take a moment to acknowledge a nurse I have worked with many times over the years. Lisa Wilson is a member of a most capable palliative care team associated with the Colchester-East Hants Hospital in Truro. There are no limits to what she will do to meet the needs of a family in the palliative care program.

Lisa has been a palliative care nurse for over 20 years. She is competent in what she does, she has a caring heart which knows no limits, and she is funny and draws people to her. Today I wish her all the best, and I thank her for what she has taught me in dealing with people in crises who are palliative, and their family and friends.

I hope you will join me in thanking Lisa and all those nurses who give their caring energy in this way.

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

LOGAN, DONALD: DOCTOR SHORTAGE - EFFECT

HON. DAVID WILSON: There is a doctor shortage in Nova Scotia. We know the challenge rural communities have had in recruitment and retention of physicians for some

time now, and in a long line of Nova Scotians who are now finding themselves without a doctor, my constituent Donald Logan.

Mr. Logan has multiple chronic health conditions and now is faced with finding a new doctor. He is concerned that the continuity of care he would receive from a walk-in clinic won't be enough to manage his health care needs. Recent changes to the bylaws has restricted issuing new doctors' licences in the central region, and family practices have found that these changes are making it more and more difficult for them to find a physician to take over an existing practice.

When will the government live up to their election promise of a doctor for every Nova Scotian?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

METLEJ, SARKIS (SAM) YOUSSEF: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

MS. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of a beloved gentleman, a long-term neighbour and a cousin, Sarkis Sam Youssef Metlej, who passed away October 28, 2015, in Halifax. Sarkis was born in Diman, Lebanon, in 1940 and immigrated to Halifax in 1965. He was a pillar in the community. Coming from humble beginnings, he worked tirelessly and became a prominent real estate developer in Halifax. He worked hand-in-hand with his wife of 45 years, Renee, and two sons, Peter and Paul, who will ensure the family business continues to thrive.

Sarkis was a man of strong faith, and was a proud and generous member of Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Parish. He was predeceased by his parents and two sons, Youssef and Tony. I often remember the good times, the many parties, and long trips my family and I shared with him and his entire family. I can tell you that he has been gravely missed and will not be forgotten. May God rest his soul.

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

CUMBERLAND NORTH MLA - MINING COMMENTS

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Yesterday, in an attempt to be clever, the member for Cumberland North insulted every Nova Scotian who makes their living from mining. To reduce it to his terms, thousands of Nova Scotians have made a living and provided for their families by poking a hole in the ground. We know that good jobs come from those holes in the ground, about 5,500 jobs, mostly in rural Nova Scotia. When the member for Cumberland North meets someone from the salt mine of Pugwash, does he greet them with a Beverly Hillbillies joke, or does he call them Jed Clampett?

While the member thinks it's funny to look down his nose at the people who make a living from mining, I wonder what's so wrong with being Jed Clampett. What's wrong with poking a hole in the ground and cashing your cheque at the end of the week? As Jed would say, when miners hear about the member for Cumberland North's comments, they're going to be mad as a mule chewing on bumblebees, and I can't say I blame them. As Jed once said, you hadn't ought to yell at him, he's a government man.

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

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMN. - CALLS TO ACTION

MS. LENORE ZANN: We have yet to hear from this Liberal Government on the provincial Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. Provinces across Canada are living up to the landmark report released last year, but Nova Scotia still seems to be lagging behind. These Calls to Action are not difficult. They just require the political will to act. When the TRC released its report, Justice Murray Sinclair stated that reconciliation is about forging and maintaining respectful relationships. There are no shortcuts. There are no shortcuts to acting on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and our province's First Nation communities deserve more from this government.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

VALLEY BUSINESSES - COMMUN. CONTRIBUTION

MR. JOHN LOHR: I rise to give a well-deserved shout-out to a number of local Valley businesses that stepped up to the plate in support of one of their own. When Special Olympian Phil Brown's Norco bike was stolen from the local mall, it didn't take long before Facebook help was on the way. Within a few hours, 600 people shared and thousands were aware. When K-Rock, the local radio station, began announcing the loss, the owners of GameTronics and Kentville Kings Arms Pub along with Valley Stove & Cycle came to the rescue to present Phil with a new bike. Phil is a well-respected local athlete who has represented his community, province, and country with enthusiasm, positivity, and awards success.

These individuals demonstrated the compassion, appreciation, and contribution to community that is found all over our fine Valley. I am proud to express my sincere admiration towards these businesses that stepped in to help a very worthy citizen.

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

DFO: SCIENCE-RELATED JOBS - N.S. EXPLORE

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: I'm pleased to hear that the federal government is looking to add 135 science-related personnel to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. This move is long overdue after years of cutbacks in this area. The fishing industry is a staple of our provincial economy and the backbone of many communities across this province. Many times in this House, I have highlighted the importance of understanding the science behind the catch. As our water temperatures continue to change, so too does the behaviour of different species. I want to encourage the provincial Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture to work with his federal counterpart to ensure that some of these new hirings will be exploring the waters of Nova Scotia so that our lucrative fishing industry can evolve with the changing times.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

**BAKER, COURTNEY: ACADEMIC/SCHOLASTIC EXPERIENCES
- WELL WISHES**

HON. MARK FUREY: I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize an outstanding athlete who continues to raise the bar and challenge herself to excel. Courtney Baker is a graduate of Bridgewater Junior/Senior High School who played on numerous provincial championship teams during her high school years. As a setter with Dalhousie University's Varsity Volleyball team, Courtney continues to excel in both athletics and academics. Her skills have been recently recognized on a national scale with her recent selection to the Women's National Senior Team program.

I want to take this opportunity to wish Courtney all the best in her future academic and scholastic experiences and wish her well in her future endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

PICTOU CO. TAX CLINICS - VOLS. THANK

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to applaud the volunteers involved in hosting tax clinics throughout Pictou County, throughout the months of March and April. The program is run by volunteers Allan Murray, Mary MacDonald, and Shirley Lennon, who have all been helping people with their taxes for a number of years.

This small but dedicated team of volunteers do more than 2,000 returns each year, all at no cost to the people they serve. Their group receives training and support from Revenue Canada, and all volunteers in turn provide the support for free.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude towards these individuals for providing such an incredible service to our community.

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

HFX. TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION STRIKE: LAE MIN. - STEP UP

HON. DAVID WILSON: Today marks the 111th day that the dedicated workers at *The Chronicle Herald*, belonging to the Halifax Typographical Union, have been on strike at Canada's oldest independent newsroom.

This dispute has gone on entirely too long and has put the newspaper that was founded in 1874, at great risk, Mr. Speaker. Nova Scotians are cancelling their subscriptions and businesses have stopped advertising in *The Chronicle Herald*, as a means to get the employer back to the table to bargain in good faith.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Nova Scotia are stepping up for the workers of the newspaper, and we're calling on the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education and her government to do the same.

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

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of the House to direct their attention to the Speaker's Gallery where we are joined today by Margaret Currie. She's a woman from my area who's treated me like family since I was young, driving me to the rink, feeding me - all that good stuff. I'd ask the whole House to welcome her here today. (Applause.)

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

CURRIE, MARGARET: SERV. - THANK

MR. BEN JESSOME: I would like to extend congratulations and well wishes to Hammonds Plains resident and long-time *Chronicle Herald* employee Margaret Currie, who has recently retired after 43 years of service to our local paper. Margie started with the *Herald* in 1972 and has worked stints in advertising, circulation, and most recently in custom content, making a lasting impression on her work colleagues and a great contribution to the newspaper's continued success.

I have been fortunate to have known Margie for most of my life and can only assume that she brought the same dedication and joyfulness to her work that she has always brought to her community. She will be sorely missed by the *Herald* family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I congratulate Margie for her life's work, and offer a heartfelt hope that she enjoys her retirement as much as she enjoyed her career. Thank you for your service to community, and my family, and the paper.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle Barrington.

COOK, ALLAN EUGENE - LT.-GOV.'S MEDAL

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, a ceremony to present the Lieutenant Governor's Medal to Grade 11 students from the Tri-County Regional School Board was held at Lockeport Regional High School on April 11th. Among those being recognized was Allan Eugene Cook.

Allan is an active volunteer at BMHS, he is in the French Immersion Program and works diligently to achieve a high academic standing, which has resulted in winning a Principal's Academic award last year. Over the last two years Allan has received various certificates of recognition for highest average in a number of subjects, and was chosen to be on the BMHS Math League. Outside of school, Allan volunteers with various organizations and has worked with students as a teen math mentor.

I would like to congratulate Allan on a job well done.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Fairview-Clayton Park.

FERGUSON, VANESSA: WORK/IDEAS - COMMEND

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on an important first for Nova Scotia. Yesterday Canada's largest stock exchange, the TSX, was opened remotely in Dartmouth by our Premier and Vanessa Ferguson, a 23-year-old community college student.

This special event, which opened trading for the day, was done to celebrate the growing innovation and entrepreneurialism here in Nova Scotia. Vanessa is representative of the enthusiastic and hard-working young people in our province who are changing the culture of doing business for the better, and moving us on a path to great success through innovation.

Ms. Ferguson expressed her confidence that business in this province will continue to thrive and that she plans to be part of that growth when she graduates in the summer.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House join me in commending Vanessa and all our young people for their hard work and new ideas that will help to make this province stronger.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

SCHWARTZ, EAMONN - UN STATUS OF WOMEN'S CONF. (60th)

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, Eamonn Schwartz, a young man from Canning, recently spent a week as a delegate attending the 60th United Nations Status of Women's Conference in New York City through a non-governmental organization called Pathways to Peace. Eamonn was able to sit in on round table discussions about recognizing the vital role of women as agents of development. Among topics discussed were equal pay for work of equal value.

In addition to his attendance at this conference, Eamonn was able to visit some of the United Nations buildings and participate in some explorations of where the UN Security Council meets.

I want to congratulate Eamonn on his ingenuity and innovative thinking, his interest in national and world affairs, and wish him every success when he attends Concordia University this Fall.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

RITEMAN, PHILIP - SOVEREIGN'S MEDAL FOR VOLUNTEERS

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to tell you about an honour one of my constituents received earlier today. Mr. Philip Riteman of Bedford is a Holocaust survivor. He has been telling his story of survival to young people across Canada and the U.S. for more than 25 years. He touches the hearts and minds of his audience, teaching awareness and compassion as ways to stop hate and spread love.

Earlier today the Lieutenant Governor presented Philip with the first Sovereign's Medal to be awarded in Nova Scotia at a ceremony at Government House. The Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers was established in 2015 to recognize any person who is a Canadian citizen who has made significant, sustained and unpaid contributions to their community in Canada or abroad. The Sovereign's Medal was presented to Mr. Riteman for his longstanding commitment to educating about the Holocaust. He is a justly deserving recipient of the medal and if any of the members have not heard him speak, I would urge them to catch one of his talks because I assure them that they won't forget it.

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

N.S. SKILLS COMP.: COL.-MUSQUODOBOIT VALLEY COMPETITORS - CONGRATS.

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Recently Skills Canada-Nova Scotia held the Nova Scotia Skills Competition. More than 300 students and apprentices from across the province converged to show off their talents in 45 skilled trades and technologies. Most

gold medalists advanced to the Skills Canada National Competition as members of Team Nova Scotia.

I wish to congratulate all the competitors in this challenging event, but in particular, would like to acknowledge the accomplishments of the following students from within my constituency: Breanna Hatch from Musquodoboit Rural High School won bronze in the Job Skill Demonstration; Hunter Redmond and Marika Schenkels from South Colchester Academy won bronze in TV Video Production; Bryanna Richardson from South Colchester Academy won silver in Photography; and Nicole Hamilton, an apprentice from Upper Stewiacke, won gold in the Car Painting category and will be advancing as a member of Team Nova Scotia in the Skills Canada National Competition. I congratulate those individuals.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

ROSS, DANIEL/ROSS SCREENPRINT LTD. - ANNIV. 25th

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize an Antigonish business that has been in operation for 25 years now, Ross Screenprint Limited. Daniel Ross was just 16 years old when he decided to develop his passion for cool T-shirts into a business. In the past quarter century Ross Screenprint has evolved from a simple T-shirt company to a full service, screen print, embroidery and promotion product supplier that serves customers around the world.

Mr. Speaker, Ross Screenprint has not only become a successful business but also a role model for community support. Daniel and his crew have gone above and beyond in supporting local events, community groups, sports teams and causes. They've provided countless discounts to worthwhile causes, have sponsored numerous events, and have even given young entrepreneurs free supervised access to their silk-screening equipment to help cut down on production costs.

Daniel has also personally taken a leadership role in our business community, being past president of the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce and a mentor to numerous entrepreneurs in the area. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Daniel Ross and the entire Ross Screenprint on a tremendous 25 years in business.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

W. PICTOU CONS. SCH./TRENTON ELEM. - GO CLEAN GET GREEN

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge West Pictou Consolidated School and Trenton Elementary for raising awareness for the Go Clean Get Green pickup that took place on Earth Day. At West Pictou's fashion show,

students demonstrated how items can be recycled in various and imaginative ways. At Trenton Elementary, students recited a pledge and sang a song about the Go Clean Get Green campaign. The GCGG founding chairman and current committee member, Jim Shaw, also talked with the students about what they can do and why it is important to keep the earth clean.

Mr. Speaker, I commend these local schools and young students for helping to raise awareness for this year's Go Clean Get Green community litter pickup campaign. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton-Richmond.

RCL BR. 150 (ARICHAT) - BATTLE OF THE ATL. EVENT (25th)

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, on May 1st, Royal Canadian Legion Branch 150 in Arichat put on their 20th annual event to celebrate the Battle of the Atlantic. The Battle of the Atlantic began in 1939 and ran until the end of the war. Fifteen hundred souls lost their lives, and many others bravely fought for us, keeping vital supply lines open during the six years of the battle. A number of Isle Madame and area residents perished during the Battle of the Atlantic, and they were remembered at the celebration and a video produced by Telile Community Television and the Branch 150 executive. Every year, this event is put on with care, respect, and dedication.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating all the Navy sailors and Merchant Marines who made the ultimate sacrifice and those who came home, and continue to honour their memories.

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

**COX, SHANN/GLACE BAY FEMALE BANTAM AA MINERS
- LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Shann Cox of Coxheath and her team, the Glace Bay female Bantam AA Miners, as they finished up their 2015-16 season in fine style. Shann and her team ended their season as the South Conference League champions.

It is a pleasure to congratulate Shann Cox along with all her teammates as well as her coaches for all their hard work and dedication that they put into making their team champions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MAGUIRE, RENA: ROLE MODEL - THANK

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, four years ago today at St. Patrick's Church on Brunswick Street, I became a lucky man when Rena Catherine Moir said I do. But most looking from the outside in would say we are an odd couple, what with her being smart, funny, caring, and beautiful, and me - well, me being me. Our love has worked.

She's not only my role model, she's also my best friend, the love of my life, and my rock. Over the last four years, she has given me two beautiful children, Oliver and Ruphina, with a third due in October. It has been a busy four years. So to Rena, thank you for the past four years, and here's to many more. I love you.

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

BMO BLDG.: OLD SYDNEY SOC. - DONATION

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday, downtown Sydney received fantastic news with the announcement that BMO will donate their historic Charlotte Street property to the Old Sydney Society for \$1, turn the building into a museum for visitors and residents, and will also become the new home for the Old Sydney Society. This is one of Sydney's oldest and most beautiful buildings, and this news saves this historic property. I want to thank BMO for realizing the historic importance of this building and the generosity to the Old Sydney Society. I also want to recognize the Old Sydney Society for making this agreement a reality and for their tireless work and advocacy to preserve our cultural and natural heritage. Thank you.

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

**LEBLANC, PÈRE MAURICE:
CHORALE DE LA BAIE SAINTE-MARIE - MERCI**

MR. GORDON WILSON: Merci, Monsieur le Président. Je voudrais remercier le Père Maurice LeBlanc qui a mis bas son bâton de chef d'orchestre dès la fin de la pièce, Alléluia du Messie, la dernière pièce de son concert de Noël. Natif de Pubnico et ordonné en 1949, il est retourné à l'Université Ste-Anne dans l'année 1970, cette fois, comme professeur. Là, il a fondé la Chorale de la Baie Sainte-Marie et a recommencé la fanfare de l'université. Dans le futur, le Père Maurice va continuer d'être occupé. Il va continuer d'être membre de la chorale et d'être responsable pour les sacrements à deux églises. Au Père Maurice, soyez assuré que votre chorale et votre fanfare sont entre de bonnes mains sous la direction des anciens élèves. Merci.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Fairview-Clayton Park.

FARES, MONIQUE: SIGNATURE HEALTH - OPENING

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Monique Fares, a young woman who had a dream of working in health and wellness and owning her own business. After completing both her Bachelor of Science degree in kinesiology and her Master's in Business Administration, she combined her newly-gained knowledge and her natural entrepreneurial instinct to create her own business in Fairview-Clayton Park, Signature Health. Signature Health is a unique business that provides corporations with the opportunity to help their employees pay as much attention to their physical and mental health as they do to their business. As well, Monique believes in giving back to her community and is involved with many community organizations such as, the IWK, Diman Association Canada, the Lebanese Chamber of Commerce, and her special interests within the Halifax Special Olympics.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize Monique Fares and her new business Signature Health, and wish her success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton-Richmond.

RICHMOND AMATEUR BASEBALL ASSOC. - SEASON (46th)

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, we're approaching the beginning of another season of RABA Baseball. This will be the 46th consecutive season for Richmond Amateur Baseball Association. Taking part this year will be teams from Petit de Grat, Louisdale, Inverness, Port Hawkesbury, St. Peter's, Isle Madame, as well as the defending champion Little Anse Hawks.

The Hawks will be looking for their 4th consecutive championship, but I'm expecting strong runs from all the teams, especially the legendary Red Caps of Petit de Grat. It's hard to beat an afternoon or evening at the ball park, especially when watching tightly contested matchups, and with long running rivalries, and players representing the same teams represented by their fathers and grandfathers, the RABA League is something very special.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking the organizers, players, and coaches for everything they do to bring entertaining baseball every year to diamonds around the Strait area.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

FIORE BOTANICA: GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS - FEATURE PRODUCTS

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to recognize the Lunenburg-based business that has gone Hollywood. Fiore Botanica, a natural skincare

business, recently had its products featured at the Golden Globes. Their products were included in the gift bags presented to award nominees and presenters.

Business partners Kathleen Quinlan and Phaedra Charlton-Huskings, moved their booming business from Liverpool to Lunenburg. Relocating to Lunenburg, the partners have shown a good business can operate almost anywhere, and they have also shown how rural communities can contribute to the provincial economy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of the House join me in congratulating Fiore Botanica for having its products featured at the Golden Globe Awards, and for furthering Lunenburg's reputation on the global map, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid on an introduction.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to draw the attention of the members to the east gallery where we have members of the Halifax Typographical Union. They're here on their 111th day on strike. We have Frank Campbell who has 19 years' service; Ingrid Bulmer, 20 years; Christine Madill, 28 years; Clair McIlveen, 30 and a half years; Nadine Fownes, 26 years; JoAnn Alberstat, 27 years; Randy Jones, 31 years; Clare Mellor, 30 years; Bill Power, 31 years; Lynne Keane, 29 years; Tim Arsenault, 30 years; Tracy MacLaughlin, 23 years; Stephen Forest, 30 years; Karen Ware, 27 years; Ed MacLellan, 28 years; Sherri Borden Colley, 21 years; Willy Palov, 21 years; Brian Freeman, 18 years; Stuart Peddle, 15 years; Glen MacDonald, 20 years; Monty Mosher, 32 years; Stephen Cooke, 19 years; and I'm sorry if I missed anybody. I wonder if all members could give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

CABOT TRAIL RELAY RACE: RACE CHAIR/VOLS. - THANK

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, later this month almost 1,200 runners will be taking part in the 29th running of the Cabot Trail Relay Race. The 17-stage, 298-kilometre race has attracted 70 teams this year, and will lead the runners through some of the most beautiful scenery in the world, from the steep mountains of Cape Breton Highlands to the gently rolling Margaree Valley. The race begins May 28th at 7:00 a.m. at the Gaelic College in St. Ann's, and runs around the clock, concluding Sunday morning at the courthouse in Baddeck.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the House to join me in thanking Race Chair, Dave Parkinson, and all the volunteers that make this event such a huge success, and wish all the runners the very best of luck in the race, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. That concludes the time allotted for members' statements. We'll now get ready for Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers, and we'll wait out the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition

PREM. - WALK-IN CLINICS: DOCTORS ATTENDANCE - DENIAL EXPLAIN

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: My question is to the Premier. Last year the government began limiting doctors from working in walk-in clinics. In fact, an order from the Nova Scotia Health Authority informs doctors that, "Requests for new physicians to work in walk-in clinics will most likely be denied." I'll table that order, Mr. Speaker.

For thousands of Nova Scotians who don't have a family doctor, a walk-in clinic is the next best way for them to get the health care that they need. The step after that would be an emergency room. So I'd like to ask the Premier, why is his government making it harder for families without doctors to at least go to a walk-in clinic?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): I want to thank the honourable member for the question. We continue to work with the Health Authority to ensure that we continue to recruit and provide doctors across our province. There are many ways that that will be delivered. In some cases, some of those doctors will work in walk-in clinics. Some of them will actually do both, work in a walk-in clinic as well as run a practice. It depends on each physician and how they want to operate their private business.

We're going to continue to work with the Health Authority to make sure that we have physicians across this province as well as working with other health care clinicians, to ensure that we provide the appropriate health care team in communities across Nova Scotia.

MR. BAILLIE: The Premier promised every Nova Scotia family would have a doctor if there was a Liberal Government, but that is not happening. There are thousands of families today without access to a family doctor, and yesterday the Minister of Health and Wellness wrote off 40,000 of them by saying that they don't want one. That's not what people were promised. They need a family doctor. When they don't have a family doctor, they should at least be able to rely on a walk-in clinic.

The Premier says, well there's a new plan, that they'll work collaboratively. You know what, Mr. Speaker? The Health Authority itself says that new collaborative plan is

at least five to 10 years away. Why is it okay to leave Nova Scotia families without family health care at a clinic when the plan to replace it is at least five to 10 years away?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. He's completely wrong. If he had at all been paying attention to what's been happening across this province, he would recognize that health care teams, collaborative practices are working across our province, with nurse practitioners, with doctors . . .

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Does everyone have a doctor?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member for Pictou East can try to perform and have some performance if he'd like. The reality of it is, we're going to continue to work with our Health Authority. We're going to continue to work with those Nova Scotians who are focused on the future. We're going to continue to work with our health care teams to make sure that we're providing the appropriate health care services across our province.

MR. BAILLIE: It is the Premier who is completely wrong. Dr. Lynne Harrigan, vice-president of the Nova Scotia Health Authority says that trying to build up a system of collaborative care practices “. . . is a long-term process that will take five to 10 years.”

Families need doctors now. They were promised doctors now. It is a fact that there are thousands of Nova Scotia families without access to a family doctor today. When they don't have one, they should at least be able to rely on walk-in clinics. Until there's a new plan in place, it's only fair to allow them to use those walk-in clinics.

I'll ask the Premier, will he reverse the ban on adding new doctors to walk-in clinics until there really are enough doctors to supply all Nova Scotia families?

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. If he actually listened to what he was reading there, what Dr. Harrigan has said - there are collaborative practices being created across our province today. We're continuing to work with staff, continuing to make sure we provide that collaborative team approach.

The honourable member would know the walk-in clinics that physicians are working in today are not changing. That is not changing. They can continue to work in those walk-in clinics. It is our hope that across our province we're going to continue to work with Nova Scotian communities to make sure that we have a collaborative health care team that Nova Scotians will call their primary health care team delivery.

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

PREM.: OPIOID USE (N.S.) - POSITION

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Recent charges against a doctor in Tantallon have shed light on ongoing concerns about opiate use in Nova Scotia. A UN report says that on a per capita basis, Canada consumes more prescription drugs than any other country in the world. In March, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published guidelines urging doctors to try non-drug approaches first to treat chronic pain and to prescribe opiates sparingly, and I'll table that.

I ask the Premier, what is the government's position on the current state of opiate use in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Obviously health care providers - doctors, pharmacists across this province are people who prescribe the medications. The honourable member, in her question, raised an important piece that I think many Nova Scotians are looking for alternate ways of dealing with health care issues. We've seen it and I would add to that piece that we, as citizens, need to begin to take control of our own health care, ensuring that we continue to begin to live healthier lifestyles.

I said the other exciting piece, we are a generation right now that is going to have an opportunity not only to do that, but we have an opportunity to shape what our health care delivery model looks like with the current announcement around the new hospital and some services being moved out into the community where people are living. This is an exciting time in terms of the health care delivery model change that we can make for the next 50 years. But when it comes to prescribing prescriptions to patients across this province, it obviously would be between the doctor and their patient.

MS. MANCINI: Just few weeks ago the Auditor General was critical of this government's sluggish pace in implementing a prescription drug monitoring program. Today the Department of Health and Wellness has said there will be further delays in implementing this program. Mr. Speaker, in response to a lack of government action on this issue, Nova Scotia's College of Physicians and Surgeons has begun its own initiative to rein in opiate prescriptions.

So I ask the Premier, why is the government dragging its feet on this serious issue?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. We continue to work with our health care providers across this province. She referenced the physician organization, we'll continue to work with them and we'll ensure that that is implemented as quickly as possible.

MS. MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, for those suffering from addiction to opioids, access to health services can make the difference between life and death. This morning our caucus

spoke with a man in Cape Breton who said that access to a methadone program helped save his son's life.

In late March, Direction 180 in Halifax announced it had to lay off staff, reduce its hours, and stop accepting new patients because of a lack of funding. It has made an appeal to the provincial government for more funding.

I ask the Premier, will his government answer the call for more funding to support the work of Direction 180?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. That request would have gone to the Minister of Health and Wellness. We have provided the same funding they were provided with last year, and the request that has come in is being reviewed.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - DOCTOR/PATIENT RATIO:
ACTIVITIES - INCLUSION**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness.

The minister and his Party need to find a way to address the doctor shortage in Cape Breton. They, in their campaign, promised a doctor for every Nova Scotian, but when it comes down to it the minister relies on statistics rather than listening to the stories of real people who need doctors. You know, Mr. Speaker, the first step is for him to admit there is a problem, before he can fix it.

My question to the minister is quite simple, is the minister aware of what a doctor's activities have to be for them to be included in the doctor-patient ratio that he is so fond of quoting?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: It is a very important issue, not just for Cape Bretoners but for all Nova Scotians, that we have strong recruitment, and for the first time the NSHA now has a team that is working every day, literally around the clock, to recruit for the province. We have 10 new doctors going to Cape Breton. We've just been able to fill two for Neils Harbour that were so difficult to get places for. We're making progress, Mr. Speaker, and we'll continue to make more.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, many of the doctors in Cape Breton, and in other areas as well, have large practices with well over 1,000 patients. When those doctors leave or retire it leaves thousands of people without a doctor. The minister is so fond of saying

that there are 10 more doctors coming to Cape Breton - does he know that there are 16 who are leaving?

Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware of how many of the new doctors coming to Cape Breton Island will be taking over full family practices and how many Cape Bretoners will still have no doctor?

MR. GLAVINE: We are on a path to improve the recruitment process for all of the province. And yes, while 10 will be coming this year, 10 more are being recruited for Cape Breton and that will give us a plus four.

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

LAE: THE CHRONICLE HERALD STRIKE - GOV'T. INTERVENTION

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, it has been 111 days since the 57 dedicated workers of *The Chronicle Herald* have been on strike at Canada's oldest independent newsroom. We're joined today by many of those dedicated workers who are on strike and are hoping to get back to work soon.

The Halifax Typographical Union has written to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education asking her to appoint a mediator to try to assist the parties in reaching a settlement. I'd like to ask the minister, does the minister agree that it's time that the government step in and appoint a mediator to hopefully resolve this ongoing strike?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I respect the collective bargaining process and remain neutral during negotiations and labour disputes. It's best to let the parties speak for themselves but I can confirm that a mediation officer from LAE's Conciliation Services division has already been appointed in the matter. The officer and conciliation services remain available to the parties and willing to assist in any way.

I have also asked the Chief Industrial Relations Officer to contact both parties to reiterate this and determine if they may be of assistance. I would ask the honourable member to join me in strongly encouraging both parties to return to the bargaining table to work towards reaching an agreement.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I respect that the minister wants to stay neutral but when we're dealing with these workers, many of them have been working over 30 years at this independent newspaper, I think the government does have a role to play. I'll stand here in my place and encourage the government to do whatever they can to go in that direction.

I know the workers are willing to go there. It's the employer who needs some nudging from the government. We've seen the government refuse to stop advertising in the

newspaper. That just helps them continue the business they are doing now with scab workers. At least will the Premier agree to stop advertising in *The Chronicle Herald* to hopefully push the employer to get to a mediator to hopefully settle this strike?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The Minister of Labour and Advanced Education encouraged both sides to get back to the table to get an agreement that both sides can live with.

We're going to continue to communicate with Nova Scotians across the province. We're going to use the forms available that we can, to make sure that we get our message out on programs and directions the province is moving forward with.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HEALTH & WELLNESS - ABERDEEN HOSP.: 3rd SURGEON - ADD

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Two surgeons at the Aberdeen Hospital in New Glasgow are going above and beyond what should be expected of them. Basically they have to be on call 24/7, that is they are actually expected to work every second weekend, even after they have already put in long hours during the week that are physically exhausting.

In order to rectify the situation, a locum is brought in every three weeks. Mr. Speaker, this is extremely expensive, using valuable health care dollars, paying for their flight, paying for their lodging, paying for their food and other essentials.

My question to the minister is, would the minister agree that this situation at the Aberdeen Hospital is unacceptable and the provincial Health Authority should have added a third surgeon, to avoid present personnel burnout and also save taxpayer dollars long before today?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. He raises a very important point. The Aberdeen Hospital has full surgical services, including a very specialized orthopaedic team there. I know Dr. Bill Lowe has taken on recruitment in a very significant way, both for GPs and specialists for that zone. We hope to have results from those efforts to be seen very soon.

MR. DUNN: We are rapidly approaching a dilemma in Pictou County. Unfortunately, a family doctor recently passed away and at least four other doctors with large practices are past retirement age. Another family doctor is absent due to health reasons. We're already facing a doctor shortage, and the problem is going to escalate. My question to the minister is, will the minister admit that Pictou County is facing a doctor shortage and there doesn't appear to be a solution in the foreseeable future?

MR. GLAVINE: I met just this week with CEO Janet Knox, as well as board chairman Steven Parker. In the first year of the Health Authority's operation, they needed to look at a whole array of programs and standards across the province. Stabilizing the financial system of the Health Authority has been very successful in its first year of operation. This year one of their top three priorities is a constant plan to recruit for the needs that we have right across the province.

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

PREM. - HIGH-VOLUME FRACTURING: DEFINITION - RELEASE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: My question is to the Premier. Over 18 months ago the government banned high-volume hydraulic fracturing without even knowing what it was. Nova Scotians were promised a definition by the end of 2014, with public consultations to follow. The Department of Energy was ready to go both with a definition and the public consultations that Nova Scotians had been promised, but the government told the department no, don't go forward.

I'd like to ask the Premier, why did his government reject the department's plan to release the definition of high-volume hydraulic fracturing to the public?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As I've said in this House, one of the great successes off our coast is the great work begun under the MacDonald Government, which was mapping the ocean floor to identify what was there, to be able to take out to the industry. We're in the process of mapping onshore to identify if the resource exists, where it exists, and the volume of it.

The honourable member would also know that there had been some drilling that took place in, I believe, Hants County. All that was left behind was fracking waste. We spent an awful lot of time dealing with that issue. I think it's appropriate before we go to any community, that we can honestly tell them what we can do with that waste and what's appropriate to deal it in a safe environmental way.

MR. BAILLIE: Our offshore has seen billions of dollars in private investment and thousands of jobs. We have an opportunity to do the same thing here with onshore gas, but as long as the government has no idea what it is they've banned, not a single cent is going to be developed to make it environmentally responsible or to allow the jobs that we need to come from that resource.

Now we know from a freedom of information request, which I will table, that the department does have a definition of what the government banned, but they won't tell the public what it is. I'd like to ask the Premier, what is the definition of high-volume hydraulic fracturing that his government is hiding from the public?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Again, I want to tell him the work is happening across the province. We're doing the onshore mapping to identify whether or not that resource even exists and to what volume it exists in the province. Again, I go back to tell him that when there was some activity that took place in Hants County, the only thing the province got out of that was fracking waste. We've been dealing with that issue. We're going to make sure that it can be done in the most appropriate environmental way.

We're going to continue to do so by working with our partners across the province. As the honourable member would know, before there's any activity on land, we have a duty to consult in this province. None of that has been done prior to that. There's ongoing work. The minister is looking across the country at the activity that's taking place. We will continue to work with industry. We will continue to work with communities across this province to make sure that we maximize the resources that we have in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

PREM. - WORKERS' COMP. SYSTEM: RYL. COMM. - STRIKE

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is also for the Premier. During the 2013 election campaign, the Premier promised the Pictou County Injured Workers' Association that he would take action to fix the workers' compensation system. He also said that he saw the need to increase benefits, and he promised a Royal Commission into the system. Two and a half years later, we've seen nothing on this.

My question for the Premier is very simple. Does he intend to honour his promise and strike a Royal Commission?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to thank workers across our province, the people at WCB have been working with workers across Nova Scotia. As you know there's a huge unfunded liability there, they've been working through that process. We're going to continue to work with them to make sure we have in place a system that, if any worker in the province requires support, financial support, that is the appropriate amount for that worker to look after his family if they've been injured on the job.

MR. HOUSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, it was a simple question: Keep the promise, or not? I think what we're hearing today after a few people were thanked, and a few other things, I think what we're seeing today is injured workers can join the list of people who work in the film industry that had a promise broken by this government, and they can join the list of people that expected fixed election dates that had that promise broken by this government.

Today it's a very simple question. I'm going to give the Premier one more chance to see if he's decided over the course of two and half years whether or not he will honour his promise that he would strike a Royal Commission. Mr. Premier, will you keep that promise or not?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question, I think he's being a bit loose with the facts, Mr. Speaker, but then again he's auditioning for a future job, and he takes every opportunity when he gets to the House, instead of actually dealing with the facts he's auditioning for a future job (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. He continues to audition for a future job. In turn, if he wants to solve problems for the people of Nova Scotia (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: I encourage the honourable member, if he wants to solve problems for Nova Scotia maybe he should stand up and be thoughtful and worry about the people instead of auditioning for a job that's not vacant at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

HEALTH & WELLNESS - PAP TESTS: WAIT TIMES

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my office has received a number of calls from people in the Pictou County area saying that the wait time for PAP tests has increased on average from two weeks to seven weeks. We've been able to confirm that delay by calling a number of clinics and individuals.

I'm wondering, could the Minister of Health and Wellness explain what changes, if any, have occurred, resulting in the longer wait times, and whether that delay is just limited to Pictou County?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I am not provided with every diagnostic test in terms of wait times. I certainly know those major ones that are a constant concern to Nova Scotians, and what I'll tell the honourable member is that I will look into that issue for him and provide as to whether or not it's right across the county, or if it is one particular clinic that may be affected by a change in practice.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate very sincerely that answer. In looking into it, we've been told by medical staff at the clinics that the delay is because a change either closed the lab in Pictou County that was doing the tests, or that they're no longer doing these tests and that the tests are now shipped to the Valley and to Truro labs.

I'm just wondering when he looks into this, and I understand he doesn't have the answer right now, whether he could look into why that change may have occurred, whether that is why the tests have gone up to seven weeks, and whether there would be a plan to address the delays that have occurred?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I know when diagnostic services do change sometimes in the early weeks the flow of test results may not be as quick as what an area of the province may have been used to. But I'll certainly provide full information for the member on that particular question.

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

**PREM.: UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
- ADOPT**

MS. LENORE ZANN: The federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs has now announced that Canada will be fully adopting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This is a welcome announcement, however it does not ensure that Nova Scotia's First Nations communities will be included.

One of the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions calls to action is that provincial governments fully adopt and implement the declaration as the framework for reconciliation, an action not yet taken by the Premier. So, Mr. Speaker, will the Premier commit today to fully adopting the UN declaration in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. We continue to work with our First Nations communities across the province. We have a great working relationship, something that was started by successive governments. I believe it might have been Dr. Hamm's government at the time, the Honourable Michael Baker might have been the minister at the time - where we began to invite the Chiefs from the communities across our province to sit down with the Executive Council. That will take place again, I believe it is in June, the second time.

We'll continue to work forward on a whole host of issues. We're very pleased to work with them. We're announcing that part of the curriculum in this coming year will talk about treaty education. I've said many times, we're all treaty people, all of us have rights and responsibilities associated with those treaties and we're going to continue to work with the First Nations communities to deal with those issues as well, with the issues that the honourable member has brought forward.

MS. ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the Premier for his actions on education for our First Nations people; I think that's a good first step. However, I'm not sure why he won't commit fully to adopting and implementing the whole landmark United

Nations declaration. It ensures that First Nations individuals and communities are empowered to assert their rights to their land, health, culture and social outcomes.

Without the declaration being adopted and implemented fully, then the Premier - who is also the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs - leaves Nova Scotia without a clear framework for the reconciliation. What rationale does the Premier have for not fully adopting the declaration in Nova Scotia, since we are all treaty people?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Mr. Speaker, we'll continue to work with our First Nations communities to continue to make sure they become the vibrant communities that they are, that their cultures continue to be respected. Quite frankly, the issue of putting treaty education in education is to not only ensure that First Nations communities understand the rights and responsibilities associated with a treaty but all Nova Scotians understand that our children, the next generation of young Nova Scotians, will understand that.

We're inviting the education chief to come to our caucus to actually talk to us about treaty education and their thoughts. I encourage the Opposition caucuses to do the same. We're going to continue to work with our First Nations communities to make sure that they are respected communities across this province. They've done a tremendous amount of work and they work very hard to ensure that we provide opportunities in their community for us and the government.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

CCH: REC. FACILITY DEV. PROG. - APPLICATION DETAILS

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: A question for the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage about the Recreation Facility Development Program, an important investment in Nova Scotians' wellness. We know this program has been moved from Health and Wellness to Communities, Culture and Heritage. Typically over the past year, organizations would have been able to interact with the government. They would have been able to put forward projects for funding. They would have had discussions about how those projects could be funded and how other partners could be brought in to fund those projects.

My question to the minister is, what will be the process for community groups who wish to apply for funding this year, based on this budget, and when is the program deadline?

HON. TONY INCE: Thank you for that question. First of all, I'm very proud that the program has been moved to our department. It's a very positive move; it will help communities across the province in these types of ventures.

That being said, because of the change and the transition, we are still looking at some of the program details. I would encourage any community group that is looking for

funding within that to contact our office and we will reach out and work with them to try to help them move forward.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the response. I presume people who were working in the Sport and Recreation Division are now over in the minister's department and they would be the contact people. How will this Recreation Facility Development Program be publicized so that everyone has a fair chance to apply? My concern is that if there was a deadline of, say, May 30th, many groups might not be aware of the deadline; they might not be able to get in on time. My question for the minister, how will the program be publicized so that everyone has a fair chance to apply?

MR. INCE: To answer your question, there are regional directors and there's also accessibility on the website to start for anyone to get that information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

TIR - PORTLAND ASPHALT PAINTING: LEFTOVERS - N.S. ROADS APPLY

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Nova Scotia taxpayers recently learned that they'll be paying for some paint to be laid on some asphalt in the City of Portland. I'd just like to ask the acting minister, if there's a little bit of paint left over, can we get a splash of that on Nova Scotia roads too, please?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. It's important to be clear here. The entire cost of the new Nova Scotia ferry to Portland is in the budget, it's there for everyone to see. There is a cost associated with upgrading the terminal, but to be clear, it's on the ramp and the control mechanisms to ensure that traffic can go on and off of that vessel.

I understand that the Opposition members don't want this ferry to be successful, but I would assure them that we do need an on and off ramp, Mr. Speaker, to ensure we can bring all those Americans here to Nova Scotia and back again.

MR. HOUSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, what we want is we want all the facts and we want the people to have the facts - and it's interesting, the acting minister talked about the work on the infrastructure there, because I know that wharves are a federal responsibility here in Nova Scotia and I don't think the province pays for any wharves, but we do now pay for wharves in the City of Portland.

So, I would like to ask the acting minister, has he lobbied for a little bit of cash to work on some of the wharves right here in Nova Scotia that are used every day?

MR. CHURCHILL: I want to be clear, there's no money going towards a wharf in Portland. What's happening is we are investing in an on and off ramp so that people can get on the ferry to come here to our province, Mr. Speaker.

It's interesting the line of argument that the members of the Opposition have been putting forward, Mr. Speaker, I want to read a quote here (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. The honourable Acting Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal has the floor.

MR. CHURCHILL: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I have a quote here:

What I want the people of Yarmouth and Nova Scotia to know, and I also made this very clear to the ferry partnership, is the PC Party has always supported the Yarmouth ferry even when it needed financial help.

Mr. Speaker, that was the Leader of the Official Opposition in 2012. Now, we have a recent quote, Mr. Speaker: "I guess the taxpayers are just supposed to pay as long as it saves the seat in Yarmouth."

According to the member for Argyle-Barrington, the ferry return for dollars was \$175 million - according to the Tories' own math, Mr. Speaker, that's a 75 per cent return. Why are they now turning their back on the economy of Nova Scotia for partisan purposes?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

BUS.: DIGBY PINES/LISCOMBE LODGE SALE - DEPT. INTERVENTION

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Business. We did not get any answers Tuesday on the Cushman & Wakefield contract to sell Digby Pines and Liscombe Lodge. This company was paid to help manage the sale of these properties through the public tendering process. It also appears that parties that did not engage with Cushman & Wakefield, or with the tendering process, may have had direct access to the Minister of Business.

Did either the minister, his department, the Department of Municipal Affairs, Tourism Nova Scotia, or other departments or agencies intervene on behalf of parties interested in these properties that did not participate in the public tendering process - yes or no?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, if I recall the questions from a previous Question Period, I did answer the question. They asked about Cushman & Wakefield and the RFP. That concluded, we accepted applications during that period, and we were open

at the time. We continued to accept applications after that time. At no time has any department or agency interfered in the process.

Mr. Speaker, MLAs have been fulfilling their role, members on that side of the House as well, who have expressed an interest in the viability and the long-term sustainability of our provincial resorts. We've worked amongst MLAs and others to ensure that the information that is required for people to submit interest and potential purchase of that property is open and transparent.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. It is my understanding that Cushman & Wakefield has been engaged to sell the property and that the minister and other departments are possibly getting involved in the actual dealing with interested parties. Will the minister confirm that Cushman & Wakefield is the agency or organization doing the sale, not the department themselves?

MR. FUREY: Cushman & Wakefield was contracted for a specific period to manage applications. They are recognized globally as a real estate company that specializes in the movement of these types of resorts. The contract ended. There were applications that expressed interest during that period, and there has been interest expressed since that contract period has expired. We will continue to accept interest in those properties.

My colleague from the Progressive Conservative Party knows full well, going back to when they were in government, we should not be in the position of owning real estate. We will do our best to transition those properties, and in the interim they will continue to function as tourist resorts and destinations for visitors this coming season.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: HEALTH INFO. TRANSFER - FEE EXPLAIN

HON. DAVID WILSON: As we know, many Nova Scotians are struggling to find a family doctor. For some it's because their family doctor is retiring and closing up their practice. When they find a new doctor, it's essential that patients are able to provide their medical history and personal information to their new health care provider. Although the physical records belong to the physician, the patient has a statutory right to their own information. Can the minister explain why some patients are being charged a fee to have their health information transferred to their new health provider?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: During my time in office I've heard of doctors who have provided patients their records when they are terminating their practice. Others charge \$100 per patient. I've had a family of five in my office wanting an explanation. Of course, that's the private business part. But I've had them contact the college to help facilitate the movement of their records to another doctor.

MR. DAVID WILSON: I've heard from patients of Dr. Jones, whose practice closed because she's facing serious drug-related charges. Those families are being told that they need to pay a fee to transfer files to their new family doctor. However, in a Doctors Nova Scotia magazine from March of this year, it clearly states that the Personal Health Information Act prohibits a physician from charging for access. The Act says personal health information must follow the patient, free of charge, when the patient changes physician or expands their circle of care, and I'll table that.

Will the minister agree to step in and help those families that have paid or are being asked to pay this unnecessary fee?

MR. GLAVINE: That will be done this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MUN. AFFS. - HFX. CITY COUN.: TAX AUTONOMY - TIMELINE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question, through you, is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The Halifax City Council passed a motion requesting that the province provide greater autonomy to set commercial taxation levels by area, and I can table that. The minister has suggested that this is something they are reviewing. Can the minister please provide a timeline as to when this change may be implemented or rejected?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: It does fit very well within our government's philosophy on economic development throughout the province to engage our communities and engage our private companies so that we can all be invested in this together. We are in constant conversations with UNSM, all of our municipal units, to discuss how best to do that. The issue of taxation obviously has come up, and those conversations are ongoing with HRM and all of our municipal units.

MS. MACFARLANE: Small businesses are looking for tax relief, as we all know. This is especially true in areas on Quinpool Road, where property values have continued to skyrocket. Some members of the public and the business community in that area are very concerned that if the requested changes are not approved before the next municipal election, the process will have to start all over with the new council. Has the minister had any direct meetings with these concerned business owners?

MR. CHURCHILL: As the Minister of Municipal Affairs, I have met with business owners, and I have met with their representatives through the CFIB and with the Chamber. I am very well aware of this request that has come forward. It is one that we are taking serious consideration of and discussing. When it comes to tax changes, any changes are important changes. They will have long-lasting effects. We need to do our due diligence on the front end to ensure we're making the right decision for the long run.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: LIFEFLIGHT SITUATION - UPDATE

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: With the loss of the EHS LifeFlight, the minister now needs to deal with contracts that support the previous service. There are three options for the government to respond to the Transport Canada ruling: buying or leasing a new helicopter, asking for an exemption from Transport Canada, or making do with the current situation.

The minister told us last week that the province would be buying a new helicopter, so will the minister tell us or give us an update on where the process is to replace the LifeFlight helicopter?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, it is an important component in the delivery of health care in our province. We won't be purchasing a helicopter but a company will be providing the required helicopter, based on the specifications of Transport Canada. That process is currently in the works and an RFP will be part of that process as well.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: New helicopters and new service agreements aren't cheap. The service provided by LifeFlight is of course important to public safety, whether you're in trauma somewhere on our roads and byways of Nova Scotia or whether you are in trouble in one of our hospitals and need to get here to Halifax where they can receive the services they require.

Will the minister inform Nova Scotians of the date that he anticipates a new helicopter to be in place and service will continue to the IWK, to the QEII and to the Digby hospital?

MR. GLAVINE: I thank the honourable member for that important question. We know that it will be about a six to nine-month turnaround for a company to procure a new helicopter that will be leased by the province. An RFP process will be required in order to achieve that. What I can tell the honourable member and all Nova Scotians is that process now is moving along as quickly as possible. I'm pleased to say that within about 48 hours of finding out the Transport Canada ruling, certainly I, as minister, was not going to ask for any further exemption. The safety of Nova Scotians at all times is paramount in our health system.

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

ENVIRON.: DEPT. DECISIONS - SAFETY CONFIRM

MS. LENORE ZANN: This question is for the Minister of Environment. One of the government's own members has made a serious allegation against her department. In a recent article published in *The Laker*, the member for Waverley-Fall River- Beaver Bank said, and I quote, "I don't think NSE is interested in keeping our environment safe. There have been many cases that they're making the wrong decisions. It would appear their (sic) making those decisions for the wrong reason." I'll table that, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to ask the minister if she can respond to this allegation.

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, thank you so much for the opportunity to respond to this. I want to thank the member for Waverley-Fall River- Beaver Bank for all the work he is doing to support his constituents. We've had many conversations about issues in this community and many of us made commitments in our communities to favour certain projects. I certainly loved doing things about the tidal bore on the Noel Shore so this has certainly been his issue.

The Department of Environment is a regulatory department so decisions on industrial approvals are all based on science and facts when assessing problems. Evidence and science-based decisions, that's what we rule on.

Applications for approval, the proponent has to meet the terms and conditions of the approval with the consultation period. If approvals are granted, they have terms and conditions that mitigate any risk to the environment, so persons or groups who disagree can also appeal that decision.

MS. ZANN: It's interesting to note that the minister is saying that people have been supporting things in their constituencies, especially since she supported the Alton Gas people against that project. However, the Fall River quarry is not the only controversial quarry proposal on the government's radar; in the Premier's own riding the proposed Brooklyn quarry has also been met with resistance.

In November 2014 local residents picketed the Premier's constituency office to show their opposition to that quarry. Can the minister please give us an update on whether this quarry has been approved?

MS. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, thanks to the member opposite for the question. What I can tell her is that all of us bring to this House things that we are engaged in, things that we're passionate about, but this isn't old-time politics, Nova Scotia Environment operates with the regulation based on the laws of this province and will continue to do so under this minister and this government.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

ENERGY: COMFIT PROJS. - CONST. PROGRESS

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy. The COMFIT Program ended last year and at the time there were several projects that were still going through the construction process. So, my question for the minister is, does he have an estimate on the number of COMFIT projects that are waiting to be constructed?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: At my fingertips, no, but I'd be more than happy to get him that information.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that from the minister. I understand that there are some projects that have been given extensions as to when they would start the construction process, maybe a couple of extensions in some cases. I'd just like to ask the minister, is there a point in time when the minister will cease issuing extensions on COMFIT projects that are in the funnel?

MR. SAMSON: The entire goal with the project is that there have been some deadlines. Now, there have been some occasions, votes for approvals that were granted prior to us taking government that ran into some issues that did require some extension. So, we try to be as reasonable as possible, but operators need to know that when they do put in for a COMFIT proposal there are time frames that they are expected to adhere to. Again, we try to use a reasonable approach when there are certain issues that may cause delays that are completely beyond the control of the proponent, such as weather delays, or others. But we're more than happy to provide more information on that if the honourable member wishes to request it.

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

ENVIRON.: BROOKLYN QUARRY - APPROVAL CONFIRM

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker. Yes, I actually asked the Minister of Environment about a particular quarry, asking it if has been approved, and I didn't hear an answer there and, in fact, the one that I'm asking about is another controversial quarry which was called the Brooklyn Quarry, which is in the Premier's riding, and in November 2014 local residents picketed the Premier's constituency office to show their opposition to that quarry.

So, my question for the minister is, can she give us an update on that quarry, as to whether it has been approved, the Brooklyn Quarry?

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member opposite for the question.

To that particular quarry I can't speak to yet. I certainly can get her that information, but I think what I wanted to make a point of is it doesn't matter if it was the Premier's quarry, whose quarry it is, there's no political interference in this process. This is all about following the regulations of the departments and the terms and conditions. Thank you.

MS. ZANN: Thank you very much, and I heard that response, but I did not hear an answer. Has that quarry, in the Premier's own riding, been approved - yes or no? Yes or no, that's all I want to know.

MS. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I don't know what part the honourable member missed on that. I did say that I didn't have the information on that, but I certainly would make it available to her.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: PAP TEST RESULTS - WAIT TIMES

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness.

I want to thank my colleague from Dartmouth East for bringing up a subject that I've been investigating a little bit about. There are a number of individuals who have called me in the last week with regard to not receiving the results of their PAP tests for over six weeks, Mr. Speaker. We know that cervical cancer is on the rise, and I want to know, does the minister feel that waiting six weeks to receive the results is reasonable?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I know that is a long period of time to get a test and, whether it's a regular part of an annual exam, or whether there is something suspicious as to why a woman went for a PAP test, and I think that is a lengthy period of time, and we will find out as to why this change has taken place and I'll report to the member with that information.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Would you please call Bill No. 174.

Bill No. 174 - Financial Measures (2016) Act.

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

MR. LARRY HARRISON: I wasn't sure whether I got my point across the other day when I spoke for a few minutes on this. My major concern is the welfare of rural communities.

I know that a lot of things have been put in place road wise, from the Department of Health and Wellness, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. A lot of things have been put in place that are going to be good for a certain segment of the population. But again, I'm not sure how long it will take for rural folks to understand the changes and how they can access all of these changes that have taken place. Rural folks just seem to be out in the middle of nowhere, and they have a hard job understanding what it is that the government can offer them with respect to services. I know there are certain things that are just number one, and that of course is roads, having access to get out of their home and get to a certain place. It's a struggle for a lot of them.

I know with respect to health care, again, it is difficult for some people to be able to get out and to have access to a doctor. The clinics and the emergency rooms are really over-populated. In our particular hospital, we're waiting at least five hours to get any kind of care at all. That is a long wait for a lot of people. I would ask the ministers and their departments, when they do make decisions, when they do start to put the programs out there, if they would really take into consideration that there are a lot of people who do not live nearby. They are in remote areas, and they deserve to have the same kind of care that the rest of us do have and that I think we take for granted.

We're very fortunate, those of us who live near Halifax, those of us who travel on reasonably good roads every day. There's a good segment of people who do not have that. I'm not saying everything can be done in a short period of time. I realize that, and I'm very conscious of that. I try to tell people to be a little patient, that changes will take place that will help them. But again, they have a hard job accepting that answer.

I know that a lot of people were calling my office the other day. It wasn't a full moon - I know that - but they were really, really angry with my assistant over things that she can't control and that I really can't control either. People are just feeling that they are losing control of their lives, just through a lot of decisions that are being made that they don't have access to right now.

I'm sure the plan is for them to be included in everything that is being offered. It takes time, but I think we need to get the word out there that these programs are for them, that their roads will have some care at a future time, that health care is going to improve over time.

But people's lives are their lives, and they really feel the pressure of all those things converging. Whatever answers we may give from time to time are really not the answers that they want to hear, unfortunately. I'm just asking that the departments in the government, when they put all this stuff together, have those remote folks in mind, so that they will feel the care that the rest of us feel. So with those few words, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to sit down and wait for someone else.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, as always, I feel very privileged to be able to stand in my place and speak. Today I'm able to stand here and speak on FMA, also known as the Financial Measures (2016) Act, Bill No. 174. And I want to thank my colleague for being my lifesaver and speaking a few words so I could step out for a moment.

It has been really quite interesting to listen to all my colleagues in the House speak. There are such interesting views that are presented from all sides in the House, and I learned so much by listening to all the members in the House. It does provide, in my opinion, a balanced perspective to hear everyone's opinions and have them voice their concerns. There are different things that mean different things to everyone.

As I stated last week, Mr. Speaker, when I rose to speak directly to the budget, I congratulated the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board on his first budget delivery ever, and for a balanced budget at that. I indicated that I would never personally have to worry about delivering a budget and that I can appreciate the many challenges and adversities in preparing a budget - and one, of course, with a surplus. I also indicated that there are reasons to appreciate what is in the budget, and reasons to be frustrated for what perhaps the budget lacks.

So here I stand today, Mr. Speaker, to share a little bit more about why I don't believe I will be able to support the FMA (2016) bill, mostly because I believe there are too many important things that are missing from the budget. But once again, I do respect and appreciate the effort that goes into creating a balanced budget with a surplus. I often wonder, it's a yearly exercise, I suppose, that has to be conducted by the Finance and Treasury Board Minister. I'm sure that after this session the minister will be preparing for next year's budget - and perhaps in that budget we will see some of the things that I personally feel are lacking in this one.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to change direction in Nova Scotia, I agree that we must have a balanced budget. Yes, a balanced budget has been presented, as I indicated, and

even with a surplus. But debt has become a way of life for so many, and most of us carry some debt so we often wonder why it is so important to have a balanced budget.

Nova Scotia's debt is out of control. In fact our debt is so high that last year our interest payments alone were to the tune of \$1 billion, the second largest expenditure the province has and that is truly hard to believe. I tried to explain this to my children and I do believe they understood it, that our biggest expenditure is health and then it is our debt. It almost equals the total amount spent on health care for the entire province. We only spend approximately half that amount on our Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal budget - and further speaking, I will get into roads later on concerning the Pictou West area.

Just think what we could do if we had our debt under control. There certainly are many places that an extra \$1 billion could benefit if it wasn't being spent on interest payments, such as health, education, road conditions, just to name a few.

Balancing a budget I know is not easy and it takes examining every department, looking for efficiencies within all those departments, and I'm sure as Finance and Treasury Board Minister, having to communicate and have regular dialogue with all the other ministers is most challenging.

In my opinion though, we must find a way to cut taxes and freeze power rates, and put more money back into the pockets of hard-working Nova Scotians. More money in the pockets of hard-working Nova Scotians means more money being spent in our local economies all across the province. We must make Nova Scotia a more business-friendly province by reducing red tape, encouraging new business start-ups, as well as expansions in existing businesses.

Mr. Speaker, the Ivany report is, as we know, over two years old, and despite attempts from the Progressive Conservative Party to have the Ivany report's 19 goals adopted into legislation, we feel that the Liberal Government has not compromised in supporting this initiative, and we wonder why. This is something that would be for the betterment of all Nova Scotians. We feel that perhaps there is just unwillingness to work with us to ensure that those 19 goals are adopted into legislation.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, some things must transcend political Parties, and this is one of them in my opinion. The Ivany report was written for all Nova Scotians, not just politicians - not just the government and not just taxpayers - it was written so that everyone could read the goals and figure out how to implement changes that would enable our province to change direction. We cannot move forward as a province until we work together, and I believe that we've compromised and worked together on some things but not all.

Mr. Speaker, why is it important to legislate the 19 goals? It is important that we legislate the goals because it ensures that every decision made by government is made with

the goal of moving forward and towards accomplishing some aspect of the Ivany report. Even if we took half of the goals and worked on them, it keeps the goals at the forefront of decision making if we legislate them.

Ray Ivany didn't name the report *Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action* because he liked the sound of it. We are in the midst of a crisis, Mr. Speaker. I feel like we are experiencing the longest economic cleansing ever, and as one author stated, Mr. Wile E. Coyote, who just ran off the cliff, hanging, suspended in mid-air - that moment right before he drops. So the big question is, how long is the moment before we drop as a province? I'm not convinced that we have hit rock bottom and I do believe that we need to keep faith in that we can move forward in a positive direction and work together. I'm a firm believer of that.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I was surprised that wasn't in the budget is the request from the Craft Brewers Association of Nova Scotia. Their request was simple and it was very reasonable: they requested to have the Department of Finance and Treasury Board adjust the remittance paid on direct sales of Nova Scotia craft beer, by manufacturers. They were simply requesting it be from 50 cents per litre to 5 per cent of wholesale pricing, and as well, they wish to have the retail markup charged by the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation on products produced by licensed Nova Scotia microbreweries, to be reduced from 40 per cent to 30 per cent.

I truly believe that their request is certainly fair and based on three key principles, and those three key principles are fairness, neutral impact on the Treasury Board, and as well promote export development.

Karl and Rebecca Whiffen, owners and operators of Uncle Leo's Brewery in Pictou, are good friends of mine who have a great passion for their business. They have set aside all other passions and interests to invest all their time and effort into making sure that their microbrewery is a success. They are off the beaten path somewhat in Lyons Brook just outside of the Town of Pictou. Mr. Speaker, they have worked so hard and they have won numerous awards provincially and actually across Canada with their beer. It is amazing how well they have been doing in their short time of being new business owners and giving up their past careers. I think we need to realize that this is a small request. It will equal approximately \$350,000, but we will get that back, and I really hope that the government will consider their proposal that they put forward to the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

I am aware that the Brewers Association did meet with the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board and that the minister was quite receptive of the proposal and has given it some consideration. Perhaps it will be something that we will see in next year's budget. I know that they are pleased with the meeting and that they have faith and hope that it will be a consideration. They simply want to be on the same playing field as our wineries or our distilleries. I believe the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board is aware of

microbreweries. I believe there is one in the minister's area, a real small one but a good one, from my understanding.

So I just want to give a shout-out to Karl and Rebecca for all their efforts, and I know that if this proposal is accepted I know that the savings that Karl and Rebecca would save in their business would be simply reinvested back into their business so that they could hire more people, expand their shop, even maybe pave their parking lot. It certainly would be reinvested into their business to ensure that they are showing economic growth within a rural area. Once again, I am really proud of the effort they have put forth.

We know that wine and distillery and brew industry is growing leaps and bounds in the Province of Nova Scotia. I know that a lot of tourists come here to do tours around the province just to try all the different wines that are here in the province. A friend of mine actually showed me a map highlighting all the distilleries and wineries and breweries within the province. It's certainly quite amazing to think that just the craft beer industry in Nova Scotia has 28 breweries or brewpubs in the province just outside HRM, so it really is a rural economic driver.

The industry directly employs over 300 Nova Scotians, and it is expected to grow 15 per cent to 20 per cent in 2016. We know that the industry grew 34 per cent just in this past year, and it is continuing to have an upward trend over the last several years. When you consider an industry that has doubled since 2011, it is certainly one that we want to keep our eye on and make sure that government can help them any way possible to continue this successful trend. I am certain that we are going to see a lot more people employed by the different microbreweries across the province. Once again, I do want to congratulate all the members of the Craft Brewers Association of Nova Scotia for working tirelessly to try and put this proposal together, and we hope that the next budget will see that there is some help out there for them. They certainly deserve it.

I do want to focus a little bit right now on tourism and somewhat the lack of support to grow this industry. I saw nothing in the budget really that would help this industry that is so vital to the whole province. My knowledge is that there's really nothing in this budget to address the impact of the tourism industry and the impact that it has actually on the province. We often stop to think about how we can help to increase the goals set out in the Ivany report. I know that in the report it spoke quite often about increasing tourism - I believe tripling the numbers by 2024. Not only is there a need to maintain the level of tourism, but it is imperative that we increase our tourism industry and the economic benefits that we all benefit from.

The Pictou Rotary VIC is absolutely ideally located at one of the gateways to our province. As one gets off the ferry from Prince Edward Island, they drive right into the Town of Pictou where the first building that is visible to them is the VIC.

While the trend for travellers has certainly changed, the face-to-face contact that tourists experience with staff is priceless; it's indispensable, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker. Many people find information online, and that's simply a great tool to use, but another tool for people and a way that they appreciate to find out their information is face to face. This does not mean that it replaces the services provided by a well-trained and knowledgeable VIC staff.

The tourists are here in our province and are ready to experience all the province has to offer. This is where the importance of staff, real live people, cannot be undervalued. These individuals who work in the visitor information centres across the province sell our local services. They help sell our products, our restaurants, and our museums. It's a good thing that they don't work on commission, because they truly are individuals who deserve a lot of credit for being great ambassadors not just for the region that they're representing, but the whole province.

The interaction with VIC staff doesn't only influence what tourists do on their visit, but it also influences the duration of their stay. We're always looking for our visitors to stay extended periods of time and to come back. Positive interaction with the staff directly relates to how many tourism dollars are then injected into the economy, the economy of Pictou County, surrounding areas, and the whole Province of Nova Scotia.

The announcement of the VIC closure in Pictou was very traumatic for the area. Many local businesses at the time contacted me to report that recommendations from the VIC staff account for much of their business during the tourism season. They gave them so much credit for the traffic that came into their businesses during that window of opportunity when the ferry was running, so usually from the months of May to October. In our area of Pictou County the increase of tourists certainly was visible.

I recognize that we are in tough economic times and that difficult decisions must be made and cuts and efficiencies in all government departments must be found. I am very, very proud of DENS, Destination Eastern Nova Scotia, for reacting so quickly to the announcement of the Pictou VIC closing. They certainly rallied the troops and received a lot of phone calls and were able to organize a lot of volunteers to ensure that the VIC opened last season, and it is their intent to open again this year on a budget so much less than what the VIC operated on in the first place. Originally the budget was around \$220,000 to operate and I know that they have been able to operate it on much less, I would say less than one-third of that budget, perhaps even less.

We're very disappointed that the core funding for DENS in October 2015 was taken away from them. Once again, DENS is faced with having to find other ways to generate funds in order to open the VIC this season. They have been able to network with local businesses in the area; in fact, we were able to connect DENS with North Nova Seafoods, which designed and built a trailer that will be in the parking lot at the VIC and selling fresh seafood, which went over really well, so well that they ended up staying open all year, not

seven days a week but through the winter they were open on weekends. It went very well and they are gearing up and opened two weeks ago with the lobster season opening on the North Shore.

Mr. Speaker, the need for employment opportunities remains vital. We need good-paying, dependable jobs in Nova Scotia. Many individuals are working hard to promote Pictou County, I do know that. It's a great place to live and it's a great place to do business.

I know that the organizers of Pictou County 20/20 and Pulse Pictou County come to mind when I think of great people working hard to stay positive and keep Pictou County on a path of knowing that they can be successful. I thank them for their work and their dedication. Many of them are young professionals who want to hang their hat in Pictou County, work there, and start a family there. It's really refreshing to see this young group of people working so hard to promote truly what is a dynamic area for the Province of Nova Scotia. I pledge to them to continue to push the Liberal Government to find ways to make Nova Scotia a more business-friendly province. One way would be to make Nova Scotia a tax-free zone for small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I know you know we have the highest corporate income tax paid on \$400,000 and we have the lowest small business threshold of \$350,000. I believe, raise the business threshold from \$350,000 to \$500,000, bringing Nova Scotia in line with the vast majority of Canadian provinces; it only seems fair. Nova Scotia must set itself up as a competitive market, in order to attract businesses here, encourage new start-ups and allow existing businesses to expand.

I know first-hand, Mr. Speaker, how difficult it is to be a small-business owner in the province but I believe in my province, I love this province; I chose to hang my hat here and raise my children here.

It's kind of ironic, as we spoke about the ferry earlier, that I used to live and worked for the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism in Portland, Maine, with the Scotia Prince at one time that sailed, of course, from Portland to Yarmouth. It's an industry that I'm a firm believer in. All the small businesses that I operated really were only successful because of the tourism industry. I ran a gift shop on the ferry service from Nova Scotia to Prince Edward Island. I owned and operated a gift shop on the waterfront in Pictou. I had my hands in a small microbrewery for a while in the Town of Pictou. (Interruptions) Yes, it was the best beer.

I owned and operated a bed and breakfast that I most enjoyed. It was so refreshing to see all these different cultures come into my home and really important for my children to see such a wide range of diverse individuals. I have to say that out of all of them, I think I really miss the bed and breakfast the most.

We look at marketing dollars for tourism in Nova Scotia and some would say the budget is too high, others will say it's too low. I would have to go with those who feel that maybe it's not enough, but that could be for personal reasons. I just think there's so much here that we can market and we could be doing a better job - and I hope that we will see in the next budget that there is more money for marketing the Province of Nova Scotia.

I know that often people would indicate that the travel guides showcased Peggy's Cove, Lunenburg, the Fortress of Louisbourg - and those places are wonderful and I visit them every year or every other year, but a lot of people felt that there are other hidden gems within the province that were never showcased. So I hope we reach out and showcase them a little bit more as well. I know my children, Chloe and Jack, and I, we take time in the summer and we love to go to Cape Breton kayaking. Our plan is to get to Yarmouth this summer . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Portland?

MS. MACFARLANE: Well, I don't think I can afford it. But, Mr. Speaker, our plan is to go to the Yarmouth area, to go down Shelburne way this year. So I've been pretty successful in getting my kids around the whole province and really enjoying those stay-vacations, and putting money back into the economy here. I can't help but say that Louisbourg, the Fortress of Louisbourg is one of my favourite areas and we usually make it a habit to go every second year. So we'll be looking forward to this summer though, going down to Yarmouth and seeing all those passengers get off the ferry and come enjoy the Province of Nova Scotia.

I'm going to move away from the tourism industry into, perhaps, about the ferry. It just feels wrong; the deal feels wrong. And I know I haven't been standing up and saying a whole lot about it, but I guess this is my opportunity just to say that I don't think it's a good deal. It's a deal that I think we're going to look back on and regret; I really do believe that.

I'm a firm believer that we need the ferry service. For years, and literally, I believe that the service really should be from Yarmouth to Boston myself. What I witnessed when living in Portland is a lot of people would get off in Portland and head directly to Boston. So I know that there are rumours out there that that might be a possibility, actually that there could be a ferry from Yarmouth to Boston, and I may have to support that idea to be honest.

When living in Portland, I noticed that it seemed that there were not a lot of Nova Scotians getting off the ferry and travelling. I'm hoping that we can increase the traffic on the ferry, but standing here today I'm going to throw out a number - I feel that we probably will not have more than 30,000-some on that service. (Interruption) Yes, and I hope I eat my words. I really do, but I'm deeply concerned about this deal. I don't believe it's a good

deal and I think that we're going to be looking back and, as one person stated, to me, money is either blowing in the wind or sinking in the sea.

I found that a little harsh, but perhaps they're right, I don't know, but I know that when I'm around the coffee shops and talking to people I have not had one person come up to me and say "Rah, rah, rah, what a great deal." I honestly haven't. (Interruption) Well, you know you're right, I'm not down on the South Shore, I'm just stating the facts of what I hear. I firmly believe in the ferry service, but I have not heard anyone tell me that it's a good deal. So I will certainly - I think many of us will be keeping our eyes on that.

So speaking of boats and vessels, one of the other issues that has come to mind, of course, is the *Bluenose II*. I know that Communities, Culture and Heritage started out overseeing that project and it was taken away from them - I don't know all the details on why it was taken away from them, but perhaps they were unable to manage it under their department. It started out \$12 million to \$14 million. Now we're way up to \$24 million, and my guess at the end of the day is that we'll be at \$28 million to \$30 million.

My concern though is the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage has just received from the Department of Health and Wellness \$16.3 million to oversee Sport and Recreation. When I spoke to the minister in estimates, I asked the minister's thoughts on how he will be managing this large sum of money and if he was comfortable in his role in doing so. At the time the minister said that he was not part of any of the meetings or negotiations that took place to transfer this department out of the Department of Health and Wellness into his department. That raises a lot of concern because he indicated in estimates - and you can go look back in Hansard, it was just a simple question - that he would have loved to have been at those meetings and would have loved to have been a little more aware of what was coming. I, too, feel he should have been at the table for those negotiations.

We will be watching quite closely to see how the Sport and Recreation budget will be handled, and as my colleague earlier from Inverness had questioned, whether or not applications will be distributed fairly across the province, making sure that all regions receive their equal amount out of the \$16.3 million.

Mr. Speaker, thinking about how important our carbon footprint is right now, I have to say I was most disappointed to learn that there was nothing in this budget. I know that we are meeting our targets, and I want to say that ministers who have held that portfolio have all done a great job, but I do not feel that we are doing enough, and I would have liked to have seen a little bit more in the budget with regard to reducing our carbon footprint.

Mr. Speaker, I think at this point I would like to move on to doctors/mental health. Our office is inundated with calls, with people dropping in. This is a serious, serious issue. What I find really difficult is trying to explain to the constituents of Pictou West or Pictou County why we do not have enough doctors, why we do not have enough psychiatrists. I don't think people can comprehend the fact that we are an area of 46,000 people with 1.8

psychiatrists, yet the area of Truro has a population of 67,000 and they have nine psychiatrists. That ratio is simply not fair. To make things worse for the residents of Pictou County is knowing that a portion of the budget for the mental health unit that was closed in August is now going to Truro. It is going to Truro because we were told at the time that there were 10 beds in Truro but that they would increase the beds to 14, and those four extra beds would be dedicated to residents of Pictou County.

So use our finances; that's fine. Take them - if the beds were actually dedicated to us, but they're not. People who are going to the ER at the Aberdeen Hospital in New Glasgow with mental health issues are usually assessed within 24 hours, but if you get there on a Friday, you're probably not going to be assessed until Monday. Once they are assessed, many of them don't get shipped to Truro or Antigonish. They are shipped to Sydney; they are shipped to Yarmouth. When someone with a mental health issue is torn away from their family, their network of love and support, it is just another formula for disaster when already dealing with a very tough and delicate issue.

I know that in one case, one of my constituents waited to be assessed for 72 hours. They were assessed, and they were told that they would be shipped in an ambulance to the Sydney hospital, which was fine. The parents drove behind the ambulance all the way to Sydney, and once they arrived they were told that they had to go back because there was not a psychiatrist on duty to reassess. When you're transferred from one hospital to another hospital, apparently you have to be reassessed. This individual had already waited 72 hours at the Aberdeen Hospital to be assessed, took the file and went to the Sydney hospital and was told, I'm sorry, you have to go back. They put the individual back in the ambulance. The parents, who were in their 70s, got in their car and followed the ambulance all the way back home. They waited a couple more days, and then they finally were able to go to Truro. This is just utterly unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of stories like that. One individual in my constituency was assessed within 24 hours, but was given 20 minutes to contact their family members because transportation for them to get to Yarmouth was leaving. This individual didn't even get to say goodbye to their family members.

It's just very, very sad to hear these stories. I feel it's my role to be able to correct these situations, to help them, and it really is upsetting to think that you can't. All you can do is listen. Sometimes you feel like you're a therapist without a licence. I want my constituents to know that I'm always there to listen, but I also want them to know that we can do better. Nova Scotians expect more, and we can do better as politicians.

We have a doctor shortage, and I know that everyone in this Chamber has been listening to us during Question Period. It's a serious, serious issue.

In the Town of Pictou we had an after-hours outpatient clinic. There were four doctors, and out of the four doctors there's a private doctor. The three others are on

contract. In their contract it states that they don't have to do after hours, but they agreed, along with the doctor who runs his practice privately, that they would give so many hours a week. But they decided that they were getting burnt out, that there wasn't enough of them to go around. After seeing X amount of patients all day, then to put in four or five hours again at night, they were getting burnt out. I believe at the end of the day, closing the clinic after 50-some years was their way of telling us we need more doctors. It's simple.

Maybe there are doctors in the HRM area. If the Minister of Health and Wellness indicates to us that 90 per cent of Nova Scotians have a doctor and there are plenty of doctors in the HRM area, we need to find incentives and ways to get them out into the rural areas. I don't have all the answers for that, but I certainly would love to sit down and find ways to get these doctors into rural areas.

We also have to find ways to somehow work with new doctors who come. There was a doctor who arrived in Pictou three years ago who is leaving this July. I became very good friends with him, and his wife. They're both doctors, and we tried for two years to find her a residency placement. We wrote Dalhousie; we wrote to the Health and Wellness Minister; we had our MP, Peter MacKay, write letters, and nothing. We kept hitting that proverbial brick wall - dead ends everywhere. This is a young couple, in their late 20s, who were more than willing to hang their hat in Pictou and have children. I'm really sad they are leaving. They are leaving for Kingston, Ontario, where he has found work and the hospital has found work for his wife. We need to do more to also help the spouses or partners of those doctors who are coming so they will stay here, they will hang their hat here, and they will raise a family here.

It's a real sad story to see this couple leave us in July. We will be down to three doctors in the Pictou area. Now the Town of Pictou has a population of 3,600 but it services the whole area of Pictou West with a population of about 15,000 to 16,000. It's really unacceptable to have three doctors servicing that amount of people.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few moments to speak about our seniors. Our seniors enrich our communities, and I know we all know that and I know that we all in this Chamber have great respect for our seniors. There is a crisis, though, when it comes to seniors' care in Nova Scotia. In my short time as MLA, many constituents have reached out to me for assistance dealing with issues pertaining to long-term care. In some cases they may be facing the difficult decision of moving into a long-term care facility and all the emotional turmoil that comes with it. I know that if I have to move my father into a facility that it will be heartbreaking, but that day may come.

As I said, it's an emotional turmoil that comes with the knowledge that they are leaving their homes and, in some cases, their community, which is very sad. It makes it really difficult for a family to have to drive long distances to visit their loved ones. Most seniors we know wish to remain in their communities, as their support systems are there. Families want to be close so they can continue to visit regularly without undue hardship.

Some people are facing the difficult decision of having to place a spouse, a parent, or a loved one into a long-term care facility - all the worry and guilt that accompanies the decision.

Occasionally a couple needs to be placed in a facility and they wish to remain together - not in different communities like the elderly couple that I had the opportunity to speak with from Antigonish. They had been married for 62 years. We know that currently there are excessive wait times for seniors waiting to enter a long-term care facility. This puts undue stress on them and their loved ones, and it certainly impacts their health because as their health care needs rise, it becomes more difficult for them and their families to cope with meeting these needs, both on an emotional level and also on a practical, financial level as well. An emergency situation arises and the senior ends up placed wherever they can get a bed.

The process is complicated and I can appreciate that. I know that coordinators attempt to balance the needs of high-priority seniors who are in immediate need, versus those who can wait a bit longer. Coordinators struggle to place seniors where they wish to be and with the level of care they require, but they are working with a finite number of resources and always an increasing wait-list that is escalating. Continuing care staff and coordinators work hard to make the transition from home to long-term facilities as easy as possible, and their efforts are certainly appreciated. There are just not the necessary facilities, and as the population ages, their job is going to become even more difficult.

On January 30, 2014, the Liberal Health and Wellness Minister launched a 100-day review of the Continuing Care Strategy and on July 30, 2015, 546 days later, the Liberals released a 12-page plan for more study. It feels like we're doing study after study, and as each day passes, seniors and their families struggle to cope.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that seniors give positive dividends and they are so valuable to our communities. In Nova Scotia, 1,000 seniors a month turn 65. Our seniors are a wealth of knowledge and I love spending time with them, listening to their stories of days gone by, and learning of the many changes they have witnessed in their lifetime. They deserve better and it always amazes me, through their adversities that they remain so jovial and hopeful, and always seem to put a positive spin on their hardships.

However, as I've indicated, the one common denominator that I often hear about is the need for long-term care beds. It truly is unfortunate that there is nothing in this budget that gives relief to those individuals and families with loved ones waiting to find a long-term care bed facility, and, Mr. Speaker, I know for certain because I recently counted that there are over 40 individuals in the Aberdeen Hospital waiting to be placed. I am most frustrated that this government is not addressing this urgent issue.

Mr. Speaker, what I probably fear the most about this budget is the absence of a plan for economic growth. Where is the plan to create jobs? Where is the plan to create a

welcoming environment by lowering taxes and power rates? I once recall the past member for Halifax Needham indicating that 52 per cent of Nova Scotians make less than \$30,000 a year. Many who come to my office are either on WCB, EI, or Social Assistance. There is nothing in this budget to provide hope to these individuals. They are looking for employment and I have nowhere to send them, Mr. Speaker.

Many of these individuals are between the ages of 18 and 35. They've lost hope. I wonder if perhaps there is a plan, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberal Government has not shared with us, because when we see \$108 million increase in personal income tax, one has to beg to ask the question, how is that revenue going to be generated? Taking out my calculator, I see that this increase would only be justified by the creation of approximately 18,000 to 20,000 more employed people - considering the average income tax paid would be approximately \$5,200 - to generate \$108 million in income tax. It excites me that this is possible, but I still can't wrap my head around it, and perhaps the Finance and Treasury Board Minister will take me aside and explain it to me someday.

Mr. Speaker, a red flag for everyone to take notice to in the budget is of course, the \$110 million contribution from both the federal government and the HRM towards the Halifax Convention Centre. There are a lot of concerns arising from this revenue flow as to what it actually will be applied towards. We have heard the Premier indicate in Question Period that it is going towards debt, and then we heard from other Liberals that this money is going towards, perhaps, the development of a new VG Hospital, and as well for the Convention Centre. All I know is that we are not receiving a straight answer and Nova Scotians deserve to know the truth.

Mr. Speaker, I am a big proponent for libraries and I am most concerned for their existence within rural areas as well as urban settings. Everyone can benefit and appreciate the value a library adds to a community. Last year before the budget was released I wrote the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board requesting the recommendation from the Laurel Broten report to increase the tax on books to be put to a halt. Luckily, the minister listened to the citizens of Nova Scotia and realized that this recommendation would absolutely be a wrong move.

However, the economic and social importance of our public libraries continues to be overlooked and undervalued by our provincial government. As placement economies tell us, large department stores and malls generate interest and foot traffic for surrounding businesses; the same effect can be observed when we have a well-funded library in a small town or rural setting. I love going to the library actually in the community of River John. It's very quaint and it's very peaceful.

Mr. Speaker, within an increasingly digital world, libraries have evolved to meet the needs of their environment by becoming community and cultural centres. In the face of shrinking municipal and provincial funding for our libraries, we can say that libraries

actually uniquely offer person-to-person human contact in a customized program to meet all the individual needs of the communities that they are central to.

Mr. Speaker, local libraries are educating and inspiring patrons of art and music and literature, and helping members to engage in their community, which we all want, as well as after-school programming, hobby and interest groups, workshops, lectures, guest speakers, and they host different young families to come in, and seniors and new members to the community. They are always welcoming everyone, and I know actually some of our new refugee families are very happy to have our local library. They have been using it quite often, and I'm glad to see that.

We also know that our libraries provide free of charge home delivery of books and literature. It's really important to have that service available to those in rural communities or for those unable to access the services offered by the libraries.

As well, Mr. Speaker, job seekers are able to use public computers and employment resources at no cost, as well as 24-hour access to wireless Internet. This allows them to seek educational and essential employment tools to improve their lives. The fact that materials can be borrowed and technology utilized without a fee is of paramount importance in levelling the playing field between socio-economic classes, and by offering universal access to information.

Mr. Speaker, libraries build engaged citizens, they educate individuals, they foster equality, and they nurture thoughtful communities and are worth fighting for, and I know that I will continue to fight for them. They are worthy of funding and I am most disappointed to learn that libraries have received no increase in funding for the past seven years, and that this Liberal Government has failed in this budget to extend financial help, only to once again download onto the municipalities to come to the rescue.

Mr. Speaker, the library in the Town of Pictou is most utilized. I have been going there all my life, but especially have been going a lot over the years when my children were younger. Taking them when they were young allowed them to develop the sense of pride in their library. Therefore as teenagers, they even love to go down, even to just sit down there, they find it really peaceful and quiet when they want to get out of the house, I guess, away from their mother. Just telling the truth.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's something that I hope that the Liberal Government will consider, increasing the funding. I know that about 70 per cent of funding for libraries came from the provincial government, the remaining was coming from the municipal government, as well as from any boards for community libraries that would have to raise themselves anywhere between 3 and 4 per cent to add to their budget in order to operate. What has happened is because of inflation the board now has to find a way to raise funds that are about 7 per cent. Once again we know that a lot of the funding is now being downloaded onto the municipality.

I want to go back to health for a minute. How many times have you heard the statement, without your health you have nothing? How true is that? Regardless of income, family status, gender, age, et cetera, good health is absolutely the most important thing we can have. The importance of good health has been lost on the Liberal Government.

Issues with the mental health system have been recently highlighted, with the Progressive Conservative Party taking the bold step of calling it a mental health crisis. I welcome anyone to come to my community for the weekend and spend it with me, to come into my office and look at the list of calls and look at the list of people that I have missed from being here Monday to Friday that I try to catch up with on the weekend. Usually, when you get the opportunity to call them, you feel that you have let them down because you were unable to help them.

It's really disheartening when someone doesn't understand the crisis that we're in. Perhaps there isn't a crisis in the Halifax area, or maybe there is. I'm not here to judge that because I honestly believe that there's a crisis across the province. I honestly believe that what I'm seeing in my constituency is not much different than what anyone else is witnessing in their constituency. I don't know, Mr. Speaker, what we're to do. I really, honestly feel helpless.

I hope through this Spring session that we've been able to inject through our questions and through our stories the fact that there is a problem. Perhaps the government will seriously look at it and find some kind of solution, something to help us in our constituencies because I know having our short-stay unit close has been a nightmare.

In fact, when I was here last week asking questions to the Minister of Health and Wellness with regard to the Aberdeen Hospital and the mental health unit, my hour was up, and I was most appreciative to have that hour. I stayed focused on mental health. But I'm going to share with you what happened when I left here. I had a message from one of my constituents who had been assessed within 24 hours and then was admitted to the fourth floor at the Aberdeen Hospital, who had not seen a doctor in two days but wrote me a message saying that they were going out of their mind and all they felt like doing was picking up the chair, smashing the window, and jumping out of the window. That message came through while I was asking the Minister of Health and Wellness what he's going to do about the crisis of mental health issues in Pictou County.

But you know what, Mr. Speaker? It's not just a Pictou County problem. It's a province-wide problem. We need to invest more funding across the board. I am pleased that there has been some funding given to the schools because we all know that statistics have proven that if we can address mental health issues at an early age, there is definitely a higher success rate in helping them. I don't believe it's always just medication or therapy; I think it's a combination. We all know that serious financial investments have to be made in order to conquer this colossal issue that we are all dealing with.

Mr. Speaker, I know that for probably the first time ever, I think I've spoken more than I have in the last two and a half years, and I apologize in advance if I have bored anyone. I just want to say that I am always honoured to be here and to stand here. I am really proud to represent the people of Pictou West and I am really proud that they still stand behind me, or those that do tell me.

There are a lot of challenges. We have faced so many adversities in my two and a half years with regard to Michelin Tire, with regard to Northern Pulp, with regard to the mental health unit, with regard to the VIC closing, with regard to the Land Registry Office closing, and now our after-hours, outpatient clinic - dealing with that. There is one thing I know about Pictou County, and I believe in all Nova Scotians, we are resilient and we have to work together. We have to work together because I know we can all do better. I know that. If we just set aside our egos . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, time has expired for the honourable member.

The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I have a few, brief words on the Financial Measures (2016) Act. It is an opportunity to recognize what this piece of legislation does. It is a mechanism to implement the resolutions and the budget of the province so that they have the funds available to follow through on their commitments that they have given Nova Scotians. That is what a budget is for government: the commitment that the government, the ministers, the Premier is making to Nova Scotians. It is important as we go through the estimates like we did for the 80 hours that we do, 40 hours in here, 40 hours in the Red Chamber, to go through those departments, go through the budget material that is provided.

I have to say there is a lot of material that was provided this year, a lot of information that we, as the Opposition members, had to really go through and try to get clarity on what the budget was all about. One reason was there has been a number of things that have been moved from department to department - a lot harder for Opposition to look at and try to evaluate what the commitments were last year that the government made in the budget. We try to do that with some success, but limited success, I think in the budget.

I know for myself as the Critic for Health and Wellness, I spent three or four days questioning the minister on a number of files within health care. The minister and his department at times - and I understand they may not have every answer at their fingertips - had indicated that they would provide me, our caucus, and really the Legislature, answers to the question. I am still waiting. I do not think it is asking too much for some of the information that I asked for to be delivered and presented to the Legislature. I was asking things like what are the budget cuts to each of the long-term care facilities that will happen? That is all on file. They know they have it. It may not have been in the minister's binder during estimates, but here we are, nearly a week after - I cannot even remember when the

estimates finished. They were a week ago maybe, and I have not received one piece of correspondence or an answer.

I hope the minister and his staff realize that is their job. Their job is to provide the information, to answer questions around the budget. We do not just make these questions up for the heck of it. There is usually something driving it. Usually for the most part, it is Nova Scotians who contact us about a concern area that might need support.

That is why I bring it up now. I hope the Minister of Health and Wellness is paying attention and he gets the information we requested. It is no secret, we are coming close to the end of the session. I am not saying anything that is not known. We might have another week - next Thursday - so I would hope that the Minister of Health and Wellness and any ministers who were asked for information or clarification or answers to a question, that if they committed to providing it to the member who asked it that they receive that information. I'll be up on my feet on Tuesday, I think. I'll give the minister another day, hopefully I'll get that information provided to us.

As I said, budgets are a promise of the government to Nova Scotians. Many of them who work every day, who know when they get their paycheque that a portion of their paycheque is going towards the implementation of the budget. I think they deserve to make sure, deserve to know that the government is living up to their commitments, and when a budget is presented they hope they are addressing issues that are a concern to many.

I think our offices are similar; I believe we all have constituency assistants - I believe we all have offices now. I believe in the past there might have been one or so MLAs who didn't have an office, but anyway that's the way it worked a number of years ago. Now I don't think there's a single MLA who doesn't have an office, doesn't have support staff. That's there so that we can engage with our residents, that we can judge, I think, what the issues are, what the concerns are of people.

I know my colleague who just spoke brought forward a number of real tough situations that you deal with as an MLA, and I wish I could tell her that it gets easier. But nothing surprises me, Mr. Speaker. In the number of years that I've been here, when someone calls for help it can be about anything. It can be about an issue where the provincial government has no jurisdiction or authority over, but usually they call because they are desperate, they are at their wit's end, they don't know where to turn. I've made it a practice to try not to just slough them off to someone else, or say it's not my issue, we can't do anything about it. Even if it's another level of government we try to provide phone numbers, we try to provide emails, and we try to provide information.

I judge budgets by what I'm hearing from the community, and I have to say over the last month or so since the budget was tabled, I haven't yet received any phone calls or any emails congratulating the government on the budget. Maybe they are out there, and I know the Liberal MLAs will try to find them this summer and make sure they voice their

pleasure with the budget, but I have to say I haven't had those calls. I'm not making it up, and I would tell the members here if I had those calls. But I have had calls and I do hear from residents on some of the issues that they think the government has been not paying the attention needed to hopefully improve that, improve the services.

I get calls now from - and I haven't, I have to say I've said this before, it has been very few times over the years that I get a call on doctor shortages. It's not something I've dealt with as the MLA for Sackville-Cobequid in almost 13 years that I've been there - until the last year. I have to say it's the prominent issue in my office right now, it's the thing that most people phone me on, email me on, and talk to me about when I'm in the community, buying groceries or getting gas or just out and about in the community. It's a sense of fear for many of them to know they don't have a doctor, or they might not have a doctor in the future.

We've had a number of practices close in Sackville and now we have a number of practices pending closure and possible retirement and future retirement. That's leaving hundreds - and I'm trying to get the figures - if not thousands, which is scary, thousands of people just in my area alone, in the communities that surround Sackville, without a doctor. People are worried, they are scared, and they are angry that nothing has taken place to try to support them.

I know there is a process out there to recruit and retain physicians. I've been in the Department of Health and Wellness. I know that there are areas in this province that have been working extremely hard to recruit and retain physicians all over the province. Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, the riding you're from, I've been there so many times over the years talking with community members about Digby and the need for doctors, and I have to commend the people of Digby and that surrounding area, they've worked extremely hard. The municipality has worked hard to come up with solutions for the riding that you represent, Mr. Speaker, but in our area it's different because there's nowhere for them to go other than the walk-in clinics that are in and around HRM.

We hear from the Minister of Health and Wellness, we hear from the government that that's what they're trying to get out of, the business of walk-in clinics, and I'm all in favour of these collaborative clinics. It's something we worked on. It's something we asked Dr. John Ross to do, to go out and look at what's going on in the province, especially around emergency room closures that were rampant for so many years, and Dr. Ross created a report. We labelled it, of course, the Ross Report - why not name it after the gentleman who did the work?

In that report he reflected on the importance of changing direction and moving towards this collaborative approach to health care and the need to ensure that we support health care clinicians, not per se just doctors - and we need to continue to support doctors - but support clinicians in their attempt to practice to their full scope of care that they can. What I mean by that is, if a nurse or a nurse practitioner is trained and licensed to work in

Nova Scotia, then they should be able to work to that scope of practice, to provide care for individuals.

I know when I first entered the Legislature, and that was 2003, there were very few nurse practitioners out there and I was quite frustrated when I knew that a colleague, someone I worked with as a paramedic at the Cobequid Centre - and it was actually the old Cobequid Centre, which was down at the bottom of Cobequid Road and you could see it from the highway - this nurse decided as a mature student who had been working for, and I don't know exact years, but for at least 20-plus years as a nurse - decided to go back to school to become a nurse practitioner. It took her a number of years to do that, because she worked full-time, had a family, worked at the Cobequid Centre providing care on a regular basis, but yet she studied her butt off to eventually be trained and certified as a nurse practitioner.

The interesting thing was - I remember being here in the Legislature - she called me and said I've graduated, I've got my licence, but when she went to work at Cobequid Centre, she wasn't allowed to practice as a nurse practitioner. She knew that people were in the waiting room, who she could treat almost immediately and give some advice to that would allow them to leave, not be seen in the department, but because of the rules at the time some 13 years ago, 14 years ago, she was not allowed to work to that full scope of practice.

That had been a mission of mine from day one, knowing that that had to change, and we have been on a path to recognize health care providers in our province, and their scope of practice, and their scope of care that they can provide someone, because I have to say, not everybody who has a health issue needs to see a doctor. That was the mentality for decades and decades, especially in rural communities. I mean, these doctors who have committed - a lot of them - their life work in rural communities, work 7 days a week 24 hours a day, and my engagement with them over the years as an MLA, as the Minister of Health and Wellness, I realized pretty quickly that we need as a government, when we were in government, and the government today needs to continue to support them, to try to get them the help they need. So, get health care providers to support them, especially in rural communities and that's why I think the Collaborative Emergency Centres that we opened up worked well.

Pugwash for example, I know there was a group of physicians working there who worked, not only in their own practice, but they worked at the hospital. They had to do rounds if their patient was in a regional hospital, and they really had no time for themselves and one story stuck with me. I remember a physician telling me that they just couldn't do a night shift at the hospital, they had to close the ER, and when they were out at a family member's hockey game, someone challenged them saying, why are you here, why aren't you at the ER? I thought, man, that's not how we should be treating our health care providers.

The collaborative model was one that we adopted very quickly as a government. I think what the government's intentions are with this new change, especially in the central region zone here, is to have these clinics around the province, and I think that's great.

If you look at my community, the Cobequid Community Centre is an amazing, amazing facility. It's an emergency room that's open from 7:00 a.m. until midnight. There have been debates all across the spectrum on if it should be 24 hours or not, and there's good and positive. I have to say I've been in favour of it going 24 hours and I've been in favour of it staying the way it is and being open till midnight with the extended hours - it used to be closed at 12 midnight - because I see the benefit that this type of centre has.

I think that's kind of the model, maybe, the government's looking at now. You can go there for more than just the emergency department. If you break your arm and you have a cast, and you had that initial emergency visit and you need your cast checked within 24 hours - because usually swelling takes effect and sometimes the cast is too tight or sometimes it's too loose - you can go with an appointment to Cobequid, go into the emergency and you're seen right away by a casting tech.

Interestingly enough, many of them are paramedics. Their scope of practice has expanded over the last 20 years. There are paramedics working in our ERs as casting techs; they do multiple other services. It's meeting the needs of Nova Scotians. That's why I said it's not necessarily the key to have a physician look at you. Definitely you need to be all integrated; you need to make sure that you seek the advice of a physician. The paramedic profession is one that I think does that quite well.

We have protocols in place where we're trained - paramedics are trained - to do a certain thing. The rules are all there. You know that if it's a broken arm or something, you can do pain management up to a certain level. If you need to go outside those protocols, then you have access to an on-call physician. You call the dispatch, they get in touch with the on-call physician, and then you can move forward with treating someone outside what the protocols might be - not outside the scope of your practice, or your care, or your expertise, but you can be supported. I think that model will work well.

The frustration I've had with the minister and the government over the last little while, getting back to the calls I get about the shortage of doctors, is the fact that the Health Authority Central Zone recently changed their medical bylaws. They're restricting the accreditation of physicians in the central region, this on top of the thousands of people who don't have a doctor. That's the criticism I have of the government. Why would you allow the health authority to do that at this time?

Not only are they restricting the licences of new doctors, but they're putting up more barriers for existing doctors, many of whom have thriving practices, who know that there's a need, and will go out and do the recruitment of the government for a physician.

There are a number of them in and around my area who have said they will find a doctor; the government doesn't have to spend one dime getting a doctor.

Can you imagine if that happened in Digby, Mr. Speaker? It was challenging, that wasn't the case - but can you imagine, the doctor said we'll find someone to come in, and doctors have been denied.

I wrote the minister about a month ago or more about Dr. Saad, who came to my office and said, I know there's a demand here. He wrote the Health Authority and was denied initially. Now they're saying there was some confusion with the letter that he received; maybe it wasn't interpreted right. Now he's going to be permitted to seek another physician in that practice. That's great; that's good, but that was months ago. I think just because Dr. Saad - I have to say this - went to the media and was on media outlets shaking his head, putting his hands up, saying, I don't understand why I would be denied. He gets calls, I think he said 10 to 15 calls a day, by patients looking for a doctor, and he wasn't the only one. There was one in Bedford, same thing; a thriving practice. They know there's a demand, but yet these new rules that are in place are making it much more difficult for them to do that.

I can see, as I said, if these collaborative clinics were up and running, maybe you could pull back on issuing those licenses for the walk-in clinics and for the expansion of family practices. I understand the government and I have to say, it definitely is over control of money that goes into health care. The current system that we have with paying doctors a fee-for-service has been here for generations; it's the way it was set up. You can't just throw that out until you have a replacement. If you want to make changes, then make the changes and then change the by-laws, change the rules; change the ability for them to do that, but not making those changes upfront.

I have one physician in our area, and I've heard from patients of that physician who is trying to get a replacement for their retirement, with these new barriers that they've put in place, they potentially had someone to take the practice over, but didn't want to go through all the hoops that are now in place because of this super board. I thought from day one the reason that we were going towards this super board, this mega board, this one health authority, was to break those walls down and those barriers down. We heard it from the Premier; he yells it to us almost every other question. The minister tells us that the walls are being broken down, or taken down, but yet the new health authority has just put some up within the central region.

It's frustrating, and I have to say doctors, for the most part, don't go to the media, they don't call the MLA's office. They're busy practising. They're busy with a practice that usually has thousands of patients. So, I hear from the patients. I hear from residents in my area that they're concerned with this change and this is all a result of the budget, of the government's decision to move towards this one health authority.

The other thing I get calls on in my office, Mr. Speaker, is long-term care placement. Every time I bring this issue up in the House so far - and I've quoted wait times, and I have them amongst the pile of information that I have here - when I quote the wait times for long-term care, they're staggering, staggering across this province. The government made a decision in their budget, since they've been here, to put more of an emphasis on home care, which is good. When you spend \$10 billion-plus, there's good in the budget. I applaud that, but what they're forgetting is that we have people on the wait-list, currently, who are trying to get into a long-term care facility, all across this province.

I've done this in my estimates and I know the Minister of Energy, I just showed it to him a few minutes ago, Richmond Villa - 1,088 days to get into that long-term care, and he acknowledges it's a long wait because Richmond Villa is a new facility and the staff there are amazing, they're professional. The care there is amazing and people want to go there, but they're still waiting potentially up to over 1,000 days, and it ranges. I have to say Cumberland County, best wait times I guess, if you want to call wait times a good thing. Gable's Lodge, 76 days; East Cumberland Lodge, I think, has the fewest days wait; you can get in there almost in 37 days, which is amazing. I've never been to East Cumberland Lodge. I've been to many of these long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker.

My point is, the commitments the government made in this budget, the money that's going to be allocated under the Financial Measures (2016) Act, does nothing, nothing, to support reducing these numbers. It does nothing, because actually, Mr. Speaker, they've cut the budget towards these facilities. The long-term care facility base was cut by \$2.9 million. It might not seem like a lot of money when you think of \$10 billion, but \$2.9 million to these small facilities is a huge hurdle to try to find those savings. That's why I asked the minister in estimates if he would provide what the cuts were for each of these facilities. I know I did that last year. There were cuts to them last year, and many of them are finding it very hard and challenging to meet the needs of their seniors.

The other thing I'm hearing from my community is housing, people looking for adequate housing. It seems to be on a bit of a roller coaster over the last 10, 12, or 13 years. Honestly, it seems like some years I don't get too many calls on housing issues - they seem to be addressed quite quickly - and then it seems to just explode. I have to say, my staff out at my office, Tammy and Marie, my part-time staff, deal with this every single day almost, someone who is just trying to find a place to live. Maybe it's a senior for a long-term care placement or a senior for a senior's apartment, or a single-parent family looking for adequate housing.

I have to say I think as a government, as a province, we've been failing our residents, and I say that of government after government, to seriously, seriously address it. When we were in government, we tried to address it. I don't think we went far enough. I don't think we addressed it to the point where I could say I feel comfortable knowing that the people of my community can get adequate housing. I think the Progressive

Conservatives before we were in failed at trying to do the same thing, and I have to say this current government is failing Nova Scotians, too, when it comes to affordable housing.

Most of us here don't have to be concerned about a roof over our heads. But when you go in our communities, we all know where the houses are. We all know where the apartments are in our community. And we know we probably wouldn't live there. The conditions are concerning. We need to do a better job of investing in housing.

I hope the federal government lives up to their commitment that this is going to be a priority for them. I know the former Harper Government really didn't do a heck of a lot when it comes to any kind of housing strategy for the country and housing agreements with the provinces, but I hope the new Prime Minister and the new government know the need to get involved with this. We need to get involved in it as a government on all levels - municipal, provincial, and federal.

It's frustrating to know some of the projects that were talked about a number of years ago, and I'll talk about Bloomfield Centre - that has been an ongoing project that's just kind of been stalled. There's no real word from the government on what's going on with that. I'm hearing rumours, Mr. Speaker. I'm hearing rumours that the government is just walking away from that project. I don't know if that's true or not, but that concerns me because that means that all the work that has been going on for the last number of years will just be wasted.

We need affordable housing. I saw some media last night of some public meetings around Halifax around housing and housing issues. It's rearing its head. I have to say if the fire marshal of this province upheld the standard that we have and the rules and the law that we have - if he held them up for everyone to follow - there would be so many people who would lose their homes, would be homeless because there's a need for low-low-income housing and some developers are, I think, taking advantage of it. The conditions are terrible. I saw them when I was a paramedic going into homes and apartments all over the city, in my own community, and all through here and I think in every riding in the province. We know it. It's something we don't talk about because if the fire marshal ever did put the law down, we'd be in trouble. We've seen it - I think it was St. John's or New Brunswick, where there was a fire recently in a rooming house, and going in and seeing the conditions, well not far from this Legislature you can find the same conditions of rooming houses. I would hope that the government would put more of an emphasis on housing in this budget.

The other thing I'm hearing from residents in my area are from seniors, not only just on long-term care. It hasn't gone away, the fiasco - I think I can use fiasco, I don't think it's unparliamentary - of the Seniors' Pharmacare. Seniors' Pharmacare, Mr. Speaker, is an important program. I wish I could say that one day we'll see that the government fully funds that but that's pretty hard to do with the sheer amount of seniors we have. I think the

majority of the seniors who are in that program realize that. They support the fact that they need to offset the cost of that program.

When we see the government and the way they approach this, seniors are upset. I have to say that generation of Nova Scotians, their first priority, normally, is to make sure their bills are all paid and that means their rent, their medication, their heat and lights. Then they worry about themselves, they worry about the food and other things, so they want to pay their bills.

I know every year I get calls from one or two seniors who say - what avenue of payment should I go on? Should I pay it all up front? Should I pay as I go? I'm not sick now, should I even enter the Pharmacare Program? I try not to give them the advice or tell them what to do because I think it's something they need to discuss with their family, with their spouse. They are concerned that the government's handling of that, even though they backed away, that it could happen again next year. We don't see a firm commitment from the government that that won't happen.

That's why we introduced legislation on that, requiring that any future changes to Seniors' Pharmacare would have to come here to the floor of the Legislature for debate. Then that would trigger Law Amendments Committee, which would allow seniors to have their say, if the government or future governments would want to change or increase the Seniors' Pharmacare. I know it's an important program for many. I know when we were in government we worked hard to try to get that cost down, not only for the government but for the seniors and for families.

I'm talking about the cost of generic drugs, when the jurisdictions across the country got together and said listen, we're going to try to stand up to the pharmaceutical companies and say enough is enough. We're banding together to say this is what we're going to pay, we're going to put a cap on the cost of generic drugs. I think we did the top 10 initially and saved well over \$100 million in the country, tens of millions of dollars here in Nova Scotia. So that Seniors' Pharmacare Program saved money because of making that move.

We haven't seen the government move in any direction to try to make even further improvements. The only thing we've seen was the fiasco, as I said, of them wanting to charge more, or saying that more people will pay less, when in the end the information, when it came out, was quite different, Mr. Speaker.

The other thing I hear about often, too, in my office, and I look towards the budget, is around the WCB: injured workers, people who are sick, people who might be sick from work, and of course I'm associating PTSD in there. It's something I've talked about for a number of years. It's a piece of legislation that I introduced and government needs to move on it. We have jurisdictions across the country that recognize that workplace injuries are something we need to try to address.

PTSD and those exposure illnesses, mental illnesses around that, are very much a workplace injury when you are a first responder. I'm not just having a narrow definition of first responders - what's typically thought of as firefighters, police, paramedics. I'm talking about nurses and doctors. I'm talking about correctional officers who I have to say I don't know how they do their work with what they hear and they have to deal with every day. I'm talking about children's aid workers. These are mostly women but men and women who work in that field see things on a daily basis that has to have an impact on them. I look at the budget and I try to see where we see this improvement to services for the WCB file, and it's not there, Mr. Speaker, and that's frustrating for a lot of Nova Scotians.

One of the things I didn't talk a whole lot on, Mr. Speaker, and that was the fact that within the budget we also get the Crown Corporation budgets, and their business plans and stuff. One area that I don't think has gotten enough attention yet is around gaming and the budget for the Nova Scotia Provincial Lotteries and Casino Corporation. When I first was asked to be in Cabinet, I was the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage, but I had the gaming file, this portion of the gaming file, and we knew we needed to have a gaming strategy, that was a promise to Nova Scotians. Just like in our budget, we put it in there saying, this is where we want to go into the future and it's a promise to Nova Scotians about gaming and about the ramifications of gaming.

I do believe that it needs to be regulated in this province, there have been debates over the years on, we should just get out of the business of VLTs for example, but I've seen study after study, I've seen information on both sides. Why we should get rid of it, why you can't get rid of it and I do believe that if we're not involved, if the government is not involved in regulating those types of machines and gaming devices, then the underground market will spring its head again.

We've seen that in the past. Before I was elected, I remember going into the corner store, the Green Gables, and they had a VLT in Green Gables, just around the corner in a corner store and I'm thinking, man this is not right. We knew that bars and other establishments had what they would call these gray machines with no oversight, no real payout percentage there and I think it really hurt those who might find themselves with an addiction problem. So, that's why we brought the strategy forward, and why in it there were a number of things dealing with VLTs. One was the attrition rate of VLTs, which I know is continuing on. What I mean by that is the fact that if a business that had VLTs closes and no one takes that over, those VLTs come out of service. In the past they would be divvied up, people would call the Lottery Commission at the time and say, well, we could use couple more VLTs let's put them here.

So, I'm glad to see that that practice continues and I do recall the number since that was introduced, how many machines have disappeared from the province. It's well over 100, I can't remember specifically, but I think it was a good move and that was a promise to Nova Scotians, Mr. Speaker.

The other part was a responsible gaming tool, and of course at the time there was a lot of discussion on where we should go - what should we look for, what should we implement? It was the My-Play system, which was kind of in the lead at the time or, really the company that the government thought, well, this is something we should utilize to try to support gamblers and potentially support people who have an addiction problem. One of the good things about it, it was a Cape Breton company.

Now, I know over the years there have been members in the House that didn't support that company, or the owner of the company and we've seen some time ago, that ultimately the government made the decision to pull My-Play from the machines. When that My-Play system was introduced, it was never sold as a device that was going to stop problem gambling, it was never sold as that.

I think one of the best explanations for the My-Play system and potentially the use of it, that I heard was the fact that when you get your licence, Mr. Speaker, you're given keys to the car and you turn the car on. There are all kinds of things at your disposal that help you be a better driver. One main thing is the speedometer. You know how the oil is, you know how much gas you have, and you know how fast you're going. Imagine if you didn't have any of that and you just drove away - and who knows how fast you're going, who knows how much gas you have, who knows if you're overheating or not?

The My-Play System was similar to that. You had a key to a machine that allowed you to place bets. It allowed you to kind of monitor what you were spending. It allowed you to potentially block yourself from gambling on certain days, and it allowed you to keep track of what you're doing and how much you're spending.

We've heard from the government - and I haven't ever been given the evidence - that it wasn't working. It wasn't working for what? I think they tried to make the argument that it wasn't working to curb addiction. Well, if that's the case, where? Is it in a business plan somewhere, or is it in a report? Is it in a white paper, or is it in some consultation that was done? I don't know, I've never been given that information.

Being the minister who introduced it, I was looking for that information, and I never received it. I know there was a committee struck to deal with this and where we go. If it wasn't working, fine. If that's the case, if it wasn't meeting the objectives of the current government, then why wasn't something else looked at?

There were recommendations made. There was a committee set up and recommendations made. I don't know what they were because the government claims that it's confidential information, advice to the minister. But when you're in this business for as long as I've been - even though I'm a young man - you build relationships with people. You build relationships with people who work within government and outside government. I have to say I know that there were recommendations made that the government could have implemented that I think would have, in my view, softened the decision to just rip

My-Play out of that and just allow for gamblers to have no speedometer, not know what gas is in the tank, or if they're overheating.

I have no further to look than this Crown Corporation business plan, and I see that that's very much true. Last year, \$117,500 was the estimated revenue that was going to come in from VLTs, and \$133,300 was brought in, \$15 million, almost \$16 million, more than estimated in last year's budget. This year, there's a staggering \$27 million increase in lottery winnings, or lottery revenue - winnings for the government, losses for somebody else.

You cannot tell me, and the minister has not stood up and convinced me, that removing My-Play and having a \$27-million increase in VLT revenues, that's not going to impact problem gamblers. More Nova Scotians are going to have an issue with this. I know personally of people who have lost everything when it comes to VLTs. I've been on calls as a paramedic, suicide calls - one vividly. It comes from the use of VLTs. Even though I did that, I know that we need to regulate it. I've explained why.

The government is in the position to implement programs that will hopefully help people who are addicted. If it's not VLTs, it could be something else. It could be prescription drugs, it could be alcohol, it could be illegal drugs - whatever. Addiction is addiction. When I see a \$27-million increase in the estimates this year on that revenue line, I just shake my head. I'm concerned, concerned, concerned that my colleagues, my friends who work as paramedics across this province will have to deal with more of the calls that I've seen in the past around that. There's nothing to replace it.

We've seen challenges in areas of our province to gain access to mental health services - and addiction is a mental health service. That's why as a government, when we brought in the mental health strategy, the first for our province, we didn't just call it the mental health strategy - we knew addiction had to be associated with that. If you look at the rate of addiction and dig down into people who have addiction problems, a huge portion of them are dealing with mental illness, Mr. Speaker, and that was a commitment that we made.

So, to me, seeing this budget, here is a commitment to Nova Scotians that we are going seek more revenue out of gamblers in our province and we heard, well that is all from the casual gambler. Some of it is, I agree; some of it is. I know friends who said once the My-Play card came in they don't play because you had to go get a card at the bar and put it in the machine. That number that we have seen - and I do not have it, I should have brought the other two, three books that I had - the revenue increase in VLTs is just going up. It was going down, and it was going down in a way that was responsible as a government to make sure that we were trying to minimize the impact that these machines have on people's lives. It is frustrating to see that, and we have not heard of any new initiatives within the government on what they are going to do to try to support people with addictions.

We know there was a bit of a stall with the strategy over the two years because of the implementation of the amalgamation of the district health authorities, and that will allow me to wrap up that this commitment from government to Nova Scotians - there are a lot of good things in here. When you spend money on sports for children, good things will come of it, I know that. When you spend money on roads and transportation, good things will come of it.

Coming from a health background, the commitment here that the government made in the last three budgets to Nova Scotians is that health care is not the top priority for them. There are other areas in here that we have seen investment in. We have seen increases in budgets. In health, there is no real, new initiatives that I have heard. If I have missed them, my ears are open and I am willing to hear how we are going to move as a province. What is the commitment from the government to taxpayers on addressing the issues of health care?

Three budgets in a row, we know now that health care - the last two actually - have been frozen if not cut, if you factor in inflation. As we move forward, the services that are provided there is inflation that needs to be reflected in the budget. You look at nursing homes; their costs are going to go up over the next year because of goods and services that they have to buy to provide services for seniors and others who live in those facilities, yet they are being asked to cut.

The message to Nova Scotians is hurray, hurray we have what might seem like a balanced budget or a surplus - \$117 million minus \$100 million, but the \$17 million - we always said you could sneeze in the Department of Health and Wellness and you would lose \$17 million. You would lose \$100 million if something happens.

When I go through the budget and look at what was underspent in a number of areas, well, no wonder you have a \$17 million surplus. Health infrastructure - I don't have the page in front of me but I think it is \$24 million, 63 per cent underspent last year - \$24 million. Christmas, the forecast, the update that the province gives Nova Scotians said the Department of Health and Wellness was on track to be \$1 million, \$2 million in the red. Yet, they are \$24 million, \$25 million in the black in a few short months.

Being in that role, I know that that is going to have an impact on service delivery across our province. I am going to wait and see the business plan for the Health Authority and IWK, but if they were able to go through that, those savings are not solely on getting rid of the CEOs of the Health Authority. Those savings have to come from either positions that they have eliminated that provide direct care or support direct care, which can add up to a lot if you just don't fill positions and they're \$100,000 a year. That helps you save quite a bit of money. If you have 50, 60, 70, or 100 of those, there's over a million bucks, a couple million bucks, 10 million bucks saved right there. That's going to have an impact on health delivery.

I remember going in and trying to keep the Health budget at 2 per cent to 3 per cent, and it was going to be doomsday for us in the regions. You know, they said you're going to have to take milk away from newborns, you're going to have to limit diapers in the IWK, and they were real things that were brought to the table of the Minister of Health. That was just on trying to find a bit of savings. So to see this budget frozen again for a second year in a row, there are going to be impacts in the province.

When I stand on my feet - and I have every intention, Mr. Speaker, as I have for the last 13 budgets in this province, and I look forward to the 14th budget no matter who's over there, to go through it and compare what's good, what's bad, what the promises to Nova Scotians are. Do they match up with what I'm hearing in my office, like I started saying around the people who call me every day and who email me, or who stop me on the road? I look forward to doing that.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed with the direction, especially around health care services, and it may not be any secret, but I don't support this bill and I'll be voting against it.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to have a few moments here to talk about the Financial Measures (2016) Bill. You know, there have been a lot of speakers over the last few days examining this lengthy bill that basically implements the budget measures, but a real good test is to drive just a few hours outside of downtown Halifax and compare the spin and the speeches and the analysis here to what's really going on for everyday people. I just want to talk a little bit about how the budget looks from my own constituency of Cumberland South, because it looks very different there than it has been portrayed here by the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board and his colleagues on the Liberal Government side.

Mr. Speaker, I'll give you an example, and we've been debating it here in this Chamber - doctor recruitment is a great place to start. With a Health and Wellness budget that's flat, with a Minister of Health and Wellness saying that they have great doctor recruitment strategies in place, there are many, many places, many small towns - I can name Springhill, Parrsboro, River Hebert, and others - that wish they had another doctor, and they sure feel the difference when there isn't a doctor for every family like they had been promised.

In the last few days I've been asking the Minister of Health and Wellness specifically about the situation in Parrsboro, which happened to be the first place in Nova Scotia to get one of the Collaborative Emergency Centres. The Premier of the day, Premier Dexter actually came to Parrsboro to announce it and open it, and it was proclaimed as the solution to all the closures that were happening in the traditional emergency rooms. But

now we're right back to where we started, because the number of hours that that CEC is closed in the run of a year is adding up to close to what it used to be in the old system.

Mr. Speaker, there is an annual accountability report produced by the government itself that shows that, and the reason this is happening is that there are not enough doctors for people in Parrsboro and the shore area - some due to retirements. In one case there's a wonderful young doctor who is on maternity leave, something that was known for months and months in advance, and yet nothing was done to prepare for doctor coverage or family doctor coverage and for the CEC to remain open.

Here is a great example, Mr. Speaker. The government says, in our budget we have \$2.6 million for doctor locums, where we need to move a doctor someplace to cover a shortfall; we have money for that. Well Parrsboro is exactly the place where that should be applied. It has been asked for and they don't have it.

Mr. Speaker, we'll talk in a few minutes about how the budget is not really balanced, but here is an example where they are not spending the money to meet the need in the people of Parrsboro, in the shore area. The CEC stays closed to save a few dollars. So it's one thing to announce that you have money for something, like doctor locums, but then when it is not used for that purpose, no wonder people get skeptical about the announcement that government makes at budget time.

I think the best thing that could happen right now is that the government get on top of this and apply the budget for doctor locums and cover that shortfall in the Town of Parrsboro, so that people there could have a family doctor and that that CEC can be open.

Why not, Mr. Speaker? Why is the answer no to that question? The need is there. They may think they're saving money when they don't spend it, but the need is there. When people go without the family medical care that they need and when the local CEC is closed because there's no doctor to cover it, it doesn't mean that the need is not there, it means the need is there and it's going to show up somewhere else - maybe at a regional hospital emergency room, maybe in an ambulance. Where a crisis could have been avoided, a crisis becomes created. In budget terms, any saving the government thought they had by withholding a locum doctor from that area is lost. It's bad management. It's unfair to the people like the people in Parrsboro who deserve that coverage.

We talked about the situation in our nursing homes, in long-term care facilities. We actually have nursing homes in Cumberland County, in Cumberland South, that have vacant beds. In discussions on the estimates with the Minister of Health and Wellness, we pointed out the Chignecto Manor in Advocate as an example - five vacant beds. There are people in the area who need that long-term, around-the-clock advanced level of care who can't get in. The government says to them that home care is the solution. We're all about home care now, we're not going to invest any more in long-term care or advanced care.

First and foremost, yes, we want to make sure that people who are able can age in place, can receive care at home and stay in their own homes, but that's not the answer for everyone, Mr. Speaker. But the government hides behind home care to avoid dealing with the advanced care needs of people who have reached the point where they need to be in a place like Chignecto Manor and yet they are denied it.

The government talks about health, but they are not filling the need and that's a problem. The reality on the ground is very different from what the government sees here in the Legislature, and it's too bad because governments are elected not just to add up the debits and credits of a budget but to actually address the needs of the people of Parrsboro for a family doctor, of the Advocate Shore for those beds, Mr. Speaker, and that's not happening.

In the area of mental health in Cumberland County, a rural county where access to clinicians, to mental health practitioners, to psychologists is so hard to get in a timely way, it's inconceivable that the government brings a budget to this House that has no new investment in mental health. In fact this is a great example of where you need to read the fine print because the government actually put out a budget bulletin saying they were going to spend \$271 million this year in mental health. Well, that sounds great, until you check and find out it is the same amount that was spent last year - nothing new.

There is an EIBI program, and I am glad there is. That's \$4 million and that's good. So when you take that out of the \$271 million, you see the squeeze that is on mental health services everywhere else. Well, that's not acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, when you have a young couple, a mum and dad, come into your constituency office - as has happened to me, and as I am sure has happened to too many members here - who have lost a young daughter who died by suicide because she couldn't get the psychological help she needed in time. Then you have to believe that we need to invest more in mental health across the province, including in our rural areas, including in Cumberland County, for those young people.

That's exactly why we're spending so much time in this House as the Official Opposition on mental health. There are ways with a little investment to reach out, particularly to young people, junior high and high school aged, and give them the tools they need to know when they are starting down the road of a mental illness to identify it and to know what to do about it, to destigmatize it, to make sure that they are taught to reach out, to match them up with mental health practitioner, to get them off that road down into depression or some other mental illness and into recovery.

Mr. Speaker, we have the tools today, particularly with young people, if we catch a mental illness early, we have the tools, the medicine, the counselling, to actually heal them. Imagine the payoff if we were able to do that. (Interruption) I hear government members say it's not as easy as that. Well, I wish we had time to go into all the details.

You know what? It's not easy. It's hard. These are hard things to do. But they need to be done. So let's get at it.

To bring a budget here that has no new money for mental health when the evidence is all around us that we need to make an investment in this area, it is unforgiveable. This budget should be defeated on that one fact alone. In Cumberland County where there are so many young people who will not be able today to find a counsellor in time, we have to get at this, Mr. Speaker.

In Wentworth this past year, we had an elementary school that was closed. The government says that it was closed by the school board. The residents of that area reached out to the school board and to the government for support. It wasn't half empty, in fact, it was pretty much full. It was a small school. It was a rural school. But it was not a half-empty school. Those kids now are being bused, over an hour in some cases, in half the cases, to get to school. These are elementary school kids, five, six, seven, eight years old and on. There is supposed to be a policy that we don't bus kids of that young age that far.

No work was done in a detailed way to ensure that wouldn't happen. When the government talks about its investments in education, it falls on deaf ears to the people of Wentworth who had their community school close. The volunteers there spent hundreds and hundreds of hours looking at the hub school model and then refuting information that was provided by the school board that was just wrong about the physical condition of their school. They saw the exact same thing happening in other communities across the province like River John and Meteghan, communities that want to have some hope of attracting young families in the future dashed. To bring a budget to this house and say look at all the great things we're doing in education, does not mean a lot to people who are seeing the contraction in the quality of education in their communities.

Then we turn to jobs. Then we turn to the very survival of some of our rural communities themselves. Let's use the community of River Hebert as an example. The liquor store is closed. The Co-op is closed. Two years ago the pharmacy closed. People there want to have an opportunity to bring more people in. They want to show families that they have a future in that area, in River Hebert and Joggins.

They look at this budget and they say what does this do for our community? Our big issue is work. What does this do for work? Was there a plan for jobs in this budget? The answer is no. No. In fact, Mr. Speaker, when they hear the government say oh, look how much better the books are, our tax revenue is skyrocketing by hundreds of millions in the upcoming year and they know no more people are working than last year and they're not making any more money than last year; and they look at their own community and they know it's true - they wonder, how can that possibly be right? They get it, they get it that that part of the budget is a fiction. They get it, because they only have to look around, Mr. Speaker.

While I'm on the topic of the people of Joggins, the government puts out a road condition map and erases the major link between that community and Cape Chignecto Provincial Park, which by the way, is not only beautiful but it's our largest provincial park in the whole province. We have a World Heritage Site, the Joggins Fossil Cliffs, about 45 kilometres away, and their link by a provincial highway, Route No. 209, and it disappeared off the map.

Mr. Speaker, I know other members who represent rural areas have listed some of the closures, whether it's the threat of closure, or real closures of the Visitor Information Centres, or courthouses, and land registry services, which I'm pretty sure every rural part of the province has experienced. You can add to that list a whole road disappeared off the road map for the people between Cape Chignecto Park, Apple River, and up to Joggins.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I know some people find that funny, because the road is still there, and a lot of people make their living trying to attract tourists down to that part of the province, tourists who are going to look at a map to check out the road conditions, and not see that there's even a road, and go on. You know, we've spent a lot of time and energy in the last number of years trying to attract tourists as they come across the border at Amherst, to get off the highway and to come down one of our secondary highways, to get off Highway No. 104 and come down and see some of the great tourist attractions that are not on the main highway, like the Joggins Fossil Cliffs, like the Anne Murray centre in Springhill, like Cape Chignecto Provincial Park, and on and on I can go, Mr. Speaker. Like Cape d'Or, like the Fundy Geological Museum, like Ottawa House, all along this route, along the Cape Chignecto Shore, but you look at the map and the road is gone.

So, I hope we can address that, I know I asked the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal about it yesterday and he said they would see if they could put it back in. I hope they do, because for the meagre cost of keeping that road on the map, a lot of the people who live along that area rely on that road, and the tourists that would travel on it for their livelihood. They're not very impressed with this budget which does nothing for them, in terms of jobs, or health care, or education.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at some of our primary industries, take farming for example, a whole generation of young farmers are out there who would like to actually take over the family farm, or buy a farm that's for sale and put it back into production. And we need them to do that, but the cost, the ability to borrow, the access to capital, even the condition of some of our farmland that has fallen into disuse is a barrier for them. One would think the budget would have a plan to address that.

One would think they'd be new investments in the Farm Investment Fund for example, to maintain farmland in good quality so that young farmers who are out there can take up that cause. There's nothing about that. Even some of the buy local initiatives that would really help with the demand for our local products, there's nothing in there for farmers. Blueberry famers, maple syrup people, they're all looking to see, where's the

encouragement to carry on. Of course they will carry on, but it would be great to see a strategy to get a fair return to our farmers to keep up the farms we have now and entice some of the younger farmers into taking up that cause. Mr. Speaker, all the talk about this budget has not reached them in a positive way.

Mr. Speaker, we see companies like Oxford Frozen Foods in Oxford - processors of blueberries and other things - wondering where is the long-term plan for rural economic development? Where is the plan to attract more people to our rural areas? They have to go, like others, to the Temporary Foreign Workers Program because the workforce that should be there for them is not there for them. Then of course the cost of workers' compensation goes up and up and the ability to expand gets harder and harder. We need a plan for that, but there isn't one.

I raise these things, Mr. Speaker, because it really is our job to listen to what our constituents are saying when they hear there's a new budget out and these are the things they are saying. These are the voices of Cumberland South, if I can put it that way. I will expand that to the whole province when not only people in Cumberland South but a lot of taxpayers are pretty surprised today to find out that the government says, well there's no tax increases. Well, there is a tax increase. There is a tax increase of about \$22.5 million in personal income tax alone that the government has embedded in this budget by allowing the continuation of bracket creep, that ability to reach deeper into the pockets of the people of Nova Scotia. (Interruption)

I'm going to get to that in a second, just hold on. I think it's important that we get to that, actually, there's been a lot of misinformation on it. I'm talking to you right now, Mr. Speaker, but I just want to assure the member that I will get to that. (Interruption) I hear more than I look like I hear.

There was a time, Mr. Speaker, when both the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives seemed to agree - we still agree - that the government shouldn't reach deeper into people's pockets every year by stealth, by allowing them to pay more in tax when they really aren't any further ahead. So if the cost of living goes up 2 per cent and you get a 2 per cent raise, you've kept up with the cost of living, that's good, but you are no further ahead. In fact in this budget you actually are still worse off because you'll pay hundreds of dollars more in income tax because you move up the tax brackets, because they don't keep up with the cost of living. That's wrong. That amount, \$22.5 million in this budget year, is actually more than the alleged surplus that the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board claims to have.

You know if the government was being honest with people they would come to this House if they really wanted \$22.5 million more in personal income tax, they would come to this House and put it to a vote. Then if they really believed in it, they would defend it. Of course we would oppose it because people can't afford to pay more, but at least they would be up front with Nova Scotians about what they're doing. But relying on a hidden

tax grab that in this case is actually more than the entire alleged surplus, well that's just bad governance, it's bad management to leave it unclear.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to stop that. The Premier and his colleagues in the Liberal caucus once said the same thing. It's their fourth budget, they've had four times, they haven't addressed it. (Interruption) Three budgets. Well okay, that makes it way better - it's only three times they haven't addressed it. They have all been so bad that they blend together. It's hard to keep track of how many there has been. Three times they haven't addressed it. So, I do want to actually now talk a little bit about the history of bracket creep because I see from the government attack lines that they have got it mixed up, and I think it is important to clarify that.

The original path to giving Nova Scotians a break and getting on and putting an end to bracket creep started with Premier John Hamm; it started with him. It required two steps, and both occurred under Progressive Conservative Governments. The first step was to decouple from the federal system, which was a great thing to do because the risk that Nova Scotians could pay more in tax increases because of decisions in Ottawa was high, and we should set our own taxes here in this province. That is better when we have a government that actually gives people a break, but step one is to give Nova Scotians the ability to set their own taxes here by decoupling from Ottawa, and Premier Hamm did that. You know what else he did? He told people openly and honestly that he was going to do that.

Then, step two was to index the Nova Scotia tax brackets, and, it was a Progressive Conservative Government that indexed them. Step one, decouple; step two, index. Both things happened.

No more, they thought at that time, would a government be able to sneak in tax increases without bringing it here to the Legislature. That lasted all the way until the NDP came in and they ended the plan to index the tax brackets. Now we have a Liberal Government three budgets later who have not fixed it. They have not fixed it, and that is the problem.

When I hear the attack lines: Oh, who de-indexed? I have got to point out John Hamm decoupled and then indexed. You can look it up. It might have been Premier MacDonald by the time it happened, a year or two later, but it was always the two-step plan. The government mixes up decoupling with de-indexing - they are different things.

So the next time that someone pops up on that, I hope that they at least now know what really happened because if that plan had been kept by the NDP or restored by the Liberals there would be no sneaky tax increase in this budget. If the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board really wanted to ask Nova Scotians to pay \$22.5 million more in personal income tax, he would absolutely have to bring that to this House and it would happen in the full light of day, but it did not happen. Maybe someday it will.

We will have to add that to the list of broken promises like the ones to the Pictou County injured workers. (Interruptions) I know the truth is hard for the Minister of Justice to hear, but this is all a matter of record. I hope she looks it up, because you know what? I continue to believe she is an honourable person. I am sure she will look and see that every part of this is exactly what happened.

Now, where was I? I get off track when people say such silly things. Oh, yes, the Yarmouth ferry, that was going to be the next topic. I heard a member on the other side, I will not say which one, but I heard a member on the other side say every dollar is accounted for in this budget. Well, first of all, I do not know where that came from. I will say it was not the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board. It was not the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, because he knows better.

Four days before the New Year started, they stuffed \$13 million of Yarmouth ferry cost into last year's budget. They prepaid the budget; they signed a deal and transferred \$13 million - say what you want but look it up. We did this in estimates. They signed a deal to have the boat fixed on March 24th, and they sent all the money to a private company on March 27th so they could account for it in the last year. There is not a complete and true accounting of the Yarmouth ferry cost in this budget. They split it. It is the fastest cheque a government has ever cut was to make sure that Bay Ferries got \$13 million before they got to the budget year. That is what happened.

So they are projecting that the complete and 100 per cent endless subsidy that they have offered to Bay Ferries will be \$10 million this year, and that is in the budget. Well, you know what? That is based on some pretty shaky logic. That is based on the projection of 60,000 passengers and that the economy is going to be great and that the tourists are going to flow.

God, we all hope that happens, but that \$10 million could be \$12 million, it could be \$15 million. They have no idea. That's the problem. It's such a bad deal. They've underwritten an unlimited amount of losses. There's no end in sight. There's no cap. We've asked over and over again, what's the limit?

What they didn't tell us is that that \$10-million operating subsidy includes a \$4 million credit against the boat lease that expires after two years. When people say, well if it's \$10 million a year, that's \$100 million over 10 years, it's worse because that credit expires. If everything stays the same, then it's a \$14-million or \$15-million subsidy. You can't say that all the costs of that boat are in this budget. They're not.

You know what else is not in the budget and not in anything they'll say? How much is the management fee for Bay Ferries - how much are they making? They have a guaranteed profit; we underwrite all the losses. If any member over there wants to prove that everything about the Yarmouth ferry is in this budget, then bring forward the

management fee and show the people of Nova Scotia what it is. Bring it forward. Let's see it. That's missing, absolutely.

Why are they so embarrassed about the guaranteed profit that the ferry operator is going to make? Why do they want to hide it? It's bad enough to sneak in a personal income tax increase and then deny it's there. Those very same taxpayers deserve to know how much that company is going to make in a guaranteed profit.

It should be the law, as a matter of fact. It should be the law that we never sign a deal where the taxpayers blindly pay a guaranteed profit. We shouldn't do that. It's not just bad math or bad negotiating, as bad as it is, it's bad governance. It's bad management. That's how bad it is. It's like the taxpayer is this unlimited supplier of money and what they don't know won't hurt them. That's the policy of this government as embedded in this budget. It's disrespectful, that's what it is.

I wish the government members would get up and defend the Yarmouth ferry deal because the people of Nova Scotia know that their government got hosed. They got badly out-negotiated. They got snookered. They don't know what they're doing. We have private operators that look at this and say, oh, this is a guaranteed profit for them and the taxpayers pay all the losses.

You can just imagine the good fortune that befell the City of Portland and their council when the Government of Nova Scotia showed up and said we are desperate, we'll do anything, tell us what you need. Well, they must have just dreamt up every last thing they could possibly ask for, right down to the lines on the travel lanes, right down to the little yellow lines. They threw it in the deal, and this government is paying for it - right down to the travel lane lines. It's outrageous.

Day after day we bring examples to this House of the things that the government is asking the taxpayers of Nova Scotia to pay for. Terminal upgrades in the City of Portland, how much are they? They won't answer. Painting the lines in the City of Portland - how much is that? They won't answer. The poor taxpayer just has to keep coughing up and not even get the courtesy of knowing what their money is going for. That's the cost that's not even nearly accounted for in this budget. I'll tell you, that little surplus, it has gone four times over already, and I'm only on line two of the things I hope to say here this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, the other sad thing about the budget is that it's a missed opportunity to fix a mistake. Last year the government wiped out the film industry. Day after day we came here and said, we'll give you the benefit of the doubt, you couldn't have possibly done that on purpose, it must have been a mistake. Fix the mistake, save those jobs. This was the next budget - this is the one where they could have fixed that mistake, but they didn't. In the face of overwhelming evidence that the film business has been decimated, they didn't fix it. The right thing to do would have been to fix it.

Just today the Mayor of Lunenburg, Rachel Bailey - no relation - is being quoted as saying for the first time in her memory, there's not a single film production happening in Lunenburg, which is one of our iconic towns. So the jobs that would have gone with one or two or three films are gone.

So if you have a café or a restaurant or a catering service in Lunenburg, that's pretty hard to take. If you're a carpenter, a set designer, a makeup artist, that's pretty hard to take. If you have a hotel, or you rent cabins or your home out, that's pretty hard to take. But in this budget there was hope they would fix it. I'm sure Mayor Bailey had hoped they would fix it, and they didn't. They had a chance because PricewaterhouseCoopers brought out a report - a well-respected firm, Mr. Speaker - that concluded there is a \$7 return for every \$1 from the old Film Tax Credit.

Do you know what? I'm sure Mayor Bailey and all the residents of Lunenburg heard the Premier when he said, well, he's not even going to read that report. He's not going to read it, and if he did read it, it wouldn't change his mind. Well, people deserve better than that. You know that report was very clear: 3,200 people in Nova Scotia relied on the film business for their job - 3,200 - and they are mostly younger than average, they are more entrepreneurial than average, and they're in a very creative 21st Century business - the very kind of people we need a lot more of in Nova Scotia, not fewer. The fix for that mistake is not in this budget; one year has been lost and another year is about to be lost.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I talk about Lunenburg because I actually did visit a film set last summer in the Town of Lunenburg, and it's very telling when you do that. Literally hundreds of people are on-set, and they're Nova Scotians. They might be extras, they might be in some of the supporting jobs that I mentioned a moment ago; they're there, they're working, and they're being paid good money that they're reinvesting in that town. None of that is going to happen this summer in the Town of Lunenburg. How sad is that?

One thing we noticed, Mr. Speaker, is that all of the equipment that they use is on wheels; it rolls away. A lot of that equipment that was in Lunenburg this time last year is in Ontario this year, or British Columbia or New Brunswick, in a province that values the work that they do. That's how quickly it can happen. What took 25 years to build up as a vibrant 3,000-person industry has been decimated as a result.

Now, imagine if there was one factory that employed 3,000 people - imagine that - and that factory closed - imagine. There would be all kinds of work going into trying to save it. If PricewaterhouseCoopers wrote a report to show how valuable it was and what we need to do to fix it - and I believe this - all of us would do everything we can to save it.

This government has the exact same situation with 3,000 jobs scattered across the province in the film industry, and they won't even read the report. And this budget was the chance to fix that. So we gave them the benefit of the doubt last year and said this has to

be a mistake, no one would do this deliberately. Well, we can't give them the benefit of the doubt anymore, now that they've had their chance in the next budget.

Another thing the government could have put to rest is the whole Seniors' Pharmacare mess that they made. They could have actually put seniors at ease in this budget by showing them that they're not going to go back and try to reach into their pockets again, like they did in January. There is an opportunity in the budget that has now been lost, because when the government jacked up many of their premiums by 100 per cent or 200 per cent, that would cause great distress to thousands of seniors. Because of the sneaky way the government went about it, by putting out a press release that only talked about some of the changes they were making and did not disclose . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd like to remind the honourable member that the term "sneaky" is an unparliamentary term.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition has the floor.

MR. BAILLIE: Every senior saw the press release, they know what the government was trying to do. By the way, I withdraw that, Mr. Speaker, I got carried away. They tried to pull a fast one on the seniors of the province.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd like to remind the honourable member that the term "pull a fast one" is also an unparliamentary term and not a substitute for "sneaky."

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition has the floor.

MR. BAILLIE: I take that back. The point is that everyone knows what we're talking about, so in the face of a massive backlash from seniors, the government reversed course. Thankfully they reversed course, Mr. Speaker. If you want any evidence that what they were doing was wrong, they provided it themselves when they flip-flopped on their changes. But they told seniors they're going to bring in new changes sometime in the near future. They also told them they would consult them first. We're three months later, no sign in sight yet of the consultations but the clock is ticking.

For all the distress that was caused, this budget was a chance to put seniors' minds at rest - that they aren't going to reach deeper into their pockets. Because if there's one message the seniors want to make clear, if there's one thing they wanted to make clear it's that they are on a fixed income, and when you jack up their Pharmacare premiums, it comes out of something else - that got lost.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd also like to remind the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition that "reaching into the pockets of taxpayers" is an unparliamentary term. (Interruptions) I will provide the Leader of the Official Opposition with the list for his perusal, when we are finished.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition has the floor.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, if that's true, this whole budget is unparliamentary. (Interruptions) I'm trying to have a serious discussion here.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, you're not.

MR. BAILLIE: I know it's over the heads of some of the members, like the one from Halifax Citadel, but we're trying to have a serious discussion.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd like to remind the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition that inferring that something is "over the head" of any member of this Chamber, including both sides, is unparliamentary.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for that one; that was too much, I apologize.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, it's hard to concentrate with all the chit-chat here. The point I want to make about Pharmacare though, is for many Nova Scotia seniors who worked hard their whole lives, who saved as much as they could off every paycheque to provide for a dignified retirement - some had a greater ability than others to do that, but everyone did their best. In other words, they did everything that's asked of them as private citizens to prepare the way for a dignified retirement.

For us, Mr. Speaker, that's something to applaud. For the government, they saw a chance to jack up their Pharmacare premiums by 100 per cent, or 200 per cent because they just had the decency of seniors to save for a dignified retirement, but they're still on a fixed income. For those seniors that we met with across the province that were clear over and over again in the thousands that they might have to drop out of the Pharmacare Program because they can't afford it. That's unacceptable - that's unacceptable.

So here we have a budget where there's actually a chance to fix that, to put them at ease, to show them, for the government to show them, they respect the fact that they saved a few dollars, Mr. Speaker, but that didn't happen. That didn't happen, now they're going to wonder, until the next budget presumably, what the government is going to be up to next on the Seniors' Pharmacare Program. That is such a shame.

You know, Mr. Speaker, there's not a lot of time left. This might be a good time to talk about something I do actually support and like in the budget, I wish I could vote for it, but it's all in one package. Well, two things actually, one is the farm tax credit, something we have brought to this House that is now embedded in the budget and I wish we could vote on that separately, because I think it's a good idea, but we can't because it's surrounded by all these other bad measures that the government is bringing in.

Another one is the EIBI program, I know I touched on this very briefly earlier. The \$4.5 million for EIBI is a good start, Mr. Speaker, and it's exactly what we talk about when we say intervene early, get young kids on the right track, and I'm glad to see that it's in the budget, and I wish we could separate that and register our approval for it, but we can't because it's part of a much bigger package. But in fairness I know I've given the government a hard time on a couple of other measures, but on those two, you know, those are good things and they are worthy of support.

I do want to return to something that we've described as the health care challenge of our time, which is the crisis in our mental health system. This is an area where we would have applauded a new investment, it's an area where we would have applauded a real plan to actually fix the gaps in our mental health system, or at least start to fix those gaps.

Whether it's adolescent mental health, or it's seniors who are sliding into dementia, even ones in nursing homes where their safety - for themselves, for the other residents, and for the staff - if that were being addressed, this would be a much more positive speech, because this is really the challenge of our time. It is the challenge of our time, but that's not in the budget, and that's a shame, a lost opportunity to actually start to tackle a very complicated and a very difficult area, but a necessary area to tackle, because there is not a family in this province that is not affected in some way by a mental illness.

Mr. Speaker, I mention a couple that I met in Parrsboro a few years ago in my office who had just lost a daughter. That's one of thousands and thousands of experiences of Nova Scotia families. We've called for a public inquiry into the state of our mental health care system, specifically because we recognize this is a big problem to tackle, but isn't that a reason to do it? The Public Inquiry Act actually exists to enable a government to marshal resources and attack emerging issues that are not already under control. When it was written, I'm sure the writers had no idea what those issues might be in the future. When the Act has been invoked, it has been either for a very immediate situation or to begin the path of addressing a whole new challenge to our province.

This is the 21st Century challenge in health care for our province: mental health care, getting people the health care they need, ideally identifying that need early when it is treatable, when people can be healed, when they can be saved. One of the great things about 2016 is there are actually treatments that can help save people. There are counsellors and counselling techniques that turn lives around. There are wonderful modern medicines that help people control their mental illness and live productive lives with it. We need to get those tools, those drugs, those counsellors in front of the Nova Scotians who need them.

Time and time again we've asked the government to act, to call that inquiry, to bring in the expertise, to bring in a user's experience in the system and start down the road of addressing these gaps. They've said no. People say, well where do you start? Ultimately, an inquiry allows us to answer those questions. But in the absence of one, we point out, okay, adolescent mental health, let's start there. If the government wants to debate where

to start, I'd be delighted because at least we're starting. But that's not happening. This budget and the bill before us show that, other than the one program, which I applauded, the EIBI investment that's being made.

But that's just scratching the surface. There's so much more that we could be addressing. I think that really goes to a greater issue, a greater issue about what this government focuses on, what the people of Nova Scotia need, and how those are different. If the entire vision of the Liberal Government is whether the public sector unions get 0 per cent or 1 per cent or 1.5 per cent, and that's it; or which of the VICs should stay open and which ones should stay closed, and that's it; or the elimination of the Film Tax Credit, and that's it; or how much more can we charge seniors in Pharmacare - if that's all that this is about, that's not good enough.

Really what we see is a government that is stuck in the old ways. It's like a 1950s style of government where it's all about adding a little here and subtracting a little there and hoping that it all works out. In 2016, we need more than that. We need more than who gets 0 per cent and who gets 1 per cent.

Let's just elevate ourselves to a higher level. We need to see a real plan for growing, for prosperity, for jobs. As a starting point, let's focus on growth and not just the amount of pay increases and the cuts or which cuts get made in what place. That's small ball, as they say. The big opportunities are about how do we actually pay for these services by growth? How do we actually kick-start our economy? How do we actually go to places like Cumberland County and Cape Breton and the Valley and the South Shore and get going on using the resources that we have around us to create jobs and wealth and then generate real tax revenue, real new tax revenue to pay for things that we want?

I'll give you an example, and I'll go back to the film business because the members of the government like to say, well, we have to choose between the film industry and a children's hospital. Well, that is a false choice and Nova Scotians reject it because it has been proven over and over again, including in that independent PricewaterhouseCoopers report, the film industry actually makes money for the government - they actually make money for the government and that money goes to hospitals and schools, Mr. Speaker.

That's what I'm talking about, encouraging new, young, dynamic industries that grow and make money for the government is actually how you pay for a new VG Hospital, how you support a children's hospital, how you keep a school open, Mr. Speaker. It's time to think big about how we actually grow as a province.

You know, on immigration we applaud every single effort that a government - federally or provincially - makes to increase immigration to this province. But every Nova Scotian knows the best immigration strategy includes a job. Every new job that is created is an opportunity for people to move here, for people who are employed here to move ahead, and every job creates tax revenue for the government to apply to the great public

services that we all want, and that's missing. That vision of where we actually have a greater, more prosperous province is missing.

We can't afford to have it missing in 2016. We need that, Mr. Speaker, because the old, 1950s ways of just focusing on the 1 per cent and the 2 per cents is not going to get this province where it needs to go, and that is the greatest shame of the budget that we have before us, because Nova Scotians are crying out to see a vision of how we actually end up better off in the future.

You know, I mentioned the community of River Hebert, I think at the start of my speech, Mr. Speaker, and how every year it seems some service or some business that they have is taken away. Well, they need hope; they need hope that people will see opportunity in that part of Nova Scotia, that they'll move and start a family there and can earn an income there. They worry about their school, they worry about health care, and they worry about home care.

Rather than tell them, well, we'll cut something else and hopefully that will save your program, Mr. Speaker, why not, after three budgets, come in here with a plan to actually kick-start some opportunity in this province? As every Nova Scotian knows, we pay the highest taxes in the country, one of the highest personal income taxes, among the highest HST, among the highest property taxes, depending on where you live, and the economy is flat. Well, those two things go together. You can't have a meaningful jobs plan that does not include some form of tax relief for Nova Scotians.

There is none of that in sight; three budgets in and if you look at the future-year projections under this budget, there's none of that in sight. For every Nova Scotian who is paying among the highest rates of taxes in the country, there is no relief in sight under this budget.

That's where a little vision comes in - why aren't we debating how we bring our taxes down at least to the national average to give Nova Scotians a chance to get ahead, Mr. Speaker? It's not happening; it should be happening.

Even the most modest of proposals gets rejected on taxes. You know the metro Halifax Chamber, they're not even asking for a lot, they're just asking for a working group to look at how to bring taxes down. They hoped that would be in the budget, but it's not, Mr. Speaker. They won't even appoint a committee on taxes, that's how bad it is. Even when asked to look at it, just a committee, the answer is no; the answer is no. They are just committed to keeping our taxes high and spending it all and hoping that it gets us somewhere. Well, it's not going to get us anywhere.

When a budget comes in that is so narrow - I mean, the government is actually patting themselves on the back because it was a no-news budget, a stand-pat budget. Well, for all those Nova Scotians, the 40,000 Nova Scotians who are unemployed, the tens of

thousands of Nova Scotians who are out West, who would like to be here, for all of those people, a stand-pat budget is a great reason to vote against it, because they deserve better. If the government is telling Nova Scotians the best they can hope for under this government is a stand-pat budget, well, that is a reason to vote against it.

They had the calamity budget last year with the Film Tax Credit in it; we're still talking about it a year later. We've seen the devastating results. I guess stand pat is better than a disaster, which is what they brought to this House last year. The year before that, in their first budget, they eliminated the Graduate Retention Rebate, a way to keep young Nova Scotians here in the province. I guess stand pat is better than that. How do we get to a point in three years, in three budgets, where we're all relieved that the budget isn't a disaster, that stand pat is a good thing?

Stand pat is not a good thing when there are so many needs in mental health, in family doctors, in job . . .

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

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

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to close debate on Bill No. 174, the Financial Measures (2016) Act. I have appreciated the comments of the members; I believe this is our third day speaking to this particular bill. I think we all know too well that sometimes in the Legislature people can get a little mean and sparks can fly. I just want to let the members across the way know that it's certainly not my style, and I'm certainly going to shake it off and let them know that there's no bad blood with respect to some of the comments that have been made.

So I just want to speak a little bit here. A lot of the comments that have been provided by the members, my colleagues on both sides of the House here who have spoken to Bill No. 174, the Financial Measures (2016) Act, have talked about the broad-budget items. While I'm very proud to stand here in my place with my colleagues to talk about the budget that no longer has red ink in it, we simultaneously stand here to let the members know that we're not out of the woods yet, despite the positive bottom line in the 2016 budget.

I just want to draw people's attention - for people who have been following along on this, being the third day where there has been debate for the second reading of Bill No. 174, I have listened closely. In fact, even before getting up now to speak, I went back to Hansard to review the comments, because again, it has been some time from when we first started debate. So I did go back to Hansard to look at the comments that were made; it is

an opportunity to perhaps address some of them pertaining to this particular piece of legislation.

There have actually been very few comments, despite the length of debate, that actually refer to this legislation. Most of the comments that have been made refer to the budget and the budget process, more broadly speaking, as opposed to this particular piece of legislation. I just want to take an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to remind you and the members as well as all Nova Scotians what exactly the budget process is and how it works because the members opposite this evening - I believe both Parties had members who stood up this evening and said they cannot support this bill, they cannot support this legislation, because they cannot support our budget. I just want to remind those (Interruptions) I have to know, were these members sleeping on Friday when we actually passed the Appropriations Bill? Many of the people here on the opposite side (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has the floor.

MR. DELOREY: As I said, this Legislature passed the budget, the Appropriations Act on Friday. This bill before the House here for second reading is the Financial Measures (2016) Act. This bill has a few items which I introduced, but for the benefit of the members opposite, I'll just re-highlight the key changes that have come in through this piece of legislation.

The first one is a capital investment tax credit. We're amending the Income Tax Act providing a provision in there for the capital investment tax credit to provide the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board the authority to pass regulation to implement a cap on that tax credit. That's prudent management of the program to ensure that as it goes forward, we can afford to pay for the eligible projects that come forward, that it adheres to our fiscal capacity. We've introduced that change here.

One of the few areas where members opposite actually spoke about this bill and aspects of it is about the food bank tax credit for farmers. I want to remind people that that particular concept was brought by the member for Kings West many years ago when he was on the other side of the Legislature. Unfortunately, the Party in power that day did not pass the legislation, but I stand here along with my colleagues to recognize the good work of my colleague, the Minister of Health and Wellness, the member for Kings West, for continuing to advance this important cause. With this particular change, it seems there is unanimous support in the Legislature for that provision. The Act provides for that in this piece of legislation.

In addition to that, we have the Provincial Court Act, some amendments there again to ensure that there are proper controls in place to recognize that there are three branches to government. There is the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branch to our

government. It's the way our democracy works. We respect the independence and the hard work and the role that the judiciary places in our democracy. I stand here, my colleagues all support the work that they do. However, the responsibility for the public finances and how we spend the money that comes into the province on behalf of all Nova Scotians, that responsibility falls with us. It is the legislative branch that passes a budget, that passes those provisions. So it's our responsibility. That's why we feel the changes to the Provincial Court Act are important, to ensure that we have the appropriate controls in place to ensure that any recommendations respecting our ability to pay as a province going forward into the future.

We still respect having an arm's-length party, an independent tribunal, to review the compensation for the judiciary and, of course, to review the compensation and make recommendations. The only real change that's being made there is to provide the opportunity to ensure that there's a little bit more oversight from the branch of government responsible for the finances of the province.

A few other items: some changes around testamentary trusts, bringing our rules in line with the federal government. Testamentary trusts are trusts that are created as part of an estate planning process. We also provide - although it's a housekeeping item, it's a very important one. As I became aware and since I've come into this role, how the tax credit system works, and the need to provide tax certificates. I identified what appeared to be a flaw, an oversight in the rules governing the issuance of tax certificates. The rules provided the provision for a Minister of Finance and Treasury Board to revoke a certificate if the minister became aware that perhaps there may have been fraudulent, or misinformation provided when the certificate was issued, but it never provided the minister the authority to not issue the certificate in the first place. So, we provide a very important change, although it's a small change, it's a very important one for appropriate governance of the finances in this province.

Another important governance change that we brought in in this particular piece of legislation relates to changes to the board of directors for the Public Service Superannuation Plan. Mr. Speaker, that public service pension plan currently has, I believe, half a dozen government appointed representatives on that trust, but when that was established, the legislation that was brought forward required those trustees who have a fiduciary responsibility to respect the best fiduciary interest of the plan and on behalf of the members of the plan. They are obliged in the legislation, until this bill passes, to vote as a bloc. We are providing better governance, allowing each of those members to have a vote as they assess and make their own independent choice, based on their professional experience and knowledge of the situation before them to have a vote, one representative, one vote, rather than voting as a bloc on behalf of the government. A very important governance change, Mr. Speaker, being made to that plan.

Again, this implements the change for a budget measure around tobacco taxes, Mr. Speaker, makes some housekeeping changes around Shared Services Act regulations, and finally just identifies the dates.

So, Mr. Speaker, of all of those items that I spoke about here, all of those items, which are in the Financial Measures (2016) Bill - I note some members across the aisle, on the other side, they're even chirping at me as I stood up here, saying, you know we'll pull out the food bank tax credit and we'll vote for that separately. I haven't heard a single member opposite, say a single thing opposed to anything in this piece of legislation. I don't know why these members are suggesting we need to pull any item out. They haven't spoken opposed to anything in this piece of legislation, so I don't know why they are now suggesting we need to pull one section out, in order to vote on it.

Mr. Speaker, they've had hours and hours, over three days to talk about this bill and not one criticism or recommendation to enhance or improve this bill has been made by a member of either of the Parties across the way. The members can ask for us to pull one piece out, but I believe, just in this House session, not that many days ago, there were members across the way of the Official Opposition who stood up and spoke for hours. They spoke for hours about the issue, particularly around municipal governance. (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has the floor.

MR. DELOREY: Particularly, with respect to the Municipal Government Act, and how there are multiple pieces being moved through, and yet now they are asking us to pull out pieces of this legislation. I don't understand that. Within that (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has the floor.

MR. DELOREY: With respect to the entire budget, Mr. Speaker, probably the area that has been most criticized - particularly by the member for Pictou East - is the question of the accounting, of the \$110 million one-time revenue recognition. Again, I just want to reiterate for the member that of course the items get recognized more than once on the financial statements. He recognizes as an accountant that of course, for every transaction there are at least two items there, the debits and the credits, it's a double entry bookkeeping process.

So, of course he recognizes how that process works. That's why I don't understand why he stood up on multiple occasions through the process since the budget has been introduced to try to confuse . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has the floor.

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I don't understand why he continues to suggest that we're accounting for that money four times, we're not. It has not been accounted multiple times; it has been properly accounted for as following the Public Accounts sector accounting practices. Of course the rules are very clear on how it needed to be accounted for, and we've done what was fiscally prudent, and that is to not spend the money. That's a one-time revenue, to create multi-year commitments and set expectations of Nova Scotians that - a false expectation of Nova Scotians that we have more fiscal capacity to spend on programs and services than we really do.

That's why we allowed the \$110 million to flow to the bottom line and go towards our debt. Again, I don't understand why that was an issue they wanted to pick up. It's all above board, Mr. Speaker, and it's fiscally prudent in the budget.

So again, to summarize, I haven't heard anything thus far in this particular bill that the Opposition - either Party - are concerned with. I look forward to hearing from the general public through Law Amendments Committee and as the bill moves forward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 174. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

Just before we go back to the Government House Leader, I'll take the opportunity to introduce, if I could. I draw your attention to the Speaker's Gallery, I'm pleased to have members of my family here who are going to the theatre - ironically not this theatre. They are in town to go up the road to Neptune. When I state your name if you could please rise. My son Jackson Murphy, my lovely wife Stephanie, and Stephanie's mom, my mother-in-law, all the way from England, the home of the Westminster system, Sally Messenger. (Applause)

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 177.

Bill No. 177 - Municipal Government Act and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the chance to move second reading of this bill and to speak to it for a few minutes. I move that this be read a second time.

The philosophy of our government in terms of economic development in the province has been made pretty clear - we do not believe that we are in the position to continually write large cheques to large companies and hope for the best. We have seen year after year how that has not paved the road for sustainability or economic success in our province. We believe firmly that this is a collective issue for our private sector, for our communities, and for the province and we do need to work together in doing that.

This bill is very much in the spirit of those principles and in the principles of Ivany, who has challenged us to all work together to achieve success in this regard as well, Mr. Speaker.

Specifically to this bill, this is enabling legislation. There has been a lot of talk tonight around taxation and the need to review our tax system. This is a move towards that direction. This bill will enable municipalities, across the province and HRM, to apply this specific tax tool to areas or zones in which they want to see business growth happen or where they want economic development to happen. The way this would work is that there would be a phased-in approach to assessment, which can help encourage development in specific regions and avoid the drastic increase in costs to small businesses as a result of increased assessment rates.

There are parameters around this bill, Mr. Speaker. It needs to be phased-in up to 10 years. It can only be at 50 per cent of the total phased-in assessment cost, and each municipality will need to go through a bylaw process if they do want to implement this tool. What that means is they will have to engage the public in a conversation. Council will need to develop a framework. This does need to be part of a planning strategy for a municipal unit, and then they are able to move forward with application of this tool.

We believe this is a move in the right direction. We are looking at other potential reforms we can make from a legal perspective in this House to encourage and empower our municipalities, to improve their own economic position, to have control over their own economic future, and to support areas in their environment where they want to see growth and success happen. To apply this in those zones, there does need to be a built environment, so waste water and sewer is a key component of the criteria that we have set here.

We have consulted the business community. We have consulted municipalities. All the feedback we have received to date has been supportive. We have received an endorsement letter from Cecil Clarke, the president of the UNSM. We have received endorsement from the CFIB, and from chambers of commerce on this particular legislation. I am very happy to move this bill forward to second reading and then we will see what the

public has to say about this when we get to Law Amendments Committee. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to stand in my place and say a few words to Bill No. 177. (Interruption) Perhaps, if I am challenged. My first glance at the bill, it appears to be a step in the right direction. I am aware of the endorsements through CFIB and the Mayor of Sydney, and that is great. I think we are heading in the right direction with this bill. However, the bill does nothing, I believe, to underline the bigger issue of high taxes in the province and especially for small businesses. The bill concerns me that it may appear that the government is providing tax relief but, in reality, we may be just pushing a bill down the road for commercial entrepreneurs.

The taxation is a big concern of mine, with regard to not really alleviating any of the tax burden right now. I know that personally, being a small business owner, we can do better to try and relieve some tax burden for small business owners and all business owners in Nova Scotia. We all know the difficulties in Nova Scotia to try and grow a business. So perhaps the bill is a baby step in the right direction to address a bigger issue with commercial taxation.

I believe we would all prefer to see a bill that is serious about providing relief to businesses in Nova Scotia, one that would allow municipalities to strategically reduce taxes on small commercial properties and businesses. I have a commercial property as well, so I guess one of my questions to the minister would be, if something like this was phased in but I sold my property, but I had a 10-year span to pay off the increased taxes on it - we do have some questions. Certainly we're not ruling out supporting this bill but we will be looking forward to further discussions with people directly involved and will be affected by this bill. We look forward to the presenters at Law Amendments Committee and look for the results from that committee. Thank you very much.

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

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure to talk about Bill No. 177, the amendments to the Municipal Government Act. I can speak here knowing that I do have some background and spent I think roughly nine years at the municipal level. I think these issues are bringing back a few memories.

The caucus and as critic in this area, we certainly do have some concerns and look forward to the Law Amendments Committee, as the earlier speaker suggested. The Municipal Government Act is currently undergoing a review, which is expected to be completed in the Spring of 2017, and the Department of Municipal Affairs is also in the process of negotiating a collaborative agreement with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, and this raises an important question - why is the government making a

number of these small amendments to the Act before these other processes are completed? I think that is a crucial element of the questions we raised, and to me, I think we'll hear that through the Law Amendments Committee. This is another example of the government taking action without adequate meaningful engagement or consultation, and we've seen the evidence of that, of poor consultation; an example I use is the Pharmacare, in the most recent months.

These amendments will result in municipalities competing with each other for commercial development. Something that is, you know, that actually the government would be picking winners and losers, and creating different classes. Actually, in the minister's opening remarks he talked about zones, and to me that, again, raises some concerns about creating commercial ownership and much of the potential tax base could leave the province. Certainly, using an example right here, basically, when I was young, Mr. Speaker, I could throw a rock to the distance of - and the example I'm going to talk about is Quinpool Road, the business area there, 70 per cent of those businesses are national or international companies.

So, for every dollar, the tax advantage is only 30 per cent of that could stay in our local economy. So, these are certain concerns that we have flushed out at our caucus level and, interestingly enough, to know that if there is a decrease in the taxes paid by the commercial sector on property tax, then there's an increase, Mr. Speaker, of the tax burden to the other owners of the residential property. That tax revenue has to come from one of those individuals or entities. There certainly are more pressing issues that this government should be looking at dealing with the municipalities, especially affordable housing - if the province wants to do something about the range of municipal powers, they should be focused first on this.

This bill doesn't actually address the needs I'm identifying, and may actually do more harm than good. So, with those comments, I guess what we're saying is that we're interested to see what the public brings forward in further consultation on this particular bill. We look forward, our caucus, to making those notes in the Law Amendments Committee, and I thank you for your time.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 177. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

[6:13 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Mr. Gordon Wilson in the Chair.]

[6:18 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Kevin Murphy, resumed the Chair.]

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

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

Bill No. 177 - Municipal Government Act and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

which was reported with certain amendments by the Committee on Private and Local Bills to the Committee of the Whole without further amendments, and the chairman has been instructed to recommend this bill to the favourable consideration of the House.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: That concludes the government's business for today. I can advise that both Bill No. 174 and Bill No.177 will be heard at the Law Amendments Committee on Monday. We're still waiting to finalize the time as to when the committee will meet, but it will be on Monday, for those who have an interest in those bills.

Mr. Speaker, we will meet again tomorrow on Friday, May 13th, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Following the daily routine and Question Period, we will go into third reading of the multitude of bills that are on the order paper.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now rise to meet again at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to adjourn until tomorrow, Friday, May 13th, at 9:00 a.m. till 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 Friday, May 13th, at 9:00 a.m.

[The House rose at 6:19 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 3869**

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Richard “Dick” Stewart is retiring after nearly 60 years of involvement in the fishing industry, after making significant contributions to the development of the industry and providing feedback to government on the best approach to grow the value of the fishery; and

Whereas for the past 39 years Mr. Stewart has served as manager of the Atlantic Herring Co-op, a position that allowed him to use his unequalled knowledge of the fishing industry to help grow the value Nova Scotia derives from one of its most important resources; and

Whereas Mr. Stewart is known for his willingness to share his knowledge with others and for recounting stories about the people and events he has encountered during his more than six decades in the fishing industry;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House thank Richard “Dick” Stewart for his numerous contributions to the fishery and wish him good luck and good health as he begins his retirement.

RESOLUTION NO. 3870

By: Hon. Michel Samson (Energy)

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

Whereas the Strait Regional School Board held their 18th annual Strait Regional Heritage Fair on Friday, May 6th at Mulgrave Memorial Education Centre; and

Whereas Brea Campbell, a Grade 8 student at Tamarac Education Centre, won Showcase #6 at the Strait Regional Heritage Fair with her project on Pier 21; and

Whereas Brea and the seven winning students of the Heritage Fair will attend the Provincial Fair on June 2 and 3, 2016, at St. Mary’s University in Halifax.

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Brea Campbell on winning Showcase #6 at the Strait Regional Heritage Fair with her excellent project on Pier 21, and wish her good luck at the Provincial Fair in June.

RESOLUTION NO. 3871

By: Hon. Michel Samson (Energy)

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

Whereas the Strait Regional School Board held their 18th annual Strait Regional Heritage Fair on Friday, May 6th at Mulgrave Memorial Education Centre; and

Whereas Taylor MacIsaac a Grade 6 student at Tamarac Education Centre won 2nd overall at the Strait Regional Heritage Fair with her project on Moxham Castle; and

Whereas Taylor will receive a \$425 scholarship for placing 2nd and the eight winning students will attend the Provincial Fair on June 2 and 3 at St. Mary's University in Halifax;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Taylor MacIsaac on winning 2nd place at the Strait Regional Heritage Fair with her excellent project on Moxham Castle and wish her good luck at the Provincial Fair in June.

RESOLUTION NO. 3872

By: Mr. Stephen Gough (Sackville-Beaver Bank)

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

Whereas Jillian Langille achieved a silver overall ranking in the high performance novice category at the recent Elite Canada gymnastics championship held in Halifax this past February; and

Whereas in March she attended a national's weeklong training camp in Montreal and went on to tie for first overall at the international Gimnix; and

Whereas being only 12 and in Grade 7 this is her second national championship; she is headed to Portugal with her team in a few weeks to compete and represent Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize Ms. Langille and congratulate her on her future endeavors.

RESOLUTION NO. 3873

By: Mr. Stephen Gough (Sackville-Beaver Bank)

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

Whereas Mr. Victor Hughes and Mrs. Heather Hughes, residing at 48 MacIntosh Road in Middle Sackville, celebrated their 50th Anniversary on January 14, 2016; and

Whereas they celebrated with family and friends and I would like to congratulate them on many more happy years to come;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Mr. and Mrs. Victor Hughes on their momentous occasion.

RESOLUTION NO. 3874

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 when the Spitfire Arms Pub was badly damaged during a fire on July 14, 2015, owners Rick and Debbie Dunham didn't take long to find a new location to serve their faithful customers; and

Whereas within days of the fire the Dunhams had reopened a temporary location on Gerrish Street while renovations quickly began to restore the much-beloved watering hole; and

Whereas along with their staff, more than 100 patrons, Windsor's Town Crier, a bagpiper and drummer joined the Dunhams in a parade from the temporary location to their newly-renovated location on March 12, 2016, as they celebrated the reopening of the Spitfire Arms Pub;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Rick and Debbie Dunham on their reopening and wish them all the best in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 3875

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 despite burning to the ground a few times, the Royal Bank of Canada has been a staple in the Town of Windsor for many years; and

Whereas during an Open House on March 9, 2016, the RBC Windsor location celebrated 150 years of providing great advice and service to the residents of Windsor and surrounding areas; and

Whereas Windsor Town Crier Lloyd Smith read a proclamation honouring the staff and clients who have been a part of the company's history and Georgina Morehouse, the bank's most senior client, helped out by cutting the cake;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Royal Bank of Canada in Windsor and wish them all the best for another 150 years of excellent customer service.

RESOLUTION NO. 3876

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 19-year-old Rebecca Lynn Irene Corkum will represent Windsor and West Hants during this year's Apple Blossom Festival after being crowned Princess Windsor 2016 on April 9th; and

Whereas Rebecca, a resident from Martock and an Avon View High School graduate, has always looked up to the princesses and is looking forward to being a positive role model to her child attendant, Kyanna Hope, over the next year of events; and

Whereas Rebecca is currently attending Acadia University where she is pursuing a degree in kinesiology and is excited to represent Windsor and West Hants in the 84th Apple Blossom Festival;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Rebecca Corkum for being crowned Princess Windsor/West Hants and wish her every success during the Apple Blossom Festival throughout the coming year.

RESOLUTION NO. 3877

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 what started out as a simple science fair project for one Grade 4 Hantsport School student developed into so much more as the project took shape; and

Whereas 9-year-old Breanna Mailman's idea to bring recreation into a seniors' living complex and document the changes quickly became more than a school assignment as she started receiving positive feedback from the residents at J.B. North Manor; and

Whereas new friendships have formed and more of the residents are now attending the monthly games night and enjoying more social time with the other tenants in the building, even though the science project has long since ended;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Breanna Mailman on her ingenuity and out-of-the-box thinking, and wish her all the best in future projects.

RESOLUTION NO. 3878

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 18-year-old Eleanor Gallant was crowned Princess Hantsport 2016 at a special ceremony on February 29th; and

Whereas Eleanor, who calls Hantsport her home, is currently a first year university student attending Bishop's University in Quebec; and

Whereas Eleanor's involvement with the community's efforts to keep their community pool open and the many hours she volunteered in prepping the pool for opening, made her an easy choice to represent the community of Hantsport in the 84th Apple Blossom Festival;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Eleanor Gallant for being crowned Princess Hantsport and wish her every success during the Apple Blossom Festival and throughout the coming year.

RESOLUTION NO. 3879

By: Ms. Joyce Treen (Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage)

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

Whereas Martha Elizabeth Avery was awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal; and

Whereas she was nominated by her school, Cole Harbour District High School, for this honour; and

Whereas this award recognizes the academic performance and leadership qualities demonstrated within her school and community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Martha Elizabeth Avery on her achievement of the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal.

RESOLUTION NO. 3880

By: Ms. Joyce Treen (Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage)

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

Whereas Gabrielle Dawn Torrealba was awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal; and

Whereas she was nominated by her school, Auburn High School, for this honour; and

Whereas this award recognizes the academic performance and leadership qualities demonstrated within her school and community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Gabrielle Dawn Torrealba on her achievement of the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal.

RESOLUTION NO. 3881

By: Ms. Joyce Treen (Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage)

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

Whereas Bethany Baert was awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal; and

Whereas she was nominated by her school, Dartmouth High School, for this honour; and

Whereas this award recognizes the academic performance and leadership qualities demonstrated within her school and community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bethany Baert on her achievement of the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal.

RESOLUTION NO. 3882

By: Ms. Joyce Treen (Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage)

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

Whereas Bradisha Benjamin in was awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal; and

Whereas she was nominated by her school, Dartmouth High School, for this honour; and

Whereas this award recognizes the academic performance and leadership qualities demonstrated within her school and community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bradisha Benjamin on her achievement of the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal.

RESOLUTION NO. 3883

By: Ms. Joyce Treen (Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage)

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

Whereas Jordan Paul Lloyd Matthews was awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal; and

Whereas he was nominated by his school, Auburn High School, for this honour; and

Whereas this award recognizes the academic performance and leadership qualities demonstrated within his school and community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jordan Paul Lloyd Matthews on his achievement of the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal.

RESOLUTION NO. 3884

By: Ms. Joyce Treen (Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage)

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

Whereas Kayla Kathleen Beals was awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal; and

Whereas she was nominated by her school, Cole Harbour District High School, for this honour; and

Whereas this award recognizes the academic performance and leadership qualities demonstrated within her school and community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kayla Kathleen Beals on her achievement of the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal.

RESOLUTION NO. 3885

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Ralph Clark was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Clark was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Hants County 4-H;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ralph on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3886

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Carl Siler was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Siler was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Avondale Community Hall;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Carl on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3887

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Paul Mitson was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Mitson was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Avon River Heritage Society;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Paul on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3888

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Bessie Sanford was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Sanford was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by St. Michael's Anglican Church;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bessie on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3889

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Donald Sanford was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Sanford was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by St. Michael's Anglican Church;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Donald on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3890

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Greg Wile was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Wile was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Glooscap Heritage Archers Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Greg on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3891

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Marlene Myles was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Myles was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Pisiquid Canoe Club;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Marlene on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3892

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Arlene McKenzie was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. McKenzie was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by Dykeland Lodge;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Arlene on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3893

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Captain Doug Matheson was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Matheson was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Windsor Fire Department;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Doug on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3894

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Stephanie Sedgwick was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Sedgwick was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by Hants County Christmas Angels;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Stephanie on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3895

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Fred Rodgers was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Rogers was nominated for the Volunteer Appreciation Award by the West Hants Minor Baseball Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Fred on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3896

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Joan Small was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Small was nominated for the Volunteer Appreciation Award by the Friends of the Windsor Regional Library;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Joan on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3897

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Amanda Church was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Church was nominated for the Volunteer Appreciation Award by Helping Hands for Ferals;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Amanda on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3898

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas John Wilson was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Wilson was nominated for the Volunteer Appreciation Award by the Town of Windsor;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate John on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3899

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Alice Ross was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Ross was nominated for the Volunteer Appreciation Award by the Walton Shore Fire Department;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alice on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3900

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Karen Kelly was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Kelly was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by Helping Hands for Ferals;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Karen on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3901

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas David Joyce was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Joyce was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Ardoise Community Hall;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate David on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3902

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Krista Cornish & John Geddes were presented with volunteer awards during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Cornish and Mr. Geddes were nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Ellershouse Community Hall;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Krista and John on receiving the volunteer awards and thank them for their dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3903

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas David Barkhouse was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Barkhouse was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Ardoise Community Hall;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate David on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3904

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Lisa Sullivan was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Sullivan was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by Windsor Forks District Home & School;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Lisa on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3905

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Melanie Miller was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Miller was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Border Riders 4-H Club;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Melanie on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3906

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Mike O'Brien was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. O'Brien was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Hants West Wildlife Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mike on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3907

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Daisy Sanford was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Sanford was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Three Mile Plains Community Hall;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Daisy on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3908

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Nathan Tamsett was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Tamsett was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Brooklyn Fire Department;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Nathan on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3909

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Nathan Tamsett was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Tamsett was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Brooklyn Fire Department;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Nathan on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3910

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Irene Matheson was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Matheson was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Brooklyn Fire Department Auxiliary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Irene on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3911

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Bev Tetanish was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Tetanish was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Brooklyn Fire Department Auxiliary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bev on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3912

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Robert Wainman was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Wainman was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Newport District Rink;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Robert on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3913

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Gerald Jank was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Jank was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Hants Community Hospital Auxiliary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Gerald on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3914

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Margo Frost was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Frost was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by Windsor Elementary School;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Margo on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3915

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Chris Arnold was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Arnold was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Valley Maple Leafs;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chris on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3916

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Stephanie Boone was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Boone was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Town of Windsor;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Stephanie on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3917

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Marjory Brightman was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Brightman was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Windsor Gliders Club;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Marjory on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3918

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Elliot Daniels was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Daniels was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the West Hants Historical Society;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Elliot on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3919

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Jim Ivey was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Ivey was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Avon River Days;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jim on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3920

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Joyce Jank was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Jank was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Hants Community Hospital Auxiliary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Joyce on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3921

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Central Building Supplies was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Central Building Supplies was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Town of Windsor;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Central Building Supplies on receiving the volunteer award and wish them all the best.

RESOLUTION NO. 3922

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Donnie's Taxi was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Donnie's Taxi was nominated for the volunteer appreciation award by the Municipality of West Hants;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Donnie's Taxi on receiving the volunteer award and wish them all the best.

RESOLUTION NO. 3923

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Mackenna Clarke was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Clarke was nominated for the Youth volunteer appreciation award by the Windsor Recreation & Hants Aquatic Centre;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mackenna on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3924

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Jessica Carver was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. Carver was nominated for the Youth volunteer appreciation award by the Border Riders 4-H Club;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jessica on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3925

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Jonathan Chandler was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Chandler was nominated for the youth volunteer appreciation award by the Windsor Recreation Department;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jonathan on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3926

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Dawson Lake was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Lake was nominated for the Youth Volunteer Appreciation Award by the Glooscap Heritage Archers Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dawson on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3927

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Kyle MacDonald was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. MacDonald was nominated for the Youth Volunteer Appreciation Award by the Glooscap Heritage Archers Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kyle on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3928

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Christopher Daniels was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Daniels was nominated for the Youth Volunteer Appreciation Award by the Glooscap Heritage Archers Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Christopher on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3929

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Donald Davidson was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Davidson was nominated for the Youth Volunteer Appreciation Award by the Glooscap Heritage Archers Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Donald on receiving the volunteer award and thank him for his dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3930

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Julia McKenna was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Ms. McKenna was nominated for the Youth Volunteer Appreciation Award by the Ardoise Community Hall Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Julia on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3931

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Mikayla Tait was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Miss Tait was nominated for the Youth Volunteer Appreciation Award by the Ardoise Community Hall Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mikayla on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3932

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 volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Aaron Webb was presented with a volunteer award during the 2016 Windsor and West Hants Volunteer Awards banquet in April; and

Whereas Mr. Webb was nominated for the Youth Volunteer Appreciation award by the Brooklyn Volunteer Fire Department;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Aaron on receiving the volunteer award and thank her for her dedication and commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 3933

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas Gorden Woodworth currently serves as Vice-President of The Order of United Commercial Travelers of North America, an international member-benefit organization uniting people with a passion for good citizenship and volunteerism to improve their local communities; and

Whereas he will be elected in July among a pool of candidates from across North America to serve as President, an honoured position helping Halifax, Nova Scotia, to be placed on the organization's radar; and

Whereas Gorden is commendably inspiring others to actively engage the community in positive ways;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Gorden Woodworth and wish him continued success.