



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2014

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2014

Sixty-second General Assembly

Second Session

2:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Ms. Margaret Miller

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place today because it has come to my attention that a member on the other side, the member for Cape Breton-Richmond, has been offended by one of the statements I made yesterday in my response to Resolution No. 51.

I did retract that statement yesterday after you requested it, Mr. Speaker, but I would like to say that I have absolutely no problem apologizing to the member opposite if he felt offended by what I said - and I would hope he would take that in the spirit it is meant. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Just before we get into the daily routine - I think we should all be on our best behaviour today - the topic that has been submitted for late debate under Rule 5(5) is:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature ask the Minister of Agriculture to stop his attack on Nova Scotia's rural way of life and, in light of his comments in the media, ask him to confirm that he will allow farmers to continue providing meat for their families as they have done for centuries.

Respectfully submitted by the honourable member for Pictou East.

The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, before I begin with a petition, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. LOHR: I would like to introduce, in the west gallery, Louise Misner. Louise is the mother of Joellan Huntley, a young lady who was involved in a tragic accident 18 years ago on Highway No. 359 in Kings County and has been in the Kings County Rehab ever since. So if the House would acknowledge Louise. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We'll begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition, which is "To Save the Health & Life of Joellan Huntley." The operative clause is:

"... to petition the Nova Scotia Government to draw the attention of the House to the following petition to intervene with Government legislation to claw back accident victim's [sic] insurance settlements."

There are 293 signatures on the petition and another 459 that did not have the prayer page included in the signature. Mr. Speaker, I will affix my signature as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and if I could make an introduction first it would be appreciated.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: In the east gallery today, from the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation, we have Sarah Berkvens, Meredith Campbell, and Tabitha Arsenault. We appreciate them being here, and if they would stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation Annual Report for 2013-14.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I also beg leave to table the Cape Breton District Health Authority Annual Report for 2013-14.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, before I read my resolution, I'd like permission to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. DIAB: I ask the indulgence of all members to allow me to read a number of names, and I would like to draw your attention to the east gallery where we have with us today a number of police officers: Assistant Commissioner Brian Brennan, Chief Superintendent Roland Wells, Inspector Trish MacCormack, Inspector Jeff Dowling, Staff

Sergeant Dianne Stairs, Sergeant Andy Kerr, Corporal Sarah Drummond, Constable Brenda Elson, Constable Deborah Maloney, Constable Dianne MacDonald, Constable Kristy Sturge, Constable Mark Skinner, Constable Nancy Wagner, Constable Neil Edwards, Constable Sandra McNaughton, Constable Tammy Loeb, public servant Ellen Urquhart, and public servant Kim McCulloch.

I would ask everyone in the House to please give them the warm welcome of the House. (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

RESOLUTION NO. 128

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

Whereas September 16th marked the 40th Anniversary of the day when 32 women, ranging in age from 19 to 29, were sworn in as the first female police officers with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police; and

Whereas there are now nearly 4,000 female police officers with the RCMP, representing over 20 per cent of sworn police officers, with over 200 female members in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas over the next six months, visitors to the 40th Anniversary webpages will see monthly feature articles, personal profiles of some of the first sworn women, stories of the women who led the way, and interesting historical facts about women in the RCMP;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate everyone involved in this 40th Anniversary celebration and acknowledge the significant contribution these 32 women made in breaking down barriers and stereotypes for the thousands of women who have and will follow in their footsteps.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 25 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 211 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Housing Act, and Chapter 213 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Housing Nova Scotia Act. (Hon. Joanne Bernard)

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

The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission, I'd like to make an introduction first.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. COLWELL: Thank you very much. In our east gallery we have some very special guests with us today: Cindy Murphy of the Tuxedo Party, Sonya Higgins of Healing Animal SCARS, Joan Sinden of no chains ALL LOVE dog society, and Amanda Cleveland for People for Dogs. Thank you very much for attending. Give them a warm round of applause. (Applause)

Bill No. 26 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 33 of the Acts of 2008. The Animal Protection Act. (Hon. Keith Colwell)

Bill No. 27 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 5 of the Acts of 1993. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

Bill No. 28 - Entitled an Act Respecting the Entrenchment of the Goals Set Out in the Report of the Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy. (Hon. Maureen MacDonald)

Bill No. 29 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 10 of the Acts of 1994-95. The Workers' Compensation Act. (Mr. Chuck Porter)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 129

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

Whereas the RIM road maintenance budget was cut in half in 2010; and

Whereas 267 people have signed a petition calling on the provincial government to increase the budget to provide better road maintenance for safe, drivable roads in the Soapstone Mine, Roseburn and Kewstoke areas; and

Whereas less money for brush cutting, gravelling, ditching and asphalt patching over the last five years means some roads have not been maintained as well as they could have been;

Therefore be it resolved that that all members of this House of Assembly ask the government to restore the RIM maintenance budget to give Nova Scotians better roads.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Interim Leader of the New Democratic Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 130

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

Whereas Andrew Patterson is a writer, journalist and poet based in the North End of Halifax; and

Whereas Andrew Patterson has been involved with many performing arts organizations and events in our community; and

Whereas Andrew Patterson was awarded a 2014 Nova Scotia Talent Trust scholarship for poetry;

Therefore be it resolved that that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate Andrew Patterson on receiving a 2014 Nova Scotia Talent Trust scholarship and express its gratitude for his contributions to Halifax's arts community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Environment.

RESOLUTION NO. 131

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

Whereas last Friday, October 3, 2014 marked an important day in the history of St. Francis Xavier University as Dr. Kent MacDonald was installed as the 18th president; and

Whereas Dr. Kent MacDonald of New Glasgow has spent two decades working for his passion of higher education, including work at Algonquin College, one of the largest and finest polytechnic institutions in Canada; and

Whereas Dr. Kent MacDonald makes a perfect fit for the position of president at St. F.X.;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dr. MacDonald on his installation to the position of president of St. F.X. and welcome him back home to Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

RESOLUTION NO. 132

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

Whereas TSN Radio 690 announced on October 6th, two days before the Montreal Canadiens season opener in Toronto, that Dan Robertson of New Glasgow and Trenton will be the new play-by-play man for Habs games; and

Whereas Dan, a former student of mine, will join analyst Sergio Momesso, a former Canadiens player, in the broadcast booth; and

Whereas Dan was an outstanding student athlete and was well known in Atlantic University Sport broadcasting and has more than a decade of experience in calling Quebec Major Junior Hockey League games with the Halifax Mooseheads;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Dan Robertson for his new appointment, following in the footsteps of Danny Gallivan and Dick Irvin, and wish him great success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

RESOLUTION NO. 133

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

Whereas approximately one out of every seven Canadians will experience depression at some point in their lives; and

Whereas today is the National Depression Screening Day and the Calgary Counselling Centre in Alberta will be offering a free and confidential screening test online, for anyone to assess themselves for symptoms of depression; and

Whereas this test was created by Screening by Mental Health Inc. in the United States and the Calgary Counselling Centre is hoping that it will become more prevalent throughout organizations in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the National Depression Screening Day and the Calgary Counselling Centre initiative to help promote awareness of signs and symptoms of depression to all Canadians.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Kings North.

RESOLUTION NO. 134

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

Whereas the Minister of Agriculture has created turmoil and confusion among rural Nova Scotians with his inconsistent messages around allowing citizens to butcher their own poultry on their own property; and

Whereas the Minister of Agriculture has refused to work with rural Nova Scotians to develop a solution for small, independent turkey farmers and is instead focusing intently on shutting them down; and

Whereas this isn't the first time the minister has created panic and turmoil for Nova Scotians working in resource industry, as lobster fishermen have not forgotten the confusion around his revoked and reworked 5 cent levy announcement;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly urge the Minister of Agriculture to offer an apology to rural Nova Scotians for so regularly creating confusion and turmoil in the industries that so many rely on.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret's.

RESOLUTION NO. 135

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

Whereas the Patchwork Pals are a group of ladies from Hubbards, Nova Scotia that meet once a week to make quilts to donate to those in need; and

Whereas the Patchwork Pals gather donations for many individuals and organizations; and

Whereas the Patchwork Pals have given 81 quilts to ill and shut-in residents of Hubbards and area, as well as over 100 baby quilts to the IWK;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature applaud Peggy Conrad, Sharon Legge, Rowyn MacLean, Betty Norwood, and Jane Ramey, better known as the Patchwork Pals, for using their talents to help people less fortunate than themselves.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hants West.

RESOLUTION NO. 136

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

Whereas in 1974 New Boundaries, formerly called the Windsor Workshop, started their establishment, with the organization having gone through many changes over the years, including expansions; and

Whereas New Boundaries' mission is to provide services for adults with individual abilities, life skills training, preparing these clients for opportunities within society; and

Whereas New Boundaries is celebrating their 40th Anniversary this year and will be holding their third annual Realizing Dreams Fundraiser on October 25, 2014;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate New Boundaries on their 40th Anniversary and wish them all the best.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

RESOLUTION NO. 137

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisburg, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Dylan Kennedy, of Little Lorraine, recently made the *Guinness World Book of Records* for the longest stationary wheelchair wheelie; and

Whereas Dylan is the son of Derrick and Lisa Kennedy and through his accomplishment he has shown that he can accomplish whatever he chooses in life; and

Whereas the previous record for stationary wheelchair wheelie was 10 hours and one second, and Dylan did it for 12 hours and 30 minutes;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dylan on making the *Guinness World Book of Records* and wish him well in his future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 138

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

Whereas the Zion Baptist Church in Truro is the spiritual home of the African-Canadian community, whose roots extend back to the late 19th Century; and

Whereas the congregation worshipped in rental buildings until the construction of its present church in 1898; and

Whereas this church, which is proud of its relationship with the late world-renowned singer Portia White, celebrated its founding anniversary in Truro on Sunday, October 5th;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate the Truro Zion Baptist Church on its founding anniversary and wish it many more years of service to our community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The time is now 2:31 p.m. We'll conclude at 3:31 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

ENERGY: SHALE GAS REPT. TABLING (10/08/14) - PUBLICATION DATE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Yesterday in this House, the Minister of Energy tabled a document which he described as having been "Just published . . ." I will table that quote from Hansard yesterday. In that document, it says that onshore coalbed methane has the potential of 3.9 trillion cubic feet, as compared to only 650 billion for shale gas.

That information actually came from a report published not just recently, but in 2003. That is 11 years ago. Of course, we have a more recent estimate of shale gas potential from the Wheeler report, a report published in 2014, not 2003. And in that report, they estimate the potential of shale gas in Nova Scotia at 10 trillion cubic feet.

Mr. Speaker, shale gas is an important way to develop new jobs in our province. I'd like to ask the Premier, will he assure the House that his government did not decide to ban shale gas development based on an 11-year-old report?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): I can assure the member opposite that this government is doing its due diligence to ensure that every decision it makes is in the best interests of Nova Scotia. We are using real facts based on the realities that are facing Nova Scotians today, not some fairyland that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party is living in.

MR. BAILLIE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I see we are striving to the high level of debate again today that people expect of Nova Scotians. Of course, I just tabled every fact from its source document that it comes from.

Yesterday, the Minister of Energy tried to dismiss shale gas development based on an 11-year-old report, a report that he described as, and I quote, "Just published . . ." The 2014 Wheeler report estimates that shale gas development could create up to 1,500 jobs in our province. That's a 2014 estimate, not 2003.

Why did the Premier's government ignore the Wheeler report, using actual data from 2014, when 1,500 potential jobs are at stake?

THE PREMIER: As a matter of fact, we followed exactly what the Wheeler report said, that there need to be more studies and there needs to more science. That's why we're investing in more science to identify if the actual resource is here, where it is, what the location is. The bill before this House lays out very clearly a process when it comes to hydraulic fracturing in shale formations; that there has to be a public debate with Nova Scotians. Why is it that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party is so afraid to engage Nova Scotians in a conversation about their future?

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I am very encouraged to engage Nova Scotians in a debate instead of banning it all together. One Nova Scotian who I would be very interested to hear from is actually Dr. Wheeler himself. He's a Nova Scotian and an expert in this field who spent a long time studying this very topic, so I hope we do hear from him.

I will say, Mr. Speaker, that I am glad that the Premier mentioned science. Yesterday he also mentioned science. He said in this House that the government is "going to base the decisions on science." Well, that is good news.

Interestingly, the science in the Wheeler report - the 2014 science, not the 2003 science - says about the minister's favourite gas, coalbed methane, that projected volumes are small, relative to those in unconventional gas and oil wells - in other words, shale gas.

I'll ask the Premier, will the Premier return to science-based decision making and withdraw his ban on shale gas development - using 2014 science, not 2003?

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

HON. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the data yesterday came from this month's *Natural Resources* magazine, which was published yesterday - and in fact, at the Core Energy Conference yesterday, which unfortunately the Official Opposition didn't bother to attend, unlike when we were in Official Opposition. We always made it a priority, because we felt that industry was a priority. (Interruption) No, our caucus paid for it ourselves.

One of the things brought out was that the data that was in *Natural Resources* magazine is actually widely accepted by many in the industry as one of the resource estimates. The other is a possible resource estimate. The Wheeler commission talks about the fact that in both cases they are speculative, which is exactly why this government is doing the onshore atlas to determine what the real potential is.

Mr. Speaker, I have acknowledged publicly that there are many different estimates. The point of yesterday's discussion was around the fact that this Party seems to think there are no onshore opportunities, when in fact, the ones the industry are actively going after in

this province at the moment, the ones that are the furthest advanced in this province at the moment, are coalbed methane - just like the one in Stellarton that is flaring, the first one in this province's history.

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

PREM.: UNIVERSITY SYSTEM - SUSTAINABILITY

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question, through you, is for the Premier. Yesterday the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education signalled to students, staff, and faculty in the university system that it is not sustainable. She said, and I quote, "Taxpayers already invest almost \$500 million in post-secondary education each year. If things don't change, universities will need \$50 million more in funding in a few short years."

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is really quite simple. Does he agree with his Minister of Labour and Advanced Education that our university system is not sustainable?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question, and I want to thank the minister for the tremendous work she has been doing on behalf of the people of this province. For the first time in a very long time, we're having university presidents not tell us but tell all Nova Scotians that they have a government that they want to work with, that is co-operative, that actually sees a future for post-secondary education institutions in this province; a government that not only sees them as a great educational institution, but ones that will drive economic development from one end of this province to the other, unlike the experience of four years under the New Democratic Party, where they cut \$70 million out of post-secondary education.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Government has announced yet another review, this time a review of the university system. There was a comprehensive review of that system done in 2010 by an eminent scholar and well-respected economist, Dr. Tim O'Neill - a report on the university system. He made recommendations, and many of those recommendations resulted in a number of changes. For example, our outdated student loan program, which was the worst in the country, is now the best and tuition was capped at or below the national average.

I want to ask the Premier if he will commit to ensuring that tuition hikes will not be the method his Liberal Government uses as his government seeks ways for our universities to become more sustainable.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to assure her that this government actually sees a future for post-secondary education in this province. It is a wonderful opportunity to drive economic development from one end of the province to the other. The member just introduced a bill that references

research and development, if she was following the debate in this province - how excited that university students are for the first time in a very long time in our history that we've invested in research grant opportunities for university students to find their first job here in Nova Scotia. Those are all good news and we are looking forward to continuing the dialogue with university presidents and student union representatives across this province to ensure that universities are affordable in this province and one that is sustainable in the long run.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I heard no commitment to deal with the ever-rising and increasing cost of a university education in that answer. University administrators need to know that increasing tuition fees, student debt load is not the way to make the system more sustainable, it only offloads the cost onto our young graduates and burdens them for many years, sometimes driving them out of our province.

It's also the case that non-permanent members of faculty, teaching assistants and those term and sessional teachers, earn deplorable wages in our universities. These are well-trained, well-educated men and women academics. I want to ask the Premier if he will assure Nova Scotians that his government will not allow the administrators and universities to exploit the non-permanent members of the university faculty, as his government looks for sustainability in the university system.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, unlike the Leader of the New Democratic Party, we have faith in the men and women who are running our post-secondary institutions. That question leaves no doubt in the mind of any Nova Scotian why that government took an assault when it came to post-secondary education under their administration. We see it as an asset. We see it as building the future in this province, unlike that government who saw it as a place to cut.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

COM. SERV.: JOELLAN HUNTLEY - INSURANCE SETTLEMENT

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services. On April 18, 1996 a tragic car accident changed Joellan Huntley's life and that of her family forever. In the accident Joellan suffered traumatic brain injury that has left her unable to walk or talk. She uses a feeding tube to live and she is a long-term patient at Kings Regional Rehab Centre. The family uses a court award to pay for such things as a better wheelchair, a more comfortable bed and physiotherapy that the rehab isn't able to provide, even with its excellent care. Now the province has sent Joellan's family a bill for her care and is taking them to court for the money. My question to the minister is, why is the minister's department going after Joellan's insurance money, retroactively, when her accident dates back to a time before the provincial policy to go after these kinds of settlements even existed?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite not only for the question but for the work that he has been doing on behalf of the family. (Applause) This is a tragic situation which happens to many different families throughout Nova Scotia, including my own. I won't speak to the specific case, as it's still before the courts, but I will give you an experience that can help relate to the decisions of the province.

I lost my own mother to a car accident in 1999 and I buried her with the insurance money that she had most diligently bought for such purposes if her life had ended. She also had a clause in her insurance that if something devastating were to happen to her because of a car accident or any other accident, that I as her only child would have an insurance settlement to provide for her primary care, which I would have done.

If I had gone beyond that insurance settlement, because Nova Scotia is a generous and compassionate society, we take care of persons who need our help, who are in our rehabilitation centres, in our hospitals, that go far and above what the cost of care is for most patients that have comprehensive, unique needs, the cost of care is recouped when there is ability to pay, and that is why insurance is purchased in this province and that is why people are able to contribute to the cost of care. Thank you.

MR. LOHR: Thank you. I'd like to thank the minister for that answer and I appreciate her personal remarks. My family too has suffered a tragic car accident, which resulted in my brother being killed through a brain injury. I was talking with Louise driving down today about that and I do recognize the excellent care that the province is providing for Joellan. What I would like to point out is that the family is using this money in the settlement to provide for extra care for Joellan above and beyond what the province is able to do.

One of the things that Louise related to me coming down this morning was that earlier this summer Joellan actually had what's called an eye movement test and scored 90 per cent on that eye movement test, which opens up the possibility of communicating with her for the first time in 18 years through the use of sensory computers that track eye movement. That is the possibility of communication which I believe would not have been there had there not been this extra settlement money that her family was able to use. I just want to ask the minister, given this sort of a case, would she not recognize that the family has the opportunity to provide these extra services in this situation, and would she not acknowledge that?

MS. BERNARD: I have complete confidence in the medical professionals who are in that facility down the Valley, in fact across every facility in Nova Scotia that care for comprehensive cases. I know that primary care has a very strategic and strenuous medical care package and each case is managed for the most optimistic outcome for each patient and I'm confident that is the case in every situation that is currently in our rehabilitation centres.

MR. LOHR: I would like to thank the minister for that answer, Mr. Speaker. One final comment is that one of the elements of the situation is that the family has offered to give money to the Kings Regional Rehabilitation Centre, to the provincial government and the provincial government has declined that offer. So my question to the minister is why not settle this out of court with the family when the family has given every indication they are willing to work with the department?

MS. BERNARD: As noted before, I can't comment on anything that's going on before the courts but I will talk about the cost of care, not in this case, but in most cases in Nova Scotia, they can range anywhere between \$90,000 to \$150,000 or \$160,000 per year. As I said before, the Province of Nova Scotia is generous. We have a responsibility to families, to make sure that care is provided and in the instances where insurance settlements or other benefits can be contributed to that cost of care, that's why that particular piece of legislation is there.

We care for people whether they are in a tragic situation for a month or if they live for 50 or 60 years because that's the right thing to do and that's what the people of Nova Scotia expect in a government. That's what they expect with good use of their taxpayer money.

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

PREM.: O'NEILL EDUC. REPT. - RECOMMENDATIONS

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you, again, is to the Premier. We were talking earlier about the Tim O'Neill report on higher education, and some of the recommendations in that report. Some of the recommendations in that report talked about administration in the university system, something we all have a great interest in talking about, and I know the Premier does as well. With 10 institutions of higher learning, that requires a great deal of administration.

So my question to the Premier is, what thought has the Premier given to reducing administrative costs in our university system and the recommendations of the O'Neill report with respect to administration in the university system?

THE PREMIER: I want to tell all members of this House how fortunate we are for the men and women who are managing and running our universities across this province. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, to a person, from the day we became government until today, we have been received by them with open arms in a conversation that recognizes that there are challenges facing every institution across this province. Things have to change. They want to be part of the dialogue and they want to be part of the solution, and quite frankly, we need them to be part of the conversation. As a province, we need them not only to continue to drive top-quality education for our sons and daughters but for sons and daughters across

this country. They are one of the best immigration tools that we have in all of Nova Scotia. (Applause)

We have 20,000 young people coming here to post-secondary institutions, and the men and women who are in charge of administration in those universities want to be part of the solution. This government is talking with them to find a long-term sustainable model that will work for all of us.

MS. MACDONALD: I agree that we are fortunate to have the universities that we have in the province. They are an asset. But that does not mean, Mr. Speaker, that there aren't challenges, and I'm somewhat puzzled by the Premier's response. This is a Premier who has invested a great deal of his efforts into reducing administration in the health care sector, yet he doesn't seem to have the least bit of interest in looking at the administration in our post-secondary education sector.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Premier whether or not he has any plans in mind to look at the administration in the university system, even just to get an understanding of the extent to which there is administration in that system, to the extent that it may be top heavy in that system, to the extent of the amount of resources that it may absorb in that system that don't go toward the classroom?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure where the Leader missed this in the answer, but we are in consultation with the university sector. Of course we are looking at administration. We're looking into every other aspect of providing educational opportunities there for our sons and daughters, looking at opportunities to drive economic development through research. These institutions are economic drivers for the communities that they are in, but like every institution in this province, of course we have to look inward to ensure that the dollars are being spent in the most cost-effective way. We're doing that by engaging the university presidents to ensure that we work together to make sure that the long-term viability of these institutions is sustainable for all Nova Scotians.

MS. MACDONALD: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a little chart here on the universities' top-level administration in our system. There are 10 presidents, 28 vice-presidents, and 35 associate vice-presidents. That's 63 people, totalling well over \$10.5 million annually in salaries alone. I can assure you, this is the tip of the iceberg. Students and faculty, I'm sure, think some of these resources could and should go into the classroom.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is, what is he going to do with the number of top-level administrators in our university system?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, with this line of questioning, it is no wonder that that Party, when in power, attacked post-secondary institutions, had no imagination about the possibilities of creating good jobs in this province through research and development,

through the economic opportunities that are being driven by those institutions, had no concept at all of how to retain some of those 20,000 sons and daughters from across Canada and around the world who come here for one reason alone - they come here because of our university sector.

We're going to continue to work with the men and women who are charged with running those organizations to ensure that they are sustainable for the long run, unlike the NDP, who did nothing but try to kill post-secondary education in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

FOIPOP: REQUESTS - COST

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Yesterday, the Premier said that his government was more open and transparent than the last government and he challenged members to bring issues around freedom of information requests to the floor of this Assembly.

In July, the PC caucus office submitted a FOIPOP request for correspondence and government money given to Nova Star Cruises, because we all know the Yarmouth ferry has been a hot topic. In August, our office received a reply - and I'm going to table this. The reply asked for almost \$15,000 to supply the information.

Mr. Speaker, if the government believes in being open, why are they sending out bills of upwards of \$15,000 for information that should be public and readily available?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question from the member across the floor. Under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, there is actually a cost associated with gathering information. The cost actually is only about a couple of dollars for every hour we need to put in.

As people in this province - and most of the requests for the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act actually come from political Parties - as they put in more and more requests, it is costing government a lot of money. The \$20,000 would actually have cost government about \$120,000 and if the member has a suggestion as to how we can provide that information at zero cost, I'd be interested to hear him.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, the amount I mentioned was actually close to \$15,000, the cost. There might be some hope here for some change. The FOIPOP process is intended to be independent and free from political influence and all Parties have submitted requests in the past, so the member can say what he wants, but every political Party has submitted requests in the past.

Nova Scotia was the first province in Canada to enact access to information legislation. It was designed to prevent political interference in situations where information and privacy issues would be debated on the floor of the Legislature.

My question is, will the minister support greater transparency by changing the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act process to ensure it is free from political influence in government?

MR. KOUSOULIS: Thank you for the question from the member across the floor. Under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the information that is provided is readily provided. Where I think the Opposition Party is having some frustration is when requests come in to government that are very broad-based, what we need to do under the Act is actually price out how many man-hours and employee hours would it take to fulfill that request.

In this instance, where the request was \$15,000, the actual amount of hours to put out that request would have cost government over \$100,000. My suggestion is, when you read the Act, if you can be a bit more specific in your questioning, then we can drill into exactly what is being looked for and then we can provide that information. But when there are Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act requests that come in that are very broad-based, then the response is going to be 50,000, 60,000 pages of documents, and then there are going to be staff people who are actually in the process of finding those documents.

What that does is it, unfortunately, puts so much into the queue that other requests that are coming in cannot be met because we have essentially a big chunk of government just fulfilling Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act requests. Thank you.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I respect what the minister is saying. He makes a good point, but I think what might give a little more confidence to the system is if we had somebody independent. During the election campaign, the Premier said he would take action to make Nova Scotia the most open and transparent province in Canada.

We have a recommendation that may help to assist with that. We recommend that that the FOIPOP Review Officer be made an officer of this Legislature. That way, it would remove any potential political interference, perceived or otherwise, from the review process and it could help narrow down these requests so that they're not so broad.

So I will ask the minister, will he accept the Premier's election promise and move ahead with this recommendation to make the FOIPOP Review Officer an officer of the Legislature?

MR. KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I'll give you an example of a Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act request that came in. The only reason that I was privy to it is because the request was for my expense reports. I will assure the Opposition

and all people in Nova Scotia that the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act in the Province of Nova Scotia, under a Liberal Government, is free from political interference. Let me repeat that: free from political interference.

A prime example - and the only reason I'm privy to this is because what was being FOIPOPped was my expense report - the request that came in asked for my expense reports from the day I was sworn in until today, my executive assistant's and my deputy minister's. So what we had to do - we actually had staff pulling out expense reports for the last year, and then I got a stack of documents on my desk which I had to review to make sure they were factual, because it was my office that was being FOIPOPped.

When you have this request going across every department in government, there is no doubt that the system is getting gummed down. So as people make freedom of information requests, they should try to be a bit more specific. (Interruptions) I'll keep talking. If the requests are going to come in so broad-based - because it's a fishing expedition - then this is the result that's going to happen.

I'd urge the members across the floor, perhaps if they can be a bit more specific, they can get the information they're looking for. But as long as they're going to be on fishing expeditions, they're never going to find a thing.

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

PREM.: SACKVILLE LANDFILL - REOPENING

HON. DAVID WILSON: My question today is for the Premier. This week, when I asked the Minister of Environment if he would deny approval to any proposal that would reopen the Sackville Landfill, he implied that it's okay for Halifax to waste their taxpayers' dollars on a reopening proposal, but when it comes to the province, it's not worthy of the minister's valuable resources. So I'd like to ask the Premier (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid has the floor.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Does the Premier agree with the minister's approach to dealing with this important issue that would affect my community and the communities of several members of his own caucus?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I think what - I'm not even sure what the member's asking, but I can tell you what the Minister of Environment said yesterday. There was actually no proposal, no request before his department.

With all due respect to the New Democratic Party, they lost the election. The new government does not meddle in the affairs of another level of government. Municipal politicians across this province have been duly elected to represent their constituents to

make the decisions that fall under their purview. We're going to do the job that we've been asked to do, which is manage this province. I would encourage him to contact a member of the municipal government to deal with this issue.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Ultimately, it lands on the minister's desk. So it is, it does involve - it does, Premier. (Interruption) You're mistaken, Mr. Premier. It belongs on the desk of the minister. If they choose to change the proposal that is there, the province has to approve it.

All I'm asking is that if they do make that proposal change, that the minister should agree now, if they agree with it or not. Why would you allow the taxpayers of the municipality - there's only one taxpayer in this province - to go through this province over the next almost-year when the minister could stop it now if they agree with it?

I know the Premier's caucus members are concerned with this. This week the minister told us that he doesn't operate on the world of hypothetical situations. But, Mr. Speaker, when the municipality's hosting public meetings, having debate at council, has hired consultants and has received recommendations, to the Premier, how would this be a hypothetical situation?

THE PREMIER: This issue may never end up on the desk of the Minister of Environment, and the honourable member knows that. This is something that's happening at the municipal level. I encourage him to call his municipal representative; I encourage him to call the mayor if he so chooses.

Let me assure all members of this House that whatever lands on the desk of the Minister of Environment, it will be dealt with in a respectful manner looking at all Nova Scotians and it will be done through the regulatory eye of the Department of Environment.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, through you to the Premier, no one is asking the minister to spend any money. No one is asking the minister to appoint a special envoy to the Highway No. 101 landfill. All we're asking is for him to send a letter or make a phone call.

I'd like to ask the Premier, if the minister is unwilling, will the Premier make the right decision for his minister and tell the municipality the province would never entertain reopening the Sackville landfill? The municipality needs the approval from the province. Why don't they tell them what they think of it right now? (Interruptions)

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, he's being nice to me, I hear. (Laughter)

Let's be clear, the Minister of Environment has a tremendous amount of work to do across this province. He has been doing a tremendous job on behalf of the people of this province. I've been extremely grateful and proud of the fact that he stepped up a year ago. He was elected, he accepted the appointment to the Executive Council and has shown great

leadership on so many files, from dealing with issues that were left at the desk by previous ministers under the former government who were unwilling to act, unwilling to go out and engage communities on the very things that they had some control over. Instead, it's little wonder why other levels of government had no respect for the previous provincial government, because all they were spending their time on was meddling in things that were not their responsibility.

If this issue or any other issue arrives at the desk of the Minister of Environment, he will deal with it in the same professional manner that he has dealt with every other issue: through the eyes of the regulatory environment here in the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

EECD - DR. W.A. MACLEOD CONS. SCH.: CONSTRUCTION - TIME FRAME

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Despite repeated promises to the contrary, for the second Fall in a row, students at Dr. W.A. MacLeod Consolidated School in Riverton returned to study in windowless classrooms. The windows could and should have been installed during the summer months while the building sat empty, but they weren't, and the result is students are now unnecessarily going to school in a construction zone.

The students of Dr. W.A. MacLeod Consolidated School deserve better. Does the minister agree that the students of Dr. W.A. MacLeod Consolidated School deserve better and that this work should have been done during the summer months?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member opposite for the question. I have had a chance to visit W.A. MacLeod during the summer when the construction crew was there. We recognized early on, when we put \$15 million into a maintenance capital program, that schools would be able to use that, boards could apply for that and dollars were given, as the member would know, to Chignecto for that particular project. The calling of the tender, the awarding of the tender and the management of the work was the responsibility of the school board.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her answer there. But after having all summer to get this work done, the tender for installing additional windows was not closed until August 14th, with the successful bidder chosen on August 18th. Red tape ensured that the summer construction season was lost. This tender should have been issued much sooner. It should have been awarded much sooner and the work could have been done.

The students and staff deserve answers. My question for the minister is, why did the department sit idly by instead of impressing upon the board the need to get the tender out, awarded and the work started?

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, you know, we recognize that having students in a construction environment is not the most favourable place. It's something we would like to avoid. Unfortunately, we have school boards who make decisions that really would not be our decision, but it is within their purview.

We certainly have been in communication with the Chignecto board on W.A. as well as New Glasgow Junior High, a P to 8 school, and we are encouraging them to respect and consider the safety of the students during construction periods. We encouraged them to do that construction during the summer; that time ran out. I'm not happy about that. We encouraged them to do work in the evenings and weekends. I understand that is happening but the safety of the children in the school is our paramount concern.

MR. HOUSTON: I do appreciate the answer. That might be the first answer I ever actually got in a Question Period, so thank you very much to the minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. HOUSTON: I'm serious, it's a good answer.

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday the Dr. W.A. MacLeod Consolidated School Advisory Council sent a letter to the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board, of which the minister was copied - and I'd be happy to table that. It said that the school advisory council believes that renovations that should make the existing elementary school a standard P to 8 school are not being fulfilled as promised - and, with so many broken promises in the past, I understand their concern. The school advisory council is concerned that necessary educational elements such as proper fitness and tech ed facilities have been delayed and might be excluded from the project, and the letter goes on to say that we want the board and the province to understand that this is not acceptable.

So my question today is, will the minister assure the parents and students that their school will get the renovations they are promised and that anything less is, indeed, not acceptable?

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, to the member and to the school advisory council - I would like to congratulate the school advisory council for taking on the role for which they were designed. School advisory councils are there to lobby and act on behalf of the students and going to their school board representative, going to their elected member, and going to the administration is exactly what SACs - school advisory councils - are designed to do.

I will tell the member that when I receive the letter, I certainly will respond to that school advisory council.

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

NAT. RES. - WOOD HEATING: ENERGY RATES - REDUCTION

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Natural Resources.

In the Liberal platform it promises that the government will drive down energy rates - and I will table that - but according to a recent *Chronicle Herald* article, Nova Scotians who rely on firewood as a primary home heating source are facing an almost 10 per cent increase in costs.

My question for the Minister of Natural Resources is, what steps has he taken to keep the government's promise to lower energy rates for those who use wood to heat their homes?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, just for clarity's sake, the commitment made in the platform was related to people's electricity rates - just for the clarity of the House, so that everybody knows that.

What is going on with the firewood market right now, the prices are going up. That is a result of factors happening in the private wood market, Mr. Speaker. Primarily over the course of the last 10 years we've had a retraction in the forestry industry. There are less contractors, and that means there are less people going out and cutting the wood. We also had a long winter last year, which has compounded the problem for this year.

What we're able to do - what we tried to do to address this situation and increase the flow of firewood is open up Crown tenders, Mr. Speaker, particularly in the west. Unfortunately on three of those Crown tenders there were no bids - in the Counties of Kings, Queens, and Shelburne - and that is a symptom of the fact that there are just not enough contractors to supply the current demand that is in the marketplace.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, that's sad - pardon the pun - but that is cold comfort. I'll table the tenders because I've talked with the wood suppliers and they simply - I can't use the words in here, but they simply called that tendering process "garbage" or "window dressing."

Mr. Speaker, right now across Nova Scotia we are facing a firewood shortage, which has led to a \$20 a cord increase in the price. In a recent Queens County *Advance* story, several firewood suppliers spoke out about the current government's lack of willingness to address the problem; in fact, one firewood supplier told the publication that he called the local MLA for help, including the MLA for Lunenburg West four times - I repeat, four times - but the one person who returned the call was the MLA for Queens-Shelburne.

Mr. Speaker, what these suppliers have told me is that the few tenders the minister put out for firewood are nothing more than window dressing, so my question for the Minister of Natural Resources is, why has he refused to work with South Shore firewood suppliers to address this current shortage?

MR. CHURCHILL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously our government is concerned about the current state in the firewood marketplace. We have heard from constituents across the province who are having a hard time accessing firewood and have identified that the prices have gone up. That's true. It is a result of factors that are happening in the private marketplace. Just for clarity sake, 80 per cent of the firewood supply in this province comes off private land, not Crown land.

Our ability to interfere in these current market factors is limited. It's very easy during times of stress, when people are concerned about heating their homes, to point fingers and lay political blame. It would be just as easy for me to point the finger at the member opposite and say the reason there is no firewood in the marketplace is because of the large green metric tonnage that they gave to Northern Pulp. But to do so would be disingenuous because this is not a problem that was caused by any particular government. It's a challenge that the current marketplace is facing because there has been a retraction in that marketplace and there's currently not the contracting capacity to get out there and cut the wood that needs to be cut.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Thank you Mr. Speaker. The member opposite needs a quick history lesson. Bowater's land was purchased for recreational use and for commercial use, which includes firewood access. This winter it is going to cost families along the South Shore more to heat their homes and I'm concerned that some homeowners will be forced to burn green wood, which we all know poses a health and a safety risk. In today's Crown land allocation announcement the minister made no mention - I repeat, no mention - of firewood for firewood suppliers, so my question for the minister is why did he not address the firewood shortage by explicitly giving firewood suppliers access to Crown land as part of today's western lands allocation?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, our government did release tenders specific for firewood, in the summer. There were some bids that were placed in various counties. There were three where there were no bids placed on those tenders. Queens, Shelburne and Kings County were the three where we received no bids. Eighty per cent of our wood supply comes off private land. The impact that the Crown wood supply has on the firewood market is minimal.

Today's announcement was a release of a long-term allocation that is for the forestry sector. Historically, those mills would hire the contractors to cut the wood and some of that wood would make it to the firewood market. Because of the current market conditions, a lot of that wood is not getting to where it has traditionally been before and there is very little that the government can do to interfere in that process.

If the member opposite needs any indication on how government can interfere in the work of the private market, all he has to do is look at the record of the NDP throwing hundreds of millions of dollars at Bowater, at other industries to try to save them, and what did it result in? Nothing for the people of Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

EECD: EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM - STATUS

HON. PAT DUNN: Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Early childhood is the most important developmental phase of life. At this critical time proper intervention and learning can have a tremendous impact on a child's future development. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development took on this area well over a year ago. A fundamental part of early childhood development is in early childhood education curriculum. My question to the minister, has the government developed curriculum for the early childhood development program, and if so, will the minister table it in this House?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. The comment is very accurate that the education for our early learners, prior to coming to Primary school, is fundamental. We recognize and through statistics we have learned that about 25 per cent of the children in our province have some level of vulnerability before they come to Primary and our goal at Early Childhood is to make sure that we are able help identify early intervention and ensure that the readiness of those students is in place and in a better state of readiness before they come into Primary school.

We have, as the member would know, introduced Early Years centres, and one of the main components of that early years programming is a program for four-year-olds, and I would be glad to share that with the member.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, not only would this better prepare and boost healthy development in our youngest Nova Scotians, there would be a long-term economic benefit. For every \$1 spent on early education there is a \$2 economic benefit, and I'll table that. A proper curriculum with proven effectiveness and measurable goals could yield greater economic benefits and most importantly make a brighter future for young children. My question to the minister, has the minister directed her department to develop measures to determine the effectiveness of the early childhood development efforts?

MS. CASEY: One initiative that we have taken within the department - it began last year - and it was to use an instrument of assessment for all primary students in our schools and it was to determine their level of readiness. That instrument was administered by the Primary teachers and it gives us a pretty good picture of the readiness of students, whether it's their cognitive ability, their linguistic ability, their social/emotional, or their physical health. Those are the things that will help us determine what kind of an early years/age four

program we need so that the concerns that were identified during that assessment are addressed through our program.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, children across the province receive care in many different settings; some are in preschool, others are in daycare, or in a family home daycare setting. In order to develop a curriculum, the government will have to look at professionals across the province, to ensure there is uniform training. My question to the minister, will the attempt to improve the curriculum for early childhood development be a coordinated approach, an integrated approach from a number of key departments?

MS. CASEY: As the member opposite suggests, this is an effort that does cross government departments. It does include bringing in community. It does include bringing in parents, and I can tell you that as recently as this week, we had a meeting at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development that involved Justice, Community Services, Education, and Health and Wellness because we recognize that this is bigger than just one department.

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

ENVIRON. - LAFARGE CEMENT PLANT: WASTE WATER - PURIFICATION

MR. LARRY HARRISON: My question is for the Minister of Environment. The minister will remember that he and I and a number of others attended a very heated meeting in Truro. The problem was how to dispose of millions of litres of fracking waste water. Lafarge cement plant had a plan and they presented that to the Department of Environment and were given permission to use 2 million litres of that waste water.

Now what happens is that that waste water is purified before it goes to Lafarge. It's processed by a company called the Atlantic Industrial Services. Now when this was finished - the 2 million litres use - the tests were set off to Dalhousie and Dalhousie has completed that testing and what came out of that project was deemed safe. Could the Minister of Environment update the House as to the status of this project?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I would certainly be glad to provide an update on that project to the member but just to make a couple of factual clarifications on the background here, Mr. Speaker: first of all the request and the proposal, the proponent, if you will, on this file that has the agreement or the approval for that pilot project with the Department of Environment is actually the AIS, Atlantic Industrial Services, not Lafarge. While it is correct that Lafarge was the recipient disposal point for the water, AIS is the company that has the approval for that pilot project.

With respect to the pilot project, we have recently received some tests results. We had a number of things being tested. Both the water going into Lafarge - that pilot was also going to include results of stack tests to address some of the concerns in the community

with respect to air emissions of the treated water - and also the kiln, which is the physical fallout of the process, Mr. Speaker.

We are currently waiting on the test results. Last I heard we should be getting them shortly - on the kiln. Once we have that information, we will know if the entire process, Mr. Speaker, not just the reverse osmosis water - which, I'd like to highlight for everyone, is actually available on our website, and has been made available before this pilot kicked off. You certainly don't have to FOIPOP my department to get this important information. It is readily available for you.

MR. LARRY HARRISON: That answered my first supplementary, Mr. Speaker. My second one: I was talking to the manager of LaFarge a few days ago, and I know they are ready to proceed just as soon as permission is given. I'm just asking the minister, could they be given that permission as soon as possible so that they can continue?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to commit as to what the result will be. As I committed to the residents, I made several trips out to the Truro area to host public meetings between January and March earlier this year. In those meetings there was a lot of concern with the disposal of this waste water.

As the Premier earlier made reference to, some of those files that landed on my desk were backlogged because of the inaction of the previous government. This happens to be one of them, so it did take some time to build the confidence and the trust in the public that the department and the government take their concerns very seriously.

Mr. Speaker, the commitment made to the public with this pilot project was that we would assess the test results of this pilot project. So until we receive the full set of tests and have a chance to review those test results, I won't commit to what the next step will be. Once we do have those test results, if those test results are positive and indicate that the test and the pilot went through successfully, we'll certainly be considering any other applications to continue with the same process.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

JUSTICE: ANKLE BRACELET PROG. - FUNDING CUTS

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. While law enforcement does everything it can to keep Nova Scotians safe, the government has a role to play, too. In 2011, while in Opposition, the now-Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism spoke of funding cuts with respect to the ankle bracelet program. He said, and I'll certainly table this, "This government has now decided at a time" - and he was referring to the previous government - "when we're seeing increasingly violent crime in our province, that they should cut that funding and put that burden now on our police officers, rather than being on the streets, trying to prevent crime from taking place."

Mr. Speaker, that member is a trained lawyer, and I would be willing to take his advice on this one. Would the Minister of Justice?

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, a very, very important question. No doubt Nova Scotians want to feel safe in their communities. We all want to feel safe in our communities. Ankle bracelets for offenders who have been convicted and sentenced - the Department of Justice does run an electronic supervision program, as my colleague knows. We do have ankle bracelets on these offenders. Again, they have been convicted and sentenced by the courts, so the court certainly is free to order these offenders to wear the bracelets as a condition of their release. Thank you very much.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I respect the minister's reply. I think there's opportunity for broader use of these devices. I know that members of the government had concerns at the time of the release of the report on the tragic death of Raymond Taavel. The Minister of Finance and Treasury Board indicated at the time that there is an issue for the public that goes beyond the recommendations. What I believe she was referring to is the issue of whether or not the policies are tight enough to ensure our safety as a society. I will table that.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is, would greater use of electronic monitoring help to ensure a higher degree of safety for Nova Scotians?

MS. DIAB: Mr. Speaker, again, I want to ensure that all members of this House and all members of the public know and realize that we in the Department of Justice under this government want to do everything we can possibly do to ensure that our children, our youth, our adults, and everybody feel safe in their communities.

There are a number of conditions that courts can place on someone who is being released on bail. Police help to enforce those conditions. We do use ankle bracelets to supervise high-risk offenders who have been convicted by the courts. That is something that we have done and we are doing.

If my colleague is talking about the pilot bail supervision program that was run under the previous government in Halifax, that did include ankle bracelets for those who were out on bail. However, as my colleague understands and realizes, the courts were not using those and were not putting them as conditions to the offenders. Therefore, that program was not being utilized . . .

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

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. While it was a much lively and informative Question Period, I wonder if you could take under consideration that we got less than 11 full questions in today. I'm not pointing a finger at anybody; there are culprits all around. If you could look at that, and if you could also look at in the event the

government doesn't use the 10th question, that question then would fall to the Third Party? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I will take that under advisement and come back with a ruling.

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: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 6.

Bill No. 6 - Petroleum Resources Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 6, an Act to Amend Chapter 342 of the Revised Statutes of 1989, the Petroleum Resources Act, be now read a second time.

Our government has introduced legislation for a moratorium on high-volume hydraulic fracturing in shale formations, just as we said we would. On September 3rd, I announced that after 11 months of review of the information on high-volume hydraulic fracturing in shale formations, we would introduce a legislated moratorium on this activity. I would like to walk you through the process as well as some of the issues.

There are a number of issues I intend to address in my time today. I intend to discuss not only how we are open for business, but how that has been proven in recent days and will be proven yet again in the coming weeks, and then how we're responsibly managing our resources. In fact, I will speak to industry statements and investments in just recent weeks that will show this to be the case. I will also address the desire by some to expand this prohibition beyond what the mandate was and what the policy moratorium was as set out by the previous government in May 2012.

Let me start by noting the length of time and hard work by many Nova Scotians, Canadians, and input from, quite frankly, around the world - and especially Nova Scotians and our departmental staff - over the past few years on this file. Over the almost one year since I've been minister, I've made a number of public commitments about this file. I have

stated publicly that we would actively review all of the information as it came out and that I and our staff read and analyzed numerous studies and reports over this period of time.

Over this period of time, including in numerous media interviews and including an interview on the day I was sworn in as minister, I stated our government would actively review the information so that we could quickly respond to the final report of the province's Independent Review Panel on Hydraulic Fracturing. We met that commitment.

In the summer I was asked by the member for Argyle-Barrington whether my department had received the report. I advised him at that time, in early August, that while we had not received the report, we, like all Nova Scotians, had received and reviewed the draft chapters, reviewed the input sent to the panel and had reviewed the study of the Council of Canadian Academies, among other reports. I advised that member that we would look into the final Wheeler report and first analyze changes from the drafts to the final report, and if there were not substantial changes, we would likely announce a decision fairly quickly. I also stated this similarly in a public fashion.

All Nova Scotians were quite aware by early summer, from statements by Dr. Wheeler, what the primary recommendation of the report would be.

Mr. Speaker, when the Wheeler report was released all panelists signed on to a recommendation which stated “. . . that Nova Scotia should not proceed with hydraulic fracturing for unconventional gas and oil resources at this time. This conclusion derives, in part, from our observation that hydraulic fracturing currently lacks adequate social license among the majority of the citizens in the Province . . . and is actively opposed by many hundreds of stakeholders - indeed the overwhelming majority who expressed views through formal submissions, responses to our discussion papers, and in our public meetings.”

Mr. Speaker, I will table the panel's report, which I will be quoting from frequently during my remarks - I'll only table it once.

Every single energy company that comes into my office, or which I have visited, raises the issue of social licence, how they cannot proceed with their activities without social licence. How can the Official Opposition or, in fact, anyone then suggest that it should proceed at this time when the Wheeler panelists all agree that social licence does not exist?

Mr. Speaker, there has been much talk about what the panelists of the review stated. I think we can all agree that there are some different views among the panelists; however, all signed on to the above statement. They also signed on to the statement that “Based on the analysis described in this report, a significant period of learning and dialogue is now required at both the provincial and community levels, and thus hydraulic fracturing for the purpose of unconventional gas and oil development should not proceed at the present time in Nova Scotia.” And every panelist signed on to that recommendation.

Mr. Speaker, much has been made of a statement that the panel said they were not recommending a specific method of ensuring hydraulic fracturing does not proceed at this time. However the entire quote in the report is as follows: “We strongly suggest that whatever time is needed for each of these steps that it should be taken, without any sense of deadline-setting or impatience by any actor. Some might interpret this as a ‘go slow’ approach or even a de facto moratorium. However, we are not proposing a moratorium or any other political device . . .”

Mr. Speaker, the panel chose not to recommend the method in which the government would ensure the recommendations they made and the social licence they were looking to achieve is achieved. I cannot speak for the panel, and none of us can. One can only surmise that, based on the differing views that we’ve already heard from panelists, they could not agree on what the appropriate mechanism would be because they specifically said they were not going to recommend which mechanism would be used.

Now, for example, panelist Ian Mauro is quite adamant that the legislation is exactly what they recommended and he states, “When you have a situation where the expert panel is telling you that community support should be in place, and there’s a lack of widespread community support, I’m not surprised that the minister introduced a moratorium. In some ways, that’s exactly what we suggested should happen, and I think this minister has made a decisive and bold decision respecting the democratic process . . . And that is something that’s laudable.”

So let’s accept that there is disagreement among the panelists as to whether they felt legislation was needed or not. I certainly accept that panelists are split on that particular issue. However, government must deal with reality, and the reality is that the best and most appropriate way to address the recommendation to not allow it at this time, which every single panelist signed on to, is through legislation.

Mr. Speaker, let’s consider for a moment the situation - if you wish to open a restaurant and the government simply decided not to issue health inspection permits, the government would open itself to legal liability, it would create uncertainty in the industry. The only way that government cannot issue a permit is to provide for rules which prohibit the issuing of such permits. That is the only way we can refuse a permit. The only way that government can create such rules is to provide legislation which provides the authority for such rules, and that is what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, some have suggested that the Department of Energy or the Department of Environment should simply not issue permits for activities that it doesn’t like. That is the very essence of being closed for business. We hear time and time again from companies and investors that they need certainty in each process. We are providing that. Can you imagine if we simply had governments in a democratic society issue or not issue permits and approval simply on the whim of whoever sits around the Cabinet Table? That is not the test of a properly functioning society.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have analyzed the most appropriate tools, and in fact, in order to implement the top-level recommendation of the independent commission, a recommendation which all panelists signed onto, legislation is not only the appropriate but the only tool at our disposal.

Mr. Speaker, we must also consider the panelist comments that they quote - that every one of them signed onto again - "We also believe that the only level at which the precautionary approach becomes truly meaningful is at the community level where costs and benefits can be weighed in a local context. In this context, we are very cognisant of the clearly expressed views of our Aboriginal leaderships, some municipal leaders . . ." and so forth. They go on to list a number of other organizations.

In fact, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities has voted for a moratorium. Communities like Windsor, Amherst, Inverness, Yarmouth, among others, have called for various types of bans on this technique. The Mi'kmaq of our province have not only called for a moratorium in the province and over their lands and lands which they hold claim, but have said that the legislation is exactly what they are looking for.

Mr. Speaker, I presume that those who think that we go ahead with hydraulic fracturing and shale formations right now, believe those views don't matter. That being the case, it is a sad state of affairs for relations with those individuals proposed with our First Nations communities and our municipalities. In fact, one should consider, before jumping up and down and saying there could be thousands of jobs tomorrow in their process, that even the Wheeler panel didn't say that.

Now let's take Inverness, where a ban has been passed by municipal council. A recent Nova Scotia Supreme Court ruling over a quarry project in HRM found that the municipalities may not have the authority to ban the actual extraction but that they can regulate the processing, buildings and equipment on the land to conduct the extraction through their land-use planning processes. Should this ruling hold up under appeal, it is highly possible this would apply to all activities including those related to hydraulic fracturing.

Mr. Speaker, does the Official Opposition and those who believe we should allow this process immediately, ignoring the recommendations of the Wheeler report, believe we should also ignore the court rulings and the potential impacts? When we talk about being open for business, or certainly for investment, is this not an issue that should first be addressed?

I think a responsible government ensures that this is one of the issues among many which is addressed before we allow it. Frankly, as I noted, the panel believed this, too, when they talked about the need and requirement for a social licence before it takes place.

These are, of course, not the only issues. The Wheeler report pointed to potential conflicts in agriculture, tourism, forestry, and fishing. They referenced a study which

stated that implementation of this industry in Nova Scotia will require “. . . much more preparation and prior public consultation.” In fact, the report says, “There may also be displacement activities in other sectors of the economy . . .” and goes on to discuss impacts in tourism, agriculture and other sectors. Yet it appears that some, including the Official Opposition, believe it is responsible to go ahead now without addressing these conflicts.

Now this ties into the findings of the *ONE NS Report*, Mr. Speaker. The report noted that 20,000 Nova Scotians are currently employed in the food industry, for example, and 6,000 of those are in agriculture. Is it the position of the Official Opposition that we should not first address the conflicts between hydraulic fracturing in shale formations, many of which are near or under those agricultural sites which are providing those 6,000 jobs? Because both the Wheeler report and the *ONE NS Report* pointed out that those issues should be addressed before allowing hydraulic fracturing.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard the Official Opposition talk rightly about the importance of agriculture, the importance of community engagement in industrial development as it pertains to Northern Pulp. Why is it any less important when it comes to hydraulic fracturing? Why is it less important for the Official Opposition on an activity which isn't even currently underway in this province?

Our decision, and the decision of the Wheeler panel, is actually not about whether hydraulic fracturing can be done safely. In fact, it has been done safely. But we also know that there are places where there have been incidents. Many of those incidents relate to improperly developed regulations, not taking the time to understand the geology, improper well containment, not having the appropriate municipal infrastructure in place to support the activities - something we just heard about in Question Period, ironically from the Official Opposition - and so forth. Why would we not want to avoid those kinds of issues and ensure that we, as the Wheeler panel suggested unanimously, take the time to get things right first?

The issue of waste water came up during Question Period and that's something that is still being addressed, in terms of how to dispose of it. Should we not know how to dispose of the waste water before we actually allow the hydraulic fracturing operations? Should we not have the information on the best practices and how we can do that safely in Nova Scotia before we allow it? Because that is what is talked about when we say, no, allow it now and go ahead.

In 2011, I wrote a blog on the subject, which is still on my website. I didn't delete it. I didn't hide it. I talked about the potential benefits of hydraulic fracturing in shales, and I also talked about some of the potential risks and the unanswered questions. At the time, I encouraged the government to do an independent review. Now, we have that review and the panel has clearly stated, take the time to get it right.

Some say we have a missed opportunity as a result of this decision. Now, to me, that ends up being a bit of a silly argument because, on July 22nd, Dr. Wheeler stated - and

I'll table this - "It's a five-, 10-, 15-year process, if anything happens at all," before the existing moratorium would end. The Official Opposition and some commentators seem to want to spend the money we might get from hydraulic fracturing before we even know if there's a resource to generate the money from. That is not responsible government.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Official Opposition spoke the other day about someone going West now because you can't hydraulically fracture shales in Nova Scotia. That may be the most ridiculous thing I've heard in the Legislature this session. Given the fact that there are no leaseholders in the province currently for shale using or proposing to use hydraulic fracturing, suggesting a person was going to sit around and wait for years while somebody went through first the bidding process on the shale lease, and then went through the exploration stage and the staking process and so forth, seems a bit ridiculous.

This is a segment of our onshore resource which ends up being one of the smaller resource opportunities compared to many of our other resources, and instead of being involved in projects which are actually happening now in the onshore, we have a flaring coalbed methane project, for example, employing 80 companies and \$6 million of spending in Stellarton. Why is that going well? It's going well because that company has worked to achieve the social licence in that area. We have worked very closely with that project since November, and I've been to the site a number of times. So why would somebody stay here to wait until hydraulic fracturing of shales comes along, in what Dr. Wheeler has publicly said could be five, 10 or 15 years, instead of getting involved in a project that is here right now?

Mr. Speaker, this points to the issue of whether we are closed to business. In fact, it seems the Official Opposition is trying to promote to the world that we are closed for business. Indeed, at the Core Conference in the past few days, I had an investor ask me why some commentators in the Official Opposition were saying we're closed for business when the conference was going through project after project after project about investing in this government and projects that this government is involved in and supporting.

Also at the Core Energy Conference, there was discussion by Bernd Christmas about the requirement to involve First Nations, something that some in this room seem to have forgotten all about in this discussion.

I've spoken with many companies in the industry since this decision and very widely there's an understanding of the need for this direction. The legislation provides that certainty that the practice is not currently permitted. Current leaseholders are aware of this and, in fact, St. Brendan's Exploration has indicated that they will be working within the rules of this. We are excited to be working with them on their lease as they assess it, and have had numerous conversations with them in the past couple of weeks on their project.

Mr. Speaker, our government is also doing the work necessary and allowing for the opportunity to better understand the potential of the industry. This is something the

Canadian Council of Academies and the Wheeler report noted was necessary before further consideration of hydraulic fracturing in shale formations is permitted.

In the Spring Budget we talked about work we are doing to create an onshore atlas to understand exactly what our resource potential is. There is a lot of speculation out there about what may or may not exist. There's a lot of speculation about missed opportunity, and yet until we actually know what is there, there are few companies who will make a significant investment. Our government is helping to grow that with the new geoscience map of our onshore resources. That's an approach that I've talked about. We learned through the offshore Play Fairway Analysis, which as we all know has attracted a lot of money.

The member for Argyle-Barrington stated yesterday that in doing the offshore assessment, there were no prohibitions on offshore activity. This is false. In fact, during this time restrictions were placed - actually a bit earlier than that - on Georges Bank (Interruptions) In fact, it is banned - and to distance-based exclusions around Cape Breton during that very same year as the Play Fairway Analysis was being done. Distance exclusions and exclusions around Cape Breton and the offshore were put in place exactly while that work was being done.

Mr. Speaker, it was just a couple of years ago in this Legislature that the member for Argyle-Barrington stood up and joined the pleas for a continued moratorium on offshore exploration on the Georges Bank. The fact is that just as it made sense on Georges Bank for social licence reasons, this makes sense now, just as the Wheeler panelists said unanimously.

Let's now consider the latest data. In Question Period, the Official Opposition tried to claim that the data was 2003. In fact, the staff in the department checked with it just moments ago, calling to check, and in fact, that data was confirmed in 2013 by ICF and it is up to date as of 2013.

Yesterday I tabled that information in the Legislature. The Leader of the Official Opposition has tried to say it's 2003 and hasn't been updated since then, yet the company just moments ago confirmed that, in fact, it is 2013 data. They found that our highest onshore potential may be in coalbed methane. That shouldn't surprise us, because our greatest success so far in onshore wells, after about 200-some odd wells, has actually been in that area. So that's probably not a huge surprise.

Either way, the chart indicates an awful lot of gas potential in those numbers, from many sources, onshore and offshore, and we certainly have supply options. In fact, that estimate - which, again, was confirmed in 2013, that they updated it in 2013 - was 3.7 trillion cubic feet of coalbed methane compared to 650 billion cubic feet of shale potential. Even in that shale potential, not all of it - and maybe none of it - would require hydraulic fracturing. Much of that would also be unrecoverable. When we talk about "unrecoverable," let's note that the independent commission noted that the recoverable estimates are often around 10 per cent, in the low-medium case.

Now, they based theirs, as the Leader of the Official Opposition said, on 10 trillion cubic feet. Now, on the estimates done by ICF, a 10 per cent recovery rate would only be 65 billion cubic feet - a small fraction of the estimate in the Wheeler report. We know that these are all estimates, and we understand that, which is why the onshore atlas is so important. While the Official Opposition may wish to call the Wheeler estimates of 2014 data - the panel didn't actually do any on ground science to get those estimates. The ICF information is.

We also know that there was no primary analysis of that data, and that's fine, they weren't asked to do that. That is by no means a criticism of their work. It's an estimate based on evidence that they've taken from various sources just like the other one is. We have no way of knowing which estimate is correct; we really have no way. The Wheeler one could be correct, the ICF one could be correct, something in the middle could be correct.

This again points to why it makes sense to assess the true potential of moving forward in a responsible manner. When you consider the activity in the energy sector, it is very clear we are open for business and we're 100 per cent committed to the responsible development of our natural resources - we have two active offshore projects, Sable and Deep Panuke; we are a net exporter of natural gas; we have \$2 billion in offshore work commitments by Shell and BP; we have a coal gas exploration project in Stellarton that has invested more than \$6 million and enlisted the local services of 80 companies; and we have a shale lease holder in St. Brendan's, who is actually pioneering a technology that does not involve hydraulic fracturing.

We have three proposed LNG projects that could see investments of up to \$15 billion. After recent meetings with industry over the past three days we anticipate a number of major petroleum investments over the next month or two. And on the renewable front we're seeing energy infrastructure creating hundreds of local jobs and the potential in the recent studies for billions of dollars in revenue in the tidal industry.

So for someone to suggest that we are lax in harnessing our natural resources or taking advantage of opportunities just doesn't make much sense. Moreover, the argument that someone is being driven West by this decision when the panel's own experts note that the work opportunities from this specific issue are decades away is also silly; in fact the work that this government is doing in the energy field, including onshore, seeks to ensure a range of long-term sustainable opportunities for employment in the energy sector, and we're already seeing this happen.

Investment in our energy sector is up. Investment in both offshore and onshore work is up. In fact, on a recent visit to one of our offshore platforms, I met Albertans who are coming to Nova Scotia to work alongside crews that are overwhelmingly Nova Scotian. We are working with our offshore producers, our LNG suppliers, and others to maximize opportunities associated with existing offshore infrastructure and offshore gas that has already been identified.

Yesterday at the Core Energy Conference, the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council talked about projects actually underway in Atlantic Canada and they noted that the region is growing in terms of economic activity - "Most of the growth is due to new early stage projects in Nova Scotia" and "Nova Scotia leads overall investment potential for the first time since the 1980s."

That is absolutely not closed for business; that is open for business. In fact, in Nova Scotia, they predict growth over the next few years will continue and be higher for energy projects than anywhere else in the region. Mr. Speaker, there have been requests to this government as well, that I should address, to expand the legislation to include other formations and other stimulation techniques. And just as it would not respect the process to ignore the recommendations which state "we need to not allow it now so that we have time to get it right". It would likewise dismiss the process by expanding the moratorium beyond what has been understood to be in place.

In 2012 - after significant pressure from both Opposition Parties and Nova Scotians, incidentally - the NDP introduced a policy moratorium. The techniques covered in this were defined in a press release, and in fact it remains the only piece of paper defining what was prohibited. It prohibits hydraulic fracturing in shale formations only, and defines hydraulic fracturing as follows: "Hydraulic fracturing is a technique used to extract gas and oil from shale by using pressure, chemicals and large volumes of water." I'll table that release.

That - hydraulic fracturing to extract gas and oil from shale, using large volumes of water, pressure and chemicals - is the only technique which has been covered under the moratorium over the past couple of years, and it is not part of this process to expand it beyond that. The government of the day began with an internal review and morphed this into an independent review after further pressure. When we came to government, we inherited the review in progress covering the process outlined in that release.

I stated in repeated interviews over the past year that we would not extend it beyond the existing moratorium in terms of scope, and I stated this in a response to the Wheeler report as well. I have also stated that the technical definition - something which is required when dealing with actual drilling activities - will be in regulation. We've already begun to take feedback on the technical definitions which will be found there, as is usual and appropriate practice, and the regulations will be posted for 30 days of public comment.

The Wheeler panel also spoke to the need for research. Other organizations and the Council of Canadian Academies have spoken to this as well. That's why the legislation gives authority for regulations to be created which allow for research and testing that could involve hydraulic fracturing in the Nova Scotia context. This authority is for testing and research purposes only, and would only happen under strict rules and regulations.

Research projects have clear, public, defined areas of study. They involve community input and they have a clear purpose. Research projects can involve detailed

scientific baseline studies and ongoing monitoring of air, soil, and water quality, and the Governor in Council can set the rules and requirements of such projects.

Let's be clear: research and testing is just that. The provision allows for the future opportunity for government to consider research proposals and address the issues and questions which have come up through the Wheeler report and the public consultation process. One only has to look at the significant research being undertaken at a national level by Natural Resources Canada to see the long-term benefit of engaging in research in the area of unconventional oil and gas development. They're investigating the use of alternative fluids to increase hydrocarbon recovery efficiency, decrease the use of water in hydraulic fracturing, and reduce the GHG footprint of unconventional oil and gas operations.

These are just some of the examples of current research underway in Canada that over time could be advanced by field research or testing in Nova Scotia or elsewhere - an eventual development Nova Scotia could benefit from.

It's interesting that during the election - in fact, since the Official Opposition promoted a very hands-off approach to hydraulic fracturing in shale - they refused to support hydraulic fracturing, and when Amherst decided there should be a ban and a veto, the PC caucus went suddenly silent. When Inverness voted to ban hydraulic fracturing, the PC caucus did not stand up and speak out against it, despite holding a seat provincially. In fact, the member spoke up and stood up and presented petitions against hydraulic fracturing on behalf of his community and signed them. Not only that, in Cape Breton recently a number of members told me they understood that the PC caucus and that member were against hydraulic fracturing.

So the question is, if the PC caucus was so determined to allow hydraulic fracturing, why were they silent when the First Nations voted against it? When UNSM voted against it? When a number of communities passed bans themselves?

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

MR. YOUNGER: You know, Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides for a moratorium and one that is enforceable. I have outlined the reasons why legislation is required. This is what was asked for and supported by the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs and it is consistent with the view of the Assembly of First Nations, which passed a motion in July, and is consistent with the request by the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities through a vote at their meeting.

I have outlined why legislation is the only tool available to address this issue. I have addressed the fact that the Wheeler commission and their independent panel noted that social licence has to be addressed and that that can take some time.

I have noted there is research that needs to be done and that this government is doing that research through the onshore atlas process. Our approach gives certainty to Nova Scotians who said they are not ready for high-volume hydraulic fracturing and that this technique will not proceed without a public and open, transparent debate in the Legislature.

Our legislation provides accountability, transparency and clarity. It is the best tool, and as I outlined early on, it is in fact the only tool that the government has in this one to address this issue.

Now, we know there are questions that need to be answered by Nova Scotians. I've outlined many of the conflicts that exist in the shale areas around agriculture, around forestry, around tourism. I've noted that the *ONE NS Report*, in the section that I tabled, talks about the need to ensure that we do not impact those industries negatively, and how the Wheeler commission, in the report that I tabled, shows that they could see a negative impact from this activity and that those have to be addressed. Those questions need to be addressed and they should be addressed.

We also noted, in the article that I tabled, Dr. Wheeler himself stating that it would be five, 10 or 15 years before we will be ready to do this process. That's his opinion. That's the chair of the commission's opinion, publicly stated.

Mr. Speaker, under the legislation to reconsider the moratorium and determine if there is a net benefit for Nova Scotians, the Energy Minister must consider the social, economic, health, environmental, regulatory effectiveness, and scientific and technical considerations. This is the list of items that the Wheeler panelists unanimously agreed must be addressed before hydraulic fracturing is permitted in this province. This ensures we take a close look at this technique and weigh the costs and benefits before even considering the removal.

Mr. Speaker, we are listening to Nova Scotians. By any measure, from meetings to references from the panel, to letters, to town hall meetings, to my own visits over the past month to communities across this province, Nova Scotians have said they are not ready for hydraulic fracturing in shale formations.

Now, some Nova Scotians may never be, and I understand that. But there is a large percentage of Nova Scotians in that middle who have written me, who have called us, who we've talked to at meetings across this province who have said, you know? We need you to do the science. We need to understand how things are going. We need you to address those issues that I've outlined over the past few minutes before you allow it. That's what we're doing.

Mr. Speaker, we owe it to the trust of Nova Scotians - and that's something that Dr. Wheeler talked about as well, trust. He said Nova Scotians - the only way they could even get in their polling, for example, the only way they could even get the 39 per cent support

was to say that it would be very heavily regulated and very well controlled and the regulations would be perfect. Dr. Wheeler and his panel talked about why that is and they said there is a lack of trust in the regulatory process of government. We owe it to the trust of Nova Scotians to ensure that the cautious principle that they've asked for is adhered to.

Now we should also remember that the oil and gas is not going anywhere. We have the opportunity to ensure that we continue to work with communities and that we better understand the science. In fact, we have onshore opportunities that we are taking advantage of today. We have many energy opportunities, both in renewables and in petroleum, that we are taking advantage of today.

It's important that we better understand the science and work with communities, that we know where the resource potential is, that we know what the risks and rewards might be, and that we have those discussions with communities, because we need to actually determine what the real opportunities are. As the Official Opposition pointed out in Question Period, there is still an issue with getting rid of the waste from the existing fracking operation, so why would we not want to address that issue before we suddenly allow in more? Mr. Speaker, we need to ensure that our regulations are as strong and as well-defined as they can be. That work is ongoing at the moment.

We heard recently from the Leader of the Official Opposition that he felt Parties need to work to fulfill their election commitments. Well, we stated clearly in the platform that he tabled that if hydraulic fracturing in shale formations could not be proven to be safe, we would not permit it at this time. Yet now he is telling us we shouldn't follow an election commitment. I'm not sure which it is he wants.

In the analysis that the department did following the positions of the various Parties, even the department thought that the Official Opposition, during the election, was actually against it. So we are ensuring that we take the time necessary to consider the new research and the information as it becomes available, while responsibly developing our resources.

As I've travelled the province in the last few weeks, I've heard directly from many, many Nova Scotians how this decision is widely supported in their communities. I've heard from municipal leaders across this province in the same way. I've heard from the First Nations communities, who widely support this decision. Mr. Speaker, in fact, the vast majority of feedback that we have received in the department and at meetings has been in favour of the decision.

Now, I cannot predict the future any better than anybody else in this room can predict the future, or what may happen in terms of the role of hydraulic fracturing in shale formations, but I know that Nova Scotians are certainly not ready to allow for it now. The Wheeler panel said the same thing. Every one of those panelists signed on to a recommendation that said, Nova Scotians are not ready for it now. And they said, there is work to be done, and they said "... a significant period of learning."

You know, I'm not sure that I necessarily even agree that it could be a significant period - that that's what it will take - but I do know, for certain, that Nova Scotians are not ready now. I'm not going to predict how long that might be, but I do know, in talking to communities around this province, they want to talk about real opportunities and know exactly where those resources might be, which is why this government is doing that onshore atlas. I also know that the responsible thing to do is ensure we do understand the resource, and then we work with communities in real discussions about the potential opportunities and the potential risks, and that we address the issues of municipal infrastructure and their ability to deal with these kinds of projects.

There are clearly some people in the Legislature who don't think the views of Nova Scotians matter. They believe we should proceed without resource assessments. They believe that we should proceed without social licence, which all the panelists said does not exist - all the panelists. Yet these are the same people who stand in Question Period complaining when industrial process impacts their community, or there is a risk to agriculture, or a conflict of property rights, and the same people who would stand and complain when municipalities are not listened to and First Nations concerns are ignored.

Mr. Speaker, I began my remarks by discussing why legislation is the only tool and the most appropriate tool to implement the recommendation of the Wheeler panelists that they all signed. I outlined that very clearly. I also recognized the fact that there are divergent opinions among panelists about whether they felt that is what they intended or not, when they recommended that it not be allowed at this time. And I respect that divergence of opinions, and I respect the fact that there are some that say this is absolutely what it should be, and there are some that say it should be more. And that's fine. That's part of the process.

But they all signed on to a recommendation that very clearly said it should not be allowed at this time and that there are certain issues which need to be addressed, and that's what we're doing. We have analyzed the options available to us in order to ensure it's not allowed, and we're using the option that is the only practical option that is available to us.

Mr. Speaker, we have looked at all of the reports over 11 months. We have looked at the draft reports as they've come in, the feedback as it's come in, and we've gone through it. We are addressing the issues that have been raised in the Wheeler report and their recommendations so that Nova Scotians are the beneficiaries of our resources - beneficiaries in a responsible way, and beneficiaries in a way that has community engagement and community support, because we have seen just across the border what happens when you try to do these things without community support. We have examples here where we have community support and we've received community support for projects, and they've gone very, very well. That is the future we aspire to with this so that Nova Scotians truly benefit, the communities truly benefit, and the concerns are addressed. Thank you very much.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: I appreciate the remarks of the Minister of Energy. Clearly he took more time in preparing his speech today than he did in the three short days that he took to decide to ban one of the remaining new ways to create jobs in our province, Mr. Speaker, so I congratulate him on his lengthy remarks. We can only wish he had given more consideration to such an important question when he was actually faced with the decision about whether to follow the Wheeler report or not. As all Nova Scotians know, after three short days, in the middle of an election campaign in New Brunswick, for political reasons the minister decided to ban one of the few new ways that Nova Scotia has to create jobs.

Whether or not you agree that we should pursue shale gas development, the Nova Scotians that I hear from have been very clear that, whether they know if fracking is a good thing or whether they don't know if fracking is a good thing, they know a bad political decision that played with their economic future when they see one. That, Mr. Speaker, is the problem. (Applause)

In fact, Mr. Speaker, if I could for a moment, we heard the minister's boss, the Premier, throwing around the term fairyland earlier today in Question Period. It's not really a polite word, but that's what I heard, and I can't help but wonder, who is in fairyland? The minister tried his best to convince all of us that wherever he goes in his travels around the province, everyone agrees with his position. The municipal leaders agree with his position, the ordinary Nova Scotians who went to his town halls agree with his position, the editorial boards agree with his position - everyone, even the offshore conference. Despite what we read in the reports of the conference, the minister has a very different recollection - that everyone agrees with his position.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we can only ask who is in fairyland now. Let me tell you who is in fairyland now. I'll tell you exactly who's in fairyland now. When you have a government that thinks it's good for Nova Scotia to ban one of the few new ways to create jobs, that is the group that is existing in fairyland. That's the problem.

Now, I do want to help the minister out on something for just a quick moment. He seems to be caught up in data, and whether it's from just recently or 2013 or 2003 - I offered to give him the source documents himself before he started his speech a few - well, more than a few moments ago. Mr. Speaker, I have the ICT report here. I will provide it to the minister, as I said I would. Our whole point was that the information that he was using was outdated. It was old; it was 11 years old.

Let me quote from the ICT report, the data that he used yesterday: "Coalbed methane recovery has been assessed at approximately 3.9 Tcf." That is the number that the minister used. "This assessment was based upon older public domain assessments as reviewed in the 2003 U.S. National Petroleum Council North American Natural Gas Study. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the information is not recent; it is 11 years old, from 2003.

The report itself goes on to say that should operators establish commerciality in this field, the ICF estimate would likely increase substantially, which is exactly the point that we were making, that when the government decided to ban one of the new ways we have to create jobs in this province, we asked them to please assure you that you were not making such a big decision based on 11-year-old information from 2003. They said, here is where we got it from and it says this assessment was based upon older, public domain assessments, as reviewed in 2003. And when they cast doubt, when they talk down the potential for shale gas development, they ignore the fact that this report also says that the assessment will likely increase dramatically when there is a commercial play. Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister will take a look at this and I will table it for his benefit, as I offered to do before he again confirmed he is using 11-year-old information.

Mr. Speaker, this all began a few short weeks ago in the Speech from the Throne, which is where it became evident that the government intended to actually ban - as they said they would - a whole new way of creating jobs in our province. On that day in the gallery we had Mr. Rob Henderson, the very person - and the thousands of other Rob Hendersons out there who we are all here to stand up for to represent, the very person who we are here to do our best to make sure can have a good job, earn a good income, raise his family and volunteer in his community, pay his taxes and live by the rules right here in his home province of Nova Scotia.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, on that day there were a lot of important people in this Chamber, whether they were Premiers, Cabinet Ministers, Leaders or Supreme Court Justices, but as I pointed out then and I want to point out again today, the most important person in this building at any time is the person like Rob Henderson, who is sitting in the gallery, who comes to see what we do here every day, who is counting on us to get it right.

I just want to share, for a moment, Mr. Henderson's story. I wasn't going to do this today but I actually heard the minister just a moment ago say that people like Rob Henderson, more or less to him, are not relevant because there is no gas development right now. It's years away so it's not appropriate for anyone on this side to bring up a real Nova Scotian example from today because the job is not there today anyway.

Mr. Speaker, that is not right, that is not fair. I'll tell you why Rob Henderson is relevant. In addition to being the most important person in the building that day, Rob Henderson is working in oil and gas, now, out West. His family, his wife and young children, are here at home without their Dad because he is working in Alberta. Like thousands of other Nova Scotia families, the Henderson family is missing a key member, who has lost any hope of opportunity to work here, where I know he would love to be, and instead, is out West while his family remains here. That's heart-wrenching. It is actually even more heart-wrenching than that, because after trying to keep the family roots here in Nova Scotia, Rob's wife and children finally decided the best thing for their family is to be together, and the only place that they can do that and earn a decent living and raise their family is in Alberta.

There is no fact or figure that anyone in this House will ever table that will make a more powerful argument for why this ban is wrong than this story of Rob Henderson and his family. For that reason alone, we are offended and discouraged and opposed to a government that somehow has concluded that the right thing for Nova Scotia right now, with all this hardship, is actually to ban one of the few new ways to create new jobs in our province.

I know the minister held a number of town hall meetings across the province. I'm glad he did that; he came to some odd conclusions, but I'm glad he did it. He's not the only one, of course, that takes time to travel the province and hear what's on the minds of Nova Scotians. In fact, just this summer, we had a PC Jobs Tour and had 10 town hall meetings across Nova Scotia, literally from Yarmouth to Sydney and 10 points in between. We heard from thousands of Nova Scotians, whether they were there in person or whether they contacted us electronically.

I heard a very different message than the Minister of Energy did, because if I could summarize what they told us, it was very clear - they want jobs. They want meaningful work. They are tired of going out West. They are tired of saying goodbye to a family member. They are tired of the plane trips. They are tired of the long absences. They miss their kids or their grandkids. They want work. That's what the people of Nova Scotia are saying. Meaningful, productive, well-paying jobs that will allow them to live and work in a united family here at home.

I will go further and say there is not one Nova Scotian working out West who would prefer to be there. Every single one would rather be doing what they are doing in Alberta, except be doing it here at home in Nova Scotia. That's why the ban is so wrong.

This is why we have a duty to look at new ways of creating new jobs, including shale gas development, because we cannot go saying no to new ways to create jobs for Nova Scotians. Over the years, stretching beyond the one year of this government, there has been a stream of noes to ways to create jobs. Big ones like no to uranium mining, and no to gold mining, and no to fish farming, and no to mink farming, and no to pulp and paper, and no to offshore, and no to onshore - no, no, no, no. And yet we wonder why Nova Scotia families are split up.

Now when the government came to office, they had a chance to change that and say, you know what, we need the work. We need the work and we believe Nova Scotia can do this in a responsible way, and we will do the research and we will look at the regulations to make sure it works. But instead, after three days of considering the Wheeler report, they joined the hit parade of saying no. Someday, Mr. Speaker, we will count up how many more Nova Scotians they have condemned to travelling out West, to going down the road, to leaving their family or taking their family away with them, because they lacked the courage to say yes. That is what this is all about.

The most bizarre thing of all, Mr. Speaker, is the government can't even tell us for sure what they are saying no to because no one in industry, no one who does this work in another province, no one in their department, no one on the government benches can tell us exactly what is being banned. Apparently the definition of "high volume" will come later.

They don't even know what they're saying no to. Well I'll tell you what they're saying no to - they are saying no to all those Nova Scotians who are working out West and want to come home, but no, you can't do that work here at home; they are saying no to all those families that are split apart because one of that family has to work away, they are saying no, you can't live and work in the same province, not if you are from Nova Scotia; they are saying no to all those young children coming up through our schools and graduating and hoping they don't have to move away, like so many have before, Mr. Speaker, they are saying no, your future will be no better than anyone who has come before. That's what they're banning - no, no, no - and every time this government says no, they send another Nova Scotia family away. That's why this ban is wrong,

Mr. Speaker, it leads to the obvious question - if they can't find a way to take a look even at shale gas development, what else are they going to say no to in the future? What next is going to be struck off the list of potential jobs for Nova Scotians because the government does not have even a little bit of courage to try something new? How many Nova Scotians hoping to work offshore, onshore, farming, mining, whatever the case may be, now are a little less sure that they're not going to get a no from the Liberal Government as well? That's why it is so accurate to say the government has put a big "closed for business" sign on the Province of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, the minister quoted the Ivany report, and we all like to quote the Ivany report apparently in this Chamber - whether anyone actually accomplishes a recommendation from the Ivany report is another question, but at least they quote the Ivany report when it suits them.

Mr. Speaker, there's an entire section in the Ivany report on natural resource development and how we have to get serious about natural resource development. The whole point of the Ivany report was that Nova Scotia has been held back, which is odd because it is endowed with such great natural resources - great lobster fishery, great ground fishery, great Acadian forests that make and grow among the best fibre in the world, great offshore potential, great onshore potential, good schools and universities that graduate smart, young Nova Scotians who want to take on the world. We have all those things.

If you look at a map of the world, we are right there, stuck out into the Atlantic, conveniently positioned on the Atlantic Coast between Europe and Canada and the United States, ready to trade with the best of them. How can a province with all that be a have-not province, Mr. Speaker? That's the great question posed by the Ivany report.

Sadly, the conclusion about how a province with all of that going for it can be have-not is bad government and bad decision making, and that includes saying no to things

that can actually generate jobs and wealth. In the face of all that, we have a Liberal Government that has said, no, we're going to ban shale gas development, we're going to ban it, and another generation of Nova Scotians is condemned. It's not right, Mr. Speaker.

The Ivany report actually contains 19 recommendations for our province. They are zero for 19 so far, Mr. Speaker. It would be nice, after all this time, to be able to say, well, they got one done, or two, but we have zero. Zero since last February.

Here we have a Wheeler report that points the way forward to actually look at developing, or trying to develop, a safe, sustainable, environmentally-friendly new way of creating jobs. When the government says, no, we're not prepared to look at it, that actually takes their zero and puts it even further behind to a negative, because now they've made things actually worse than what the Ivany report found in its report.

Mr. Speaker, let me just take you through some of the Ivany report goals to show you what I mean. Goal number one: interprovincial migration. Every Nova Scotian knows, whether they live in a big city or a small town, that too many of our fellow citizens have given up and moved away, particularly young Nova Scotians, working-age Nova Scotians, the men and women who actually make the goods and services that add up to a modern economy. Interprovincial migration, goal number one. Now, in the face of that goal, we have a government that has a new way of creating new jobs so that the migration can stop, and they ban it. So now we're further behind on goal number one.

Goal number four: the number of business start-ups. We want to double the number of business start-ups to create opportunities for Nova Scotians. In the face of that goal to have more new businesses establish here, a government that is faced with a decision about whether to look at a new way of creating new jobs says, no, we're going to ban it. So much for goal number four.

Goal number five: the value of our exports, to increase the exports from Nova Scotia by 50 per cent. By the way, Mr. Speaker, you know what comes in when we export things that we make here? Cash. Wealth. Money. Jobs. That's what they're banning. So we have a government that, in the face of an Ivany report goal to increase our exports and has a new way to create new jobs and do just that, they ban it. So much for goal number five.

Goal number nine: increased youth employment. Now, the minister says everyone agrees with him when he goes out and travels around. Well, Mr. Speaker, every single Nova Scotian, whether they are retired, whether they are a parent or a grandparent or they are coming to our schools and graduating, they want us to get this right. More jobs for young people - that's what we hear when we're out around the province. In the face of a new opportunity to create new jobs for Nova Scotia's young people, the government banned it. They banned it. So much for youth employment, goal number nine.

Mr. Speaker, I could go through all the goals and make the same point. I think you see the trend, but I will highlight one more, and I hope the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, at least, appreciates this one.

Goal number 19, improve the fiscal health of the province. For too long, we've all been citizens, we've watched the debt run up to record levels; deficit after deficit, particularly in the last five years. Young Nova Scotians now, every single one of them, along with every single one of us, starts out with a \$15,000 debt hanging over their head as their share, and rising. All these public services - health care and education, our schools and hospitals, our roads, our ability to look after people who can't look after themselves - that's all paid for depending on the fiscal health of the province. Goal number 19.

And here we have a new way to create new jobs with new people that will pay new taxes, estimated by the Wheeler report to be \$1 billion - with a "b" - new dollars in economic growth for our province, one of the best ways to actually improve the fiscal health of the province. You don't even have to cut anything. You can actually grow something. Wouldn't it be nice if we had a government that didn't have to only focus on the cutting and the negative and the shrinking, but actually was in favour of growing something as the best way to move this province forward to meet goal 19, improving the fiscal health of the province?

In the face of all that, we have a government that says, no, they're going to ban it. They're going to ban a new way to create wealth in this province. So much for goal 19, and a whole other generation of taxpayers and users of our hospitals and schools is condemned. That's why this ban is wrong.

I heard the government's defence that Nova Scotians are not ready, they're not ready for shale gas development. It was written in the Wheeler report as well. However, the government reached a very different conclusion from the Wheeler report. The Wheeler report said they're not ready, so we've got to get more information, we've got to do more research, we've got to check on more regulations and make sure they're safe and get that information in the hands of Nova Scotians. They did not say ban it.

This government read that line about Nova Scotians are not ready, and decided to ban it all together. There is no courage in that. There is no bravery in that. I know they read the public opinion polls as well as anybody. They put their finger up in the air and they say, well, more than 50 per cent are against today; they're not ready, so we'll ban it. That's exactly the kind of old political decision making that has held us back for too long. It is not right. It is not fair to our young Nova Scotians. It is not fair to all those people I've been talking about all day today who are out West or have a family member out West who want to be here.

Yes, we are asking the government to show a little courage and actually try something new to get our economy going. Yet they say no, and they ban it. I am sure that somewhere back in the 1960s, 1970s, that someone said Nova Scotians are not ready for

offshore development. Thankfully, we had governments then with a little foresight and the courage to find a way to make it work.

I'm sure that 100 years ago, there was somebody, maybe in this Chamber, who said Nova Scotians are not ready for horseless carriages. Thankfully, somebody at that time decided to show a little courage and start to build a few roads and encourage some local businesses to sell cars, and we are all way better off and wealthier because of it.

I'm sure that 100 years ago, there was somebody somewhere that said Nova Scotians are not ready for moving picture screens. But thankfully, someone in government at that time thought that this whole new way of entertaining people would be a great addition to the culture of our province, and thankfully they did.

Now it is 2014, and we have a Liberal Government, and someone says to them - check the polls; Nova Scotians are not ready for shale gas development. Their answer, after three days, is to say, you know what? We're going to ban it. If you're not ready, we're going to ban it.

That is not leadership. That is the opposite of leadership. That is followership. It is bad enough at the best of times, but in a year where our debt has reached a record level, where out-migration has reached a record level, where we have a report that all Nova Scotians got behind, the Ivany report, which is titled *Now or Never* - in that year, they chose to ban one of the few new ways to create jobs in this province.

Let's be thankful for the government that allowed horseless carriages, and let's be thankful for the government that allowed moving picture screens, and let's be thankful for the government that figured out the offshore, but let's condemn a government that says no to one of the few new ways to create new jobs in a year where we're supposed to be dealing with a now-or-never scenario.

Mr. Speaker, the minister talked about the offshore in his speech. I'm glad he did, because how ironic is it that right off our coast, in our own waters, we have an example of oil and gas reserves that are being explored, that are being harvested, that are being developed by Nova Scotians for the benefit of Nova Scotia. We have some of the best regulations in the world to manage the risks, Mr. Speaker - we have some of the best regulations in the world. We have one of the safest sets of regulations in what is actually a pretty hostile environment in deep water. It has been operating for 20 years and it has produced countless, hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue to the Nova Scotia Government, employed thousands of Nova Scotians in a way that we all support - or I hope we all support. We all agree on that and accept it and welcome it, but we have a government that looks at that very example of how to do it right and is not prepared to even try to do the work to make that happen onshore as well. It's an incredible irony.

The shame of it is, for all those who want to see the maximum safe, ongoing, sustainable development of our offshore, what the government doesn't even realize is that

those are a lot of the same players offshore who do onshore development in other places. They are a lot of the same companies, and the government has slapped a big “closed for business” sign right in front of their eyes for onshore.

They can say, oh, we still love the offshore, if they want, but they’ve actually put a risk on our offshore. I’ve got to tell you how irresponsible it is to do that, first of all, after three days of consideration, but secondly, in the middle of the time that our province has actually opened offshore exploration bids.

Now, we all hope for the best there. Before this government came in, before they announced their ban on jobs, we had a company, Shell Canada, and another one, BP - British Petroleum - that bid a lot of money for the right to explore our offshore, in Shell’s case almost \$1 billion. That’s when they thought the province was open for business. And right in the middle of the time we have bids coming in for the second block offshore, the government says, no, actually we’re closed for some of things that you do.

You think that’s not going to have an effect on our offshore, Mr. Speaker? You don’t think that at the headquarters of Shell and British Petroleum and ConocoPhillips and all the others, that they didn’t take note of that? That they’re looking to operate in a province that says no to some of the things that they do? Of course they are.

When those bids come in, what we’ll never know is how much better they would have been, how much higher, how many tens of millions of dollars higher, how many more jobs higher they would have been if the government had done the right thing and made it clear we are open to resource development in this province.

All of those companies that explore and develop every day, they have 100 choices around the world about where they are going to invest their money and develop a resource and create jobs. We aren’t the only one. There are 100. Some of them are open for business with resources of their own and governments that want to see jobs there. And now in Nova Scotia, where we didn’t need one, we have a big X where there should have been a big checkmark. We will see in the days ahead how much this government’s short-sighted, three-day, politically motivated decision to ban new jobs is going to cost our offshore as well.

The offshore is a great lesson for many other reasons. One big one is that it’s not government money that is doing the seismic work today. Like Shell is doing to prove up the resource, it’s private money. It’s not government money that’s going to drill exploratory wells in the best locations to see if there’s really oil or gas there, it’s private money. The taxpayers don’t have to pay a dime. And Shell - to use this example again - has completed some very sophisticated seismic work offshore at their own expense, not government expense, and plans to drill a couple of wells over the next few years at their own expense, not government expense, to prove the resource.

Common sense will tell us that Shell would not be incurring those expenses - in the hundreds of millions, by the way - nor would any other company, if there was a ban on actually developing the resource at the end. Unless the Minister of Energy, and the Premier, who is his boss, are going to borrow hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money and do the drilling themselves, we will never know what potential exists onshore, because no one else is going to do it as long as there is a ban on actually developing that resource.

Here is the great shame of that. I talked a moment ago about what a great province Nova Scotia is, how blessed it is with resources and people and its location, and why, with all that we have going for us, we're still a have-not province. Well, we want to be a have province. We want to be a province that pays into our country and adds to our country, and get off those have-not equalization cheques. We, at least, want to be the Party that rips up the last cheque coming from out West and says, thank you very much - we'll take it from here. That's what we want, Mr. Speaker. It's not what they want.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? We are in a great country in Canada, and the fact of the matter is, there is not a province in this country that has moved from have-not to have except by developing its natural, God-given resources. That is how you do it. And I look forward to that day, when we do that properly and safely and sustainably and become a full, contributing part of this great country. But as long as we have a government that says no, it is never going to happen.

We've had debates in this Chamber - in Question Period, at least - over the past couple of days about whether the government is actually following the Wheeler report recommendations or not.

By the way, when the Wheeler report was released, it actually got a pretty broad acceptance by Nova Scotians. Environmental groups, including the Ecology Action Centre as one example, endorsed it. Industry groups that want to develop the resource someday endorsed it. Business groups, whether it's chambers of commerce or boards of trade, endorsed it. Municipalities and everyday Nova Scotians endorsed it - because it said that we have to go slow and there's more work to do, but we should get going.

So now the government is trying to claim, oh no, I know we're banning it, but we're really following the Wheeler report. And in Opposition, we point out, I think, the obvious, that the Wheeler report itself, on Page 5, says in pretty clear language, ". . . we are not proposing a moratorium or any other political device . . ." - those are the words of the Wheeler report itself.

Now, to be fair, the Minister of Energy decided to accuse me of selectively quoting from the Wheeler report. I find that odd, because that's pretty clear - we're not recommending a moratorium or any other political device, including a ban - but he accused me of selectively quoting, and then he himself got up and selectively quoted other parts of

the Wheeler report as some big defence. It's actually pretty funny, Mr. Speaker, to watch that happen.

The Wheeler report says that regulatory frameworks exist to allow for the safe development of shale gas onshore, and I will quote that. And then the Minister of Energy will get up and he'll find a sentence that he likes, and he'll quote that.

But you know what? You know what would actually solve this dilemma about who is following the Wheeler report and who is not following the Wheeler report? Let's ask Dr. Wheeler himself.

We know that three members of his panel have already made it pretty clear that they don't believe the government is following the Wheeler report. Brad Hayes, an expert in this field, wrote a scathing editorial in *The Chronicle Herald* about how the government is not following the report. Graham Gagnon, an expert from Dalhousie University, was quoted very directly saying the government is not following the Wheeler report. Ray Ritcey, an expert in oil and gas, wrote another editorial saying the government is not following the Wheeler report. There are three.

So they don't think they're following the Wheeler report. We don't think they're following the Wheeler report. We don't think the Wheeler report says what they're doing.

Mr. Speaker, why don't we hear from Mr. Wheeler himself? Why don't we ask him? We pointed out that his contract says he can't speak without the permission of the government. We pointed that out in Question Period the other day. The Minister of Energy's answer was, he's not bound by that anymore.

So that's good. I'm glad to hear it. If he's not bound by it, then we should find out, because surely what he says should have some bearing on this debate about who's following the Wheeler report and who's not. Then we can get on with - hopefully - doing the right thing, which is doing our homework, doing the research, looking at experiences in other places, and checking on where the best regulations for onshore development exist that make it safe, that make it sustainable, that make it environmentally friendly. That's the work we should be doing, instead of spending all this time in the Legislature banning new things.

So I'll give you a leg up on research that's been done. You can look no further than in our own country, to the Province of Saskatchewan, as an example. It's a province with a population similar to Nova Scotia's. It's over a bigger landmass, but the population is not that much different. Only a few short years ago, Saskatchewan faced a lot of the problems that Nova Scotia faces, it had a big debt, its population was declining, the pull of Alberta was even stronger right next door in Saskatchewan, there was unemployment, their young people were leaving, and small towns were shrinking.

The people of Saskatchewan asked themselves a very good question, how can it be that this province, with all of the natural resources that we have around us, above ground and below ground, can be doing so poorly when right next door we have a successful example in Alberta? They had an election, and they voted for a new government that told them upfront, we are going to find a way to be a beneficiary of our own resources in a sustainable way.

Here we are, not that many years later, and Saskatchewan is one of the leaders in the country in economic growth. Its population is rising, its small towns are growing again, its debt is going down, and it is holding its own with Alberta as a place for young people in our country to move to and have a good job and raise a family. They figured it out.

Let's look at some research right now on the floor of this Chamber. Mr. Speaker, 35,000 onshore non-conventional shale gas wells have been drilled in the Province of Saskatchewan. Do you know what the Premier of Saskatchewan says about their experience with those 35,000 wells? I'm going to share it with you. By the way, I'm pretty sure, even if you're a Liberal or NDP or PC, you'd have to agree that a sample size of 35,000 must be statistically accurate and scientifically significant.

The Premier of Saskatchewan was asked if there had been any incidents among those 35,000 wells. I'll quote his answer, and then I'll table it. "Here are the incidents that we found related to fracking," says Mr. Brad Wall, the Premier of Saskatchewan. "Our kids are coming home" - there is an incident, their kids are coming home - "they are starting new businesses" - that's another incident that they have found - "we have jobs being created for young people here" - that's three incidents that they've found - "and we have a broader tax base" - four incidents - "in which we can afford education and health-care investment."

Those are the incidents that Premier Wall has found from the 35,000 wells drilled in his province in his time: that their kids are coming home, new businesses are starting, jobs are being created for young people, and they have a broader tax base in which they can afford education and health care investment.

Mr. Speaker, there is not a single Nova Scotian out there who doesn't want those exact same things right here in our own Province of Nova Scotia, but that's what the government is saying no to, that's what they are banning. Unless they have ten other great ideas about how to create meaningful jobs in meaningful numbers, particularly in rural areas, they have a duty to look at this. They have a duty to the people of Nova Scotia to look at this and they are not, they are banning it. Now we know really what they're banning, they're banning a chance for our kids to come home, for new businesses to be created, for jobs for young people, a broader tax base that can allow us to afford health care. That's what they're banning; that's why this is so wrong.

Mr. Speaker, Premier Wall of Saskatchewan - I'm just doing this in the benefit of good research - 35,000 wells, that's a pretty good sample size - let me just go on with the quote here and then I'll table it.

"The foundational strengths of the Saskatchewan advantage - as we call it - is the natural resources we have. As a province that has fairly recently moved from have-not to have status, the answer is, we can sustainably develop our natural resources, and we should, in the interests of our economies, not because the economy is the end-game, but because we want a quality of life."

Nobody here could put it any better than that, Mr. Speaker. Here is the incidence of onshore gas development in Saskatchewan right here. I'll table that and I hope every member on the government side takes that to heart, that's what the research is going to show because that's what is happening now in Saskatchewan and in other places.

The government has a choice - they can proceed with their majority to ban this new way of creating new jobs, to ban an opportunity for Nova Scotia to get it right, to do what Saskatchewan has done, to do what many other have done, to find a way to allow Nova Scotians, young Nova Scotians, to work here to expand our tax base, to help pay for health care and education, or they can ban it, Mr. Speaker.

The sad thing is that it's not only Nova Scotians who are watching this debate, the whole country is watching us on this one. There have been scathing editorials in the national media, in *The Globe and Mail*, in the *National Post*, in the *Calgary Herald*, in the *Fort McMurray News*, in the *Edmonton Sun*, on and on and on. They make a very interesting point on behalf of the country, Mr. Speaker, and that is, wait a minute, what's going on there in Nova Scotia? They are happy to receive . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: . . . out towards the light, Jamie.

MR. BAILLIE: Well, I will, but I hope they look towards the light, too, actually, because they are casting us in the dark so far, Mr. Speaker.

They looked at this debate and they said wait a minute, you are happy to be on the receiving end, in this great country, of \$1.6 billion a year in equalization generated out West by the natural resources that are safely and responsibly extracted there. You are happy to take that cash, but you think you are too good, or your government does, to actually do that work in your own province.

Mr. Speaker, I'd be interested to hear if the government actually responds to that because I want Nova Scotia to be a great, contributing part of this great country. I want Nova Scotia to proudly go to national conferences, to Premiers' meetings, to ministers' meetings, to conventions of any kind and proudly talk about what we're doing to build our great part of Canada, but the government is banning that, too, in a way, because instead

now we have to explain somehow, why we're happy to take the cheque but we think we're above doing the work here at home ourselves.

That might be how the government feels but that is offensive to the values of everyday Nova Scotians who I know, who work hard to bring a paycheque home that they've earned themselves, balance their household budget, save a little money for their kids, try to leave their little part of our province better off when they're finished with it than when they found it, volunteer in their communities, go to the fire hall, go to the Legion, coach minor hockey, make this province better on their own two feet. Those are the values of Nova Scotians.

Nobody likes to be given a handout. Nobody wants to sit back and have someone else pay their way. Those are the values of Nova Scotians. But now, not only has this government put a big closed for business sign on our province, they've actually put a big neon sign across our whole country: please send money, we're not going to do it ourselves. That's not right. The values of this government, by saying no, and the values of everyday Nova Scotians could not be further apart.

I just hope that as Canadians watch this debate, watch what goes on in our province, for whatever amount of time they look at us, they know there is a voice here in this Chamber on this side who says no, we want to carry our own weight. We want to earn our own way. We want young Nova Scotians working to make this province better and richer here at home. That's what we're saying yes to - not no, yes.

I believe, in the face of a government that surrenders because Nova Scotians are not ready, that as this debate goes on and more and more Nova Scotians see what it's really all about, standing up for ourselves, making our own way in the world, generating our own jobs and our own wealth, on our own two feet, that they will come around and they will be ready because they are looking for leadership and they are not getting it from the government. They are looking for someone to show the way to make this province stronger and richer and prouder, and if they won't provide it over there, we will provide exactly that here. That's why it's time to say yes.

I've said from the beginning that we have a duty to look at onshore gas development; we have a duty. The question is, who is that duty to? I mentioned first and foremost Rob Henderson and his family, and the thousands of families like Rob's, we have a duty to them. But we also have a duty to the rest of Canada, as I just pointed out, but let me conclude with this for now, we have a duty to ourselves as Nova Scotians. We have a duty to ourselves to get this right, to not turn back on the future, to not shrivel in fear at something new, to not do the old thing and say no to something that we don't have all figured out yet.

We have a duty to ourselves to build this province up richer and prouder and stronger than we found it. You do not fulfill that duty to yourselves by saying no, by banning a new way to create new jobs. You fulfill that duty by standing up on your own

two feet and saying we can do this, we can do it responsibly; we can do it in the best interests of our environment and our people like we are doing on the offshore, we can do that in the onshore. That is how you lead a province - not by banning things. Thank you very much.

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

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say a few words. I won't take my full hour for sure. I think what we have caused now for Nova Scotians to contemplate is - it used to be two things that would guarantee a fight and that would be religion and politics. Now we can add resource management to that saying.

Bill No. 6 is a bill that is not going to win anybody any friends. It's a bill because it tries to walk a line that you really can't walk. The idea of what we do with our resources in this province is not a new argument. Where I come from in Cape Breton we can go back to the 1700s when coal was first mined in Port Morien. What we do in this province with our resource development, those arguments are nothing new. It's not new that - whether it's a coal mine, a gypsum quarry, or a rock quarry - you will get people coming out on either side of that argument, very loudly.

There will be opponents and proponents. This is what we're going to have when it comes to fracking. Now, the idea of fracking is relatively new to Nova Scotia. It's not a new technology and it has its own inherent problems. But to say that we should turn our back on it forever - I really don't think this bill says that, but nonetheless, that is where we are at. We did have a very knowledgeable, well-led group of people, headed by Dr. Wheeler, who travelled throughout Nova Scotia. I think before I go too much further I would like to thank Dr. Wheeler and those who were on his committee for their report, the hard work.

Coming out of that, there was an argument of, well, we've only heard one side of the story. Hopefully, if that is factual, then when this bill gets over to Law Amendments Committee, if we've only heard one side of the fracking story then that will be heard loud and clear by the witnesses in Law Amendments Committee.

Last year we heard during the election, if you recall - a little over a year ago - about green fracking. I don't know where that has gone now. Does anybody know what happened to green fracking?

AN HON. MEMBER: Kermit the frog is doing it.

MR. CORBETT: Kermit the frog is doing it. That's what causes this Party a great deal of consternation when it comes to this. When you've had the Party and its candidates saying there was such a thing as green fracking and that is gone in the ether somewhere now, because I think the Party saw the error of its ways. I would have hoped that somebody would have stood up and owned that comment and disavowed themselves of its silliness.

Nonetheless, here we are. We are, for the foreseeable future, whether you like it or not, no less than 30 years and maybe further out, tied to carbon in a substantive way. People will argue that and that's fine, but the reality is that carbon, for the foreseeable future, will play a large part in our energy and heating sectors. That's just the reality.

I've heard the minister talk quite a bit about coalbed methane. Where I come from, and I'm sure my friends from Pictou County, coalbed methane is no new idea. That's from the old Allen seams; that's probably one of the ones they're working on. We know those things, Mr. Speaker - back in the late 1970s, before they drilled the portals for Phalen Mine, right next to Lingan Mine. You could do that because the Phalen Mine sat on a seam of coal that is known to geologists as the Harbour Seam. The Harbour Seam went straight out and went kind of - for the golfers, it would dogleg toward Newfoundland and Labrador.

Now the Phalen Seam, which Phalen Mine is on, is more like a horseshoe. It would crop - it would almost come up to the surface in around another part of my riding, in Reserve Mines, in Gardner, in that constituency. It would then go out for probably 10 to 12 miles and then horseshoe back, and that's where the 26th mine was mined, that seam there. Again, the same thing would happen going in kind of a direction toward Donkin, where my friend is, and for the life of me, I do not recall the name of his riding because it is so long.

AN HON. MEMBER: Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg.

MR. CORBETT: Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg, I'm told. But he would know about that.

The reason I explain those is because both of those seams have been tested since the 1960s - late 1960s, early 1970s, - for coalbed methane. There has been some positive experience around it, and it will be interesting to see how we go there. Now, coalbed methane extraction is not without its perils also, and so there will be some issues worth looking at as we go forward, because there are a lot of gasses that have to be stripped out of there to use it in any viable way.

If we can become self-reliant on our energy sources, that's a good thing, if we can do this in a parallel system where we don't tie ourselves forever to carbon - there is a reality that carbon by its very nature is a diminishing resource, so we're not going to have carbon forever. We have to think of carbon in two ways. One that I just mentioned, that there is a quantified amount and it will depreciate and it will eventually be gone. There is the other one of the harm it does to our environment. We have two issues here when we come to any kind of carbon.

Another issue that we have not really discussed much in this House about resource management is called coal gasification, where you actually burn the coal underground and then take up the resource from there. It has been done in Russia, South Africa, and I believe, Madam Speaker, to a limited extent in Australia. The upside of that, people would tell you, is that the waste product is pumped back into the tunnels and where you get the

coal, and it would stay there in perpetuity. I go back to the Harbour Seam and the Phalen Seam again because that block is between Cape Breton and Newfoundland and Labrador, and that's an area as large as the tar sands. If there were a way we could capture that through coal gasification, it would go a long way to harnessing our energy.

Again, I put that out there because it's a new and emerging technology. If we were to say no to that new and emerging technology - like the previous speaker - we'd be limiting ourselves. The previous speaker and I part ways on some of the issues around this bill and that's fine, but the idea of limiting ourselves, I don't think the limiting is as large as the previous speaker said, but there is a limit here that's being put on Nova Scotia on how we extract this.

Not saying that fracking doesn't deserve the bad name it has been given, but the industry has done very little, when Wheeler was touring the province, to discount any of that information. Again, I'll go back to one would hope that if indeed there's factual information that Wheeler didn't have, that it would be given to them. One area where I would agree with the previous speaker is that for us not to be ready and to explore it and when the minister and the Premier both say we don't know what we have, well, that's not being respectful to Nova Scotians.

If there's a possibility of having this resource, then we should go and see what's there as opposed to just saying it's not there so don't worry about fracking. Well, if it's there, somebody at some point is going to have to make the bold step and just say yea or nay on this whole thing. Bill No. 6, the Petroleum Resources Act, doesn't really do that.

I'd like to talk more in general on what happens in Nova Scotia around resources because there's probably not a rural member here who hasn't had to fight the existence of a quarry. That's a resource. People always think of resources as stuff like the energy resources, but there's one quarry now being proposed in the Mira area, by Intervale there, and the company is looking to extract a fair amount of gravel and so on from there. The residents do not accept it, they don't like it, it's extremely rural, it is beyond the Grand Mira area, and it's an area that many people use for recreation whether it's boating, hunting, fishing and so on, not too far from the Two Rivers Wildlife Park.

There's an issue that is in front of those people, I believe there's a group actually taking the proponent to court. If the province was to completely - okay, nobody needs gravel for roads so we're not going to have any legislation on what gravel pits are, it would be in no person's land. For the province to merely say today as we debate this bill that we don't know how much of a resource we have here so we don't really need the protection that we should afford Nova Scotians.

Another one of our resources that we really, really got snookered terribly on was gypsum. Now, gypsum is not what it used to be, just because of the building trends in the United States and what it was, and wallboard, and it may make a comeback. But we

literally gave that resource away, Madam Speaker (Interruptions). Literally. We gave it away. (Interruptions.)

Madam Speaker, I love being corrected by the member for Glace Bay, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, especially on English. Youse guys from Glace Bay really knows hows to talk. (Interruption) It's true, but it hurts. If he's around, we'll talk about coal mining a bit more, and I'm sure that will pique his interest, too.

We have, figuratively or literally, given that resource away, especially in Hants County, where it was pretty much given to U.S. interests and we really saw little or no benefit out of that. So we have to think about those things.

Similarly, we have to be ready for a scheme; if we have shale gas in this province, then we have to be ready with a regime of what our royalties should be.

I can go back to another Liberal Government, on its deathbed, basically, signed away a lot of the royalties in our previous life here in the offshore, Madam Speaker. These are important things to have set up now. I think if we have the eureka moment, if you will, that there is shale gas at commercial quantities, then we're scrambling - what do we get for it? What should we get paid for it? Those are the problems.

I go back to the offshore agreement that the former Liberal Government paid, and what it was, was an acknowledgement in some ways that the front end would go to the proponents and that the government would get some as the stock dwindled, so say a 20-year agreement. So what they did is they piled the resource on the front end when they paid less of a benefit on it, and then, as the stock dwindled, the price went up. But we still were only getting a relatively small share, because they were smart enough to say, in a declining scheme, that they were better to do at the front end. It would be interesting to see if we've learned anything from that if shale gas was available onshore here, and what we would do with it.

I mentioned before about coal mining. For the amount of coal that was mined in Cape Breton and in Pictou County and the Springhill area, we never really got the return on that resource that we deserved. We pretty much gave it away. I mean, again, you talk about the late 1960s and early 1970s and what the international crisis was like around energy, and all of a sudden coal was king for a period of time. We mined it and mined it but really got nothing back, and basically gave the resource away.

These are issues that I believe have to be contemplated, rather than just say there's nothing here that we know of yet that is in commercial quantities, so hey, it doesn't matter. Well, it does matter, because you have to be ready for that.

I would like to see this bill go to the Law Amendments Committee and have people from the industry talk and tell us what they think this mechanism should look like. To push this aside and say it's not going to happen, well, are you really shunting a portion of your

economy that could grow by just saying, well, we think - we're the experts - we think that there's no commercial quantities there?

I don't think it should be drill, baby, drill, but the idea, Madam Speaker, should be that we should explore these options. The mechanism is there and if someone comes back and says that we have these resources, then we just look at the applicable Act and say, well here's what it is. Here are the royalties you pay. Here's how you do it. Here is the safe and clean way you do it, and then we go forward.

But this bill really doesn't do that, Madam Speaker. In some ways the bill really is disingenuous to the Wheeler report because it doesn't take the wholeness of the report and say - like Mr. Ritcey stated publicly and he has put his differences and his interpretation of the report in print and how the government has interpreted it.

It's very important, Madam Speaker, that we get it right. For years, as I laid out our resources, the former Liberal member for Digby-Annapolis, I believe he brought a bill forward just about every year about actually putting royalties on our gravel pits. He would talk about that - should that be there?

There is a reasonable list to this bill, but there is also an unintended consequence to this bill because one of the largest purchasers of gravel in this province is the province, through Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. So there would just be a diminishing return on that. Nonetheless, what the bill would show is that we have to put a value on our resources and we've been just really asleep at the switch for hundreds of years in this province. As the previous speaker talked about wanting us to be a have province, maybe I'm too easygoing on the guy, but I believe everybody in this House wants us to be a have province - that's just the reality of it.

I don't know which road map the government wants to take, but I'm sure at some point they would like for us to be a have province. I'm sure the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board would have a much more enjoyable winter and Spring if we were a have province rather than a have-not province. As a former Chair of Treasury Board I would have a few less grey hairs, Madam Speaker.

The reality is that if we ignore putting some framework in this bill, solid framework around what we expect from fracking - you know what? The Minister of Energy and the Premier may be right, we'll never see fracking in this province. Quite honestly, if it's not done in a way that respects the environment, and we respect the communities in which it's going forward, I'm not in favour of fracking. If it's done in a way that people and government - and let's not kid ourselves, there is no 100 per cent on this. You're not going to have any one community saying - we'll say 1,000 people - that 1,000 people are going to be in agreement with it, because as I started my conversation, it's now becoming religion, politics, and resource management and we'll have a hard time to find a group of people that will all agree from anywhere else.

What we want is a large consensus and what we want is real science - these types of things. Nobody wants someone to come up with - oh well, I saw this movie and this doesn't work. Really what we need is people who will give data that will show that this can go forward without harm to a community, and if it goes forward without harm to a community, that Nova Scotians will be the beneficiaries of all the economic benefits we can, whether it's royalties, whether it's jobs, all those things.

We've had lots of people talk about Alberta, and I'll talk about that in a few moments, about our young people and so on who work over there. You look over at the proposed nickel mine in Newfoundland and Labrador, and they have no bones about it. Over on those job sites, it's Newfoundland and Labrador first, and they've done very well by that. Although there are some people from this province working over there, they are there after all the jobs are filled by Newfoundlanders.

Now I want to talk a bit about trying not to talk out of both sides of our mouth here, because a large group of Nova Scotians are in Alberta working because fracking took place out there.

What is interesting now, though, people would say to you from time to time, oh, it's not uncommon since any one of us at any one of our ages, whether we were 18, 19, 20, leaving high school, leaving university, have gone to other parts of the country or even other countries to go (Interruptions) Well, my friends here from the Progressive Conservative Party say it's a choice, and also it's a matter of maybe some youthful exuberance in trying to see other parts of the world, which is fine.

But what we're seeing now - Madam Speaker, the type of out-migration we see now hasn't been seen at least in my lifetime. It's people around my age - a little older, a little younger - they are going and they are saying, you know what? My son and daughter, whatever, the kids are out there and they ain't coming back. So you know what? I've got a small pension. I'm going to get a job, maybe manage an apartment building or some kind of part-time job or something that will allow me to be close to my children and my grandchildren.

Out-migration, while it's bad at any age, it's really coming now to a point that we've never seen this type of out-migration, when people who have lived their lives in this province, who are third-, fourth-, fifth-, sixth-generation Nova Scotians, are taking their pension plans, selling their homes and moving out where their kids are. There was always the thought that at some point - in the 1950s and 1960s, when I was growing up - that they would come home again. A lot of people have given up on that idea, that they are not coming home again. (Interruptions)

Somebody is saying about 1950s and 1960s. I was born in 1953, so I can talk about that, Madam Speaker. I was born in 1953 and I don't know how I made it this far. Maybe it was never voting Liberal.

It is a time that's very perilous to our economy, the type of people we're losing. I would hope, as this bill moves forward, that the government will see that this has to be tempered, that there are no absolutes when it comes to our resources. I think we have to move forward. We have to examine that we do this, that we do not shut doors. I really don't believe this bill particularly shuts doors, but it has the ability to do that. To me, it's not robust enough that it really would take what we've got to do to build our economy. It satisfies, I guess, neither camp. It doesn't satisfy the people who don't want fracking and it doesn't satisfy the people who want fracking. That's why I'm really wanting this to get over to Law Amendments and to hear from all sides, and for once that the government would take into consideration what they hear over there and that Nova Scotians will not only be heard but be listened to.

Bill No. 6, the Petroleum Resources Act, is a very important bill. It comes out of some very hard work from some very, very good Nova Scotians. I would hope that the government would consider the Wheeler report in its totality and give Nova Scotians what they want and hear what they want to say over in Law Amendments Committee, and that we get to move forward. With those few words, I take my place. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise tonight and say a few words on Bill No. 6. I was listening intently to my colleague, the member for Cape Breton Centre when he talked about how everyone in this House really wants us to be a "have" province, and I do think that that is true. But the issue is how do we get there, and what decisions do we make along the way that help us to become a "have" province?

I'm just a little worried that Bill No. 6 isn't a decision that brings us closer to being a "have" province. In fact, it brings us further away. At a minimum, the government should be doing things that provide certainty to industry. The Minister of Energy referred a couple of times in his comments to taking steps to provide certainty. So he acknowledges that it is the role of government to provide certainty to industry, and he feels that Bill No. 6 is doing that. Well, unfortunately, it's not. It's doing the exact opposite.

Bill No. 6 provides a lot of uncertainty to industry, and you need only look to the first sentence in the bill as presented in the House under the explanatory notes. It says - I'll read from it, his bill "prohibits high-volume hydraulic fracturing in shale unless exempted by regulation for the purpose of testing or research;"

"This bill prohibits high-volume hydraulic fracturing in shale." Just right there - you don't have to go any further than that first sentence to see the amount of uncertainty that this bill creates. "High-volume hydraulic fracturing" - now, I doubt if there's a member in this House that can tell me what that means. I certainly don't know what that means, and I have reached out to a number of people in the industry and I've asked them, what does "high-volume hydraulic fracturing" mean? And they don't know. They don't know what that is.

Nobody knows what that is. I don't even know that it exists, to be honest. You talk about high-volume hydraulic fracturing "in shale." Now, "shale" is another descriptive term. It describes a type of rock formation. We have some sandstone; is that shale? Is that a type of shale? I mean, these are subjective terms. So when you say you're going to provide certainty and then you give them one sentence that is open to so many different interpretations, it leaves me to wonder how that provides certainty to anyone.

I can't tell, having read this, and scratched my head a little bit, and listened to the minister and his comments, I don't know - is this a temporary ban? Is it a permanent ban? Does anyone know? I mean, nobody really knows what the minister is trying to do here. His comments allude to the fact that it's just a ban for a little while, while we get things sorted out here. That's not the way you give comfort to industry. That's the way you give confusion to industry.

I thought to myself, the irony wasn't lost on me of the amount of bills that have kind of gone through here in the last week and a half or something that we've heard the government refer to as cleanup bills or housekeeping bills. They kind of present them - and a lot of them make sense to be honest. They do change legislation in a way that is helpful. But when you're thinking of the cleanup bills, I thought to myself, Madam Speaker, gee whiz, I wish this bill could go through to cleanup stage before it's brought to the floor of this House, because it needs to be cleaned up. It's not clear at all what this bill is trying to do.

That's unfortunate, because when you do things like that, there are unintended consequences. Certainly this bill will have some consequences that are intended, but this bill has a lot of unintended consequences. It even has consequences to myself and to the members on this side that are very clear, and I'm going to talk a little bit about those, about some of the consequences of this bill and the impacts on Nova Scotia. But sadly, as obvious as those consequences are to us, they seem so unclear to the minister. He just doesn't seem to have a grasp what he's doing, the impact he's having on industry here, and that's a scary thing.

Why does it matter if this bill is clear or not? Why does it matter if this bill presents certainty or not? Well Madam Speaker, when you have companies that are trying to make decisions about where to spend their exploration dollars, when you have companies that are trying to draw business plans and map their way forward, they want some certainty as to where the government that they're dealing with is going, where the government's head is, and it's really important that it's clear as to what the ground rules are. With this bill, the ground rules are very unclear and that's not fair. That's not fair to industry.

I have to wonder if that's intentional. Is it intentional that this is kind of a wishy-washy bill trying to speak to different sides and speak - I heard the expression - speak out of both sides of their mouth. I wonder if that's really what's going on here, because it seems to be the case.

AN HON. MEMBER: Keep going. That's right.

MR. HOUSTON: My colleague thinks that that is what's happening here. I'll take agreement in this House whenever I can get it, so I'll take it right there. Thank you very much.

But industry does find this bill wishy-washy. I wonder, is the minister trying to be clever here? I mean, sometimes we see a bit of theatrics around the House and stuff, and I just wonder, is there more to it? Is he trying to get clever with the wording of the bill? Does he think the subjective wording that's in there kind of lets him play both sides of it? Madam Speaker, I don't know if that is the intent or not and I'll give him the benefit of the doubt, but that's what's happening. This clever, subjective wording is not clever and it's very dangerous. (Interruptions) I don't know. We had agreement on something, and then we lost it, Madam Speaker.

I don't think it's good to have subjective wording in a bill that's impacting industry, because what happens when you do that is you create the illusion of loopholes and what will happen is - governments should never be creating loopholes, because people will look for them. When you have people who are looking for loopholes, that's only going to result in more lawyering. It's going to be expensive for the government on its side to defend its bill, to try to set its position straight, and it's going to be expensive for industry because industry doesn't want to have to lawyer up, industry doesn't want to be looking for loopholes. They want to focus on their business, and these exploration companies, they don't want to be looking for a lawyer. They want to be moving their business model forward.

So, in this case, we don't really need a lot of debate about what the government's trying to do here between industry and the government. We just want to know what their plan is. It's not clear to anyone. I've been talking to industry and they're confused. They're confused by what's happening here. I did find it somewhat entertaining to hear from the minister that he'd been to the conference here, and he came back into this Chamber and he said, everybody loves me. Everybody's so happy with what we're doing here. I just found that so entertaining to hear that everywhere he goes, everyone's happy with his legislation and everybody's so excited.

Well, if that were true for one second, it's only because they don't understand what he's trying to do because they're so confused by the wording. It's either very disingenuous or very naive. Either way, that's not the way you govern, because I can tell you that people in industry are nervous. And I'm being kind; people in industry are actually terrified because they don't know what to expect, they don't know what's going to unfold.

I heard the minister referring earlier today that he acknowledged he said that a significant period of learning was involved. He said, well maybe it won't be as significant - I think he said - but there is a period of learning.

I absolutely agree with that. Nova Scotians need information on this. Nova Scotians are looking for information. But what you do as a government is you go and get it. You go and get that information to alleviate the concerns. You don't just say, well, no, no, no, we're not going to do that. Because, if nothing else, what the minister has done is to take that significant period of learning and extend it exponentially, because he's moving us further away from the start of that period of learning than we are today, and that's not good for Nova Scotia.

We need to get into that learning period. We need the information. We don't need a government that pushes us further away, because I can tell you that industry is saying, what next? What are they going to do next?

I can't wait to get into that a little further, Madam Speaker. I have a lot more to say on this bill, and I look forward to continuing my comments on this bill. But right now, given the late hour and the excitement I can sense to get into the late debate topic, I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 6.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn the debate. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move that the House do now rise to sit again tomorrow between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. At that time we would continue the debate on second reading of Bill No. 6 and we will also call second reading of Bill Nos. 18 and 22, and if time permits, Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne and Notices of Motion.

I therefore would move that the House do now rise to sit tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is that the House rise to meet again on October 10th between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned until 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

It is now the moment of interruption. We have a late debate topic tonight. It is brought to us by the member for Pictou East and the wording is:

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature ask the Minister of Agriculture to stop his attack on Nova Scotia’s rural way of life, and in light of his comments in the media, ask him to confirm that he will allow farmers to continue providing meat for their families, as they have done for centuries.”

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

AGRIC. - FARMER: MEAT PROVISION - ALLOW

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Madam Speaker, may I please make an introduction? I would like to introduce my friend Roy Ellis in the west gallery.

Madam Speaker, something unacceptable is happening in Nova Scotia, and this time it is literally in our own backyards, Madam Speaker, and to all the members in this House, if you ate today, thank a farmer.

Early September, a local meat processor in my constituency of Pictou West was visited by representatives from the Turkey Producers Marketing Board of Nova Scotia. He was told he had to stop processing turkeys immediately; however, he was handed nothing other than a business card - no ticket, no paper indicating why he was being told to shut down. The reason, they said, was because the Turkey Producers Marketing Board received a complaint, although they stressed it was not a food-safety complaint.

Gordon Fraser has successfully and safely been operating in our community for more than 36 years. He has never received a complaint. This is a gentleman who precedes the turkey board. I randomly showed up after learning of the situation and was so impressed with his operation that I would have eaten off his immaculate floors. What else I discovered during my visit was a man who is the salt of the earth, a man who is a third/fourth generation farmer and loves his family dearly; a man who works extremely hard to make a modest living and is in his last few years of farming before his retirement and hopes that his son, Adam, will take over the farm.

Gordon Fraser was and still is more concerned about his customers. Where are they going to go and have their turkeys slaughtered? He told me a story of a couple in their 80s who came with no more than a dozen turkeys to be slaughtered and he had to turn them away and how it broke his heart to refuse them. However, if he had taken the chance to help them, he would have been fined \$5,000.

The timing of this makes me suspicious. It is actually appalling. This is all happening just before Thanksgiving and Christmas. We have since learned of at least four other small processors that were also told they could not slaughter anymore. This is not a partisan issue or a Pictou West issue; it is a Nova Scotia issue. I am not convinced by the minister that it is only a food-safety issue. I am not buying that. If so, why can I raise my own turkeys and slaughter them in my own backyard, without knowing how to do so or having the proper tools?

The turkey board admitted that the complaint was not a food-safety issue but that the complaint came from another turkey processor. When was the last time you heard of Listeria or E.coli? Who was it in relation to? Think back, people, I'm sure you all remember reading the papers or watching the stories on the TV. That's right, it was the big, licensed government-inspected meat processors such as Maple Leaf and XL Foods.

I believe with the buy-local, grow-local movement people prefer to know where their food is coming from and want to have a choice to meet their processor. They want to know that he or she has enough time and means to clean his or her equipment and they want to have a visual of where their turkeys are being slaughtered. They also like the idea that Nova Scotians are supporting Nova Scotians. This is a way of life for many and we are taking away their lifestyle by not allowing them to have a choice, a choice of deciding what they feed their families.

It is also obvious that many are raising their own turkeys to help supplement their grocery bills. Madam Speaker, we all know the pressures our local food banks are experiencing, and when we have people who are living in poverty and are taking steps to try to be self-sufficient and growing their own food such as turkeys, we need to continue to encourage, not discourage them.

According to a *Sun News* article that I'm sure many of you have seen by now, I was shocked to listen to the Minister of Agriculture. It was his last statement that most upset me and other Nova Scotians. If the minister follows through with his last statement in that news report, no one will have the right to process or raise anything for themselves. I've had the pleasure to speak to the minister on this issue, and I thank him for returning my call within a day of reaching out to him. I believe that says a lot about the minister with staying on top of his department.

I know the minister is a reasonable man and I know he has expressed interest in helping. So I implore him through this debate this evening to please sit down, as soon as possible, with the small turkey processors of Nova Scotia - I believe 124 of them is what he mentioned to me - to find a way to compromise on the issue so that it is a win-win situation for all involved.

The Natural Products Act of Nova Scotia, one of the scariest, most powerful, nine-page documents you will ever read, is under the minister's department. The Turkey Producers Marketing Board is acting under this document and I know the minister can put

forth legislative changes to this document that would help these small processors and enable them to continue to do business. It's as simple as that.

Madam Speaker, I am very worried that we are moving in the wrong direction under this Act. As a consumer, we will have no choice but to stop buying and supporting our local farmers. You will not be able to buy straight from your farmer; you will have to go to the grocery store. People are worried that it will come to the point that there will be an inspector hovering over them while pulling their carrots.

Our feed stores will suffer too. People are already stating that if these are the harsh rules on raising turkeys, it is not worth the agony and effort. Feed stores and turkey sales will be a story of the past. Sometimes I wonder if that is the intent here: to ensure that we are all buying at the big box stores rather than from our neighbour or local farmers.

I ask the members in the Chamber, would you rather buy your food at the farmers' market or in a grocery store - you know where the farm animals were raised with hormones, antibiotics and vegetables sprayed with antibacterial properties?

I also worry about the 4-H programs, that they will cease to exist. The 4-H turkey marketing program is already in jeopardy because of this unnecessary mess. Madam Speaker, Nova Scotia is a province that is in economic decline. The actions taken by the turkey board negates everything the Ivany report states about buy local, shop local, help the local farmers.

I'm sorry, Madam Speaker, but I can't help but feel that this rhetoric of food safety has to stop for if people really believe it is all about food safety, then they really need to take some time and educate themselves on this situation. Do you know that in Nova Scotia \$180 million is spent each month on groceries? If just 10 per cent of that was spent on local food, our local economy would be infused with \$19 million.

Madam Speaker, I once again ask the Minister of Agriculture to review and revise this antiquated Act and ensure that small processors continue to thrive in rural areas while allowing Nova Scotians to continue to eat healthy and locally-grown food. The minister has the perfect opportunity to address this unfortunate issue in a proactive manner and help find solutions to ensure our small turkey processors are treated equally.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to speak on the issue that I am most passionate about. I will now take my seat.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member to my right for her passionate words. I know this issue means a lot to her, as it does to many rural people in Nova Scotia. The member and I and one of the other members from Pictou also attended

the protest rally held in West River a few weeks ago, on behalf of Gordon Fraser, the gentleman who is the turkey processor in question, who had just been told that they were shutting down his business after 30 years of operation.

There were close to 400 people at that meeting, which surprised me. I really didn't know that that particular issue would be such a passionate one for so many people. I went with my father and a friend. We sat in the front row and we listened very intently to every single person who got up to speak. Basically the gist of what I received that night was the story of rural communities across Nova Scotia, not just in Pictou County but across Nova Scotia, who feel that their way of life is being threatened.

They were very upset by the fact that this gentleman had been operating for 30 years with no health issues, no problems. They said that his shop is very clean, you could eat off the floor, that they trust him, and that they've been taking their birds to him for years. They were very saddened by both the fact that this was a particular livelihood that was going to be taken away from this gentleman and his son, who he wanted to bequeath the business to and who worked with him at this business, and also that it was taking away their freedom to take their birds and get them raised by other people or raise them themselves and then take them to somebody down the road, who they knew, to be processed and slaughtered as humanely as possible.

They said that one of the things that bothered them was that the woman from the turkey board who had come in had apparently told a number of people that they'd be allowed to slaughter their own birds in their own yards, but that this gentleman couldn't. And they said, well, you should see me try and slaughter a turkey. They said this would be more inhumane than anything you'd ever seen, and most of them said they would never want to try to do that. One young girl said that she'd actually started taking some lessons from the gentleman in question, and she said it was one of the goriest jobs she's ever had to do and she never wanted to do anything like that again.

Now, these are farmers, farming people. A lot of them were talking about how they were growing their own little pigs, they're growing turkeys and chickens, and a lot of them were concerned about where this is going to end. They said, well, it's starting with the turkeys, but they're concerned that it was going to be chickens that would be next on the list, that they would not be allowed to process. They felt that Big Brother is watching you, and why is this government suddenly coming down on all these little farmers and preventing them from continuing to live the lifestyle that they've lived for hundreds of years?

A gentleman from Lunenburg got up and spoke, and another gentleman and a woman from Antigonish got up and spoke, and they all said the same thing: that a woman from the turkey board had come in - in one instance the person, in either Lunenburg or Antigonish, said that she had called them up and said that she owned turkeys, about 12 turkeys, and she wanted to bring them in to be processed. But when she showed up with the turkeys, and suddenly when they accepted the turkeys, she said, okay, aha, I've caught you.

You're not allowed to do this anymore, and I'm shutting you down. They felt that that could be a case of entrapment, and they were very concerned with the way it was done.

The other gentleman in Lunenburg said that the way it was done was very harsh and very cruel and not very compassionate. They felt that it came suddenly. They weren't expecting it, and they would have liked to have seen a little bit more lead-up, maybe some discussion from the department - something to let them know that this was coming down the pipes.

Gordon Fraser himself said that he was very shocked to find out that somebody had made a complaint. They don't know who made the complaint. It wasn't a health complaint apparently, so they were wondering whether it was somebody else from the turkey board that made the complaint and wanted to try to shut down little mom-and-pop operations around the province so that there would be more for the bigger operations.

Now, this is all hearsay. This is all personal stories that I heard this night, but I can tell you, I was amazed by the passion that the people of the countryside feel about this issue and others like it. They already feel a little disempowered, and I know I've talked about disempowerment in this House before, in terms of workers and workers' rights being taken away from them. These people feel the same way.

I spoke to the Federation of Agriculture the next day, after that meeting. I asked them how they felt about this issue, and they said, well, for us it's really food inspection issue, it's a meat inspection issue, and it's a health issue. They said there are very, very stringent rules and guidelines and regulations that say that, for instance, you cannot cut up meat - like red meat, beef, pork, whatever - in the same place as you're cutting up turkeys or chicken. In fact, you even have to change your clothes and use different equipment and not use the same boards and cutting boards, because there is the possibility of cross-contaminants. If there happens to be some kind of disease in one, it could cross over to the other. This is why people in their own homes are told, don't use the same utensils to cut up meat and chicken, because of these very things.

I understand the other side of this equation and I understand how government and how the Minister of Agriculture may be feeling that they do not want to have any diseases come down into Nova Scotia and be caught saying, well, somebody has now died from this disease - why didn't you do something?

Having been on the government side before, I know exactly how that feels if you're not ahead of the story and you're ahead of trying to make something safe for people before something terrible happens. We actually lived through the pandemic in our very first month of government, that was one of the first challenges - that huge pandemic, H1N1. People were dying and nobody knew exactly why. So I understand why the government might want to make sure that things are safe and this is a safety issue. How much time do I have left, Madam Speaker? Sorry, I thought someone was pointing at me. Oh sorry. I thought someone was giving me a time thing.

I see both sides of this story and I really, really care about this gentleman and all of the people who are in these small businesses across Nova Scotia. We push eat local; we push shop local, and yet we are telling these people there is no help for you, shut down shop, no you can't go and get your birds processed down the street. We would like to see that government is doing something to help these small businesses with these challenges, and what health and safety standards would small businesses need to meet to continue and how can government help them achieve this?

If there is some training or funding available to these small businesses to guide them to acceptable standards, we would be very open to hearing that from the minister and trying to get the word out to all the local people that we know so that they can continue to keep the livelihood that they have had and live in the way they have become accustomed to for hundreds of years. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Thank you very much Madam Speaker. It's with great pleasure that I stand in my place to talk about this very critical issue to the health of Nova Scotians. This is what we're talking about, the health of Nova Scotians.

I'm glad we are discussing this the way we are. I'm glad we're not here today because somebody died, actually died from an illness that they might have contracted from some meat that was processed at a non-inspected facility in Nova Scotia. It would be a totally different discussion today. It's not a matter of if it's going to happen, it's just when it's going to happen. It's going to happen; it's going to happen eventually. (Interruption) The Opposition over there is saying when? Well, remember Alberta's beef problem? Remember the beef problem? Well, we'll take these remarks into consideration and take all this information when it does happen, and we'll remind you of the political avenues you have taken on this instead of the food safety issue for Nova Scotians. Most Nova Scotians don't realize that this meat is not inspected; they do not understand that.

I want to clear up some information that isn't correct that was indicated by the member from the PC caucus. Number one, the complaint that came into the turkey board was from a consumer - a consumer - it was a consumer complaint. I verified that with the turkey board. The other thing was it was indicated that 4-H was going to come to an end because of this meat inspection. That was indicated in your speech. I tabled this document which I'll table again today - maybe this time you should take time to read it - where it says that 4-H will only take to facilities that are inspected. Number three indicated that farmers' markets are a great place for food, and that's absolutely right. And guess what? If you have a farmers' market that is selling uninspected meat, I want to know about it because I'm going to have my inspectors there to shut them down.

It's against the law in the Province of Nova Scotia to sell uninspected meat at a farmers' market. That is the law. And we have inspectors because I'm responsible for food safety as well as processing. When you go and say no small business is doing this - and I'm

going to table this again because evidently they didn't pay attention in Question Period the other day. Nine small businesses in the Province of Nova Scotia are licensed in this province to process turkeys, nine all over the province.

I can't stress food safety enough. This is all about food safety, nothing else. The gentleman in question, whom I won't name for obvious reasons, is welcome to talk to us. I actually engaged his son in a conversation. I told him to come to us. They have never, ever once approached us about licensing their facility. That makes me worry. That makes me worry a great deal.

On the video that was cropped and cut by *Sun News* indicating that the people can't do their own product at home, the policy is and the policy will remain as long as I am minister: if you grow a product on your property, on a farm or other facility, you can process the meat on that facility. You can consume that product on your own property. You cannot give it away and you cannot sell it, but you can do it on your own property.

The reason for that is, I believe, way back when all this started, was that at the time it was felt that you were putting only your own family at risk, not the general public. That's what we're talking about here, the general public.

To come back to this regulation, I'm surprised the PC caucus is so intent about this. In 1989 - that's the year - John Buchanan's Government, a PC Government - let me stress that - saw the wisdom of putting the regulation in place by that government to allow the Turkey Farmers of Nova Scotia to do what they did under the proper legislation, and I commend them for doing it. So if they had the foresight of worrying about people's safety and health, I can't believe all these years later that same caucus is standing up and saying, well, it shouldn't be the case. We don't worry about food safety. We don't care what happens to Nova Scotians.

I can tell you what is going to happen as this goes forward and we see some illness and people start to realize that they could possibly get sick from a facility that is not properly maintained, not properly certified to do the work, they are not going to be buying product from them. They are going to put themselves out of business. The more attention you draw to this, the more likely they are going to be out of business. (Interruptions)

Let me tell you about the licensing. Maybe you should listen - you might learn something here. If you go in an adequate facility that's inspected by us, this is just a few of the things that you have to have. You have to have clean, potable, tested hot and cold water. When I spoke to Mr. Fraser's son, they don't do water tests - number one problem.

Lab tests on the meat to make sure there are no bacteria or other infections in the meat that you are going to pass on to humans. No rusty equipment - look at the video again and see the rusty wall behind that video that was done by *Sun News*, the rusty wall right behind him. That is a place for bacteria.

Adequate facilities for chilling and storing during and after processing and a cool-down time, so two freezers are required for that product. Proper cleaning, proper cleaning and disinfecting procedures. These are just to mention a few things that have to be done, a few things.

When you look at what has happened and the potential risk for Nova Scotia, I cannot break the rules, bend the rules or correct the rules in any way that would jeopardize the health and safety of one single Nova Scotian, not one. It's not worth it.

The day will come, if we don't correct this and we don't ensure that this is going forward, we're going to have a discussion in this House that's not going to be very pleasant. I don't want to ever have to be standing here and saying we didn't move fast enough to correct this problem that could really injure and kill some people and make people very sick.

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, one in eight Canadians gets sick every year from food poisoning - one in eight. When you look at what has happened - you mentioned the large processing facilities - they had tested facilities. Look at the volume of product they put through a year, and you see how many licensed facilities have recalls and the recalls luckily happen because they take them out of the consumer markets and ensure that people don't get sick from them. So these things are really, really important.

As we move forward and we go through this whole process, people remember food safety. Food safety is number one. There have been all kinds of misconceptions put out there - I know one lady was quoted in the news at a farmer's market, you know, we can't use this gentleman's food anymore at the farmer's market. Well, they were never allowed to to start, and anyone who was there breaking the law, they will be fined by our department. If we find anybody that puts that - you're not allowed to sell this product anywhere, so where does all this product go? Where does it go? That's a darn good question. It probably goes to small stores someplace. They buy it. There's too much product going through all these 124 facilities in the province. Where does it go? It's not for personal consumption, so it's something that really needs to be checked into and see where it's all going.

I'm a strong supporter of the small farm. I'm a strong supporter for people being able to go forward and produce their own product, produce it on their site and process it on their site for their own use. Talk about poverty - it costs more to feed a turkey when you buy it and feed it than it does to buy it at the grocery store. Anyone who's in poverty may or may not be able to afford to grow their own turkey. Hopefully they can, and hopefully they can enjoy that as they move forward.

The bottom line of this whole thing is food safety, ensuring that Nova Scotians are safe. I'm entrusted with that responsibility as food inspector for the Province of Nova Scotia and I intend to follow through on that and make sure food safety is the number-one priority for this government and for this province as we move forward. I do not want to see

Nova Scotians getting ill and being in the hospital or maybe even dying from illness that we could have prevented by properly processing food.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Madam Speaker, I think the thing that's lost on the House here is when you go to a big-box store to buy food, you have a certain expectation that what's happened to that food out of sight, out of mind has followed certain procedures.

When you grow your own turkeys and you drop them off at a slaughterhouse and you meet the guy who slaughters them and you look and see the facilities and you pick your turkey up, it's not out of sight, out of mind where the food's been. It's absolutely in sight, in mind. You're just hiring somebody to provide a service to you. That's all they're doing. Nova Scotians, in this case, should have the right to decide who provides that service to them. They've grown the animal, they're getting somebody to slaughter it and then they're going to consume it. It's as simple as that.

How much time do I have?

MADAM SPEAKER: You have (Interruptions)

MR. HOUSTON: Until 6:30 p.m. So for people to sit in the House - I was disappointed to hear the minister saying that he thinks all this stuff coming out of these slaughterhouses is ending up in stores. That's so far from the truth. It just shows that when you get a sound bite, when somebody puts a sound bite in your mind of food safety and you just try to stick to that over and over, it shows how far you can come away from the facts.

People in rural Nova Scotia that the member is talking about - I don't know if the member has ever raised animals. I have chickens and I have horses. I don't have turkeys, but I can tell you that I understand a little bit about the rural lifestyle. So for people to sit in Halifax and sit in offices and say, here's what the scientists say is the best way to do this, therefore we're going to push that all down on everyone? It's not fair.

You have large facilities that process thousands of animals a day, thousands of turkeys. They should be held to a certain standard because their output is going to a certain market. What we're talking about is a small facility, a local person who's dealing with their neighbours, dealing with their relatives, probably holding themselves to a higher standard than a manual that is this big will ever accomplish, because the reality of it is, in the case of Gordon Fraser, 36 years and nobody's sick. If somebody would have been sick, the community would close him. The minister wouldn't have to take such pleasure in going around and shutting them all down because if one person was sick, the community would close him.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. The time has elapsed for late debate. I would like to thank all members of the House who participated in the Adjournment debate this evening.

The motion is carried.

[The House rose at 6:30 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 139**

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas the Riverport and Area Community Choir was founded by the late Ken Matheson as a collection of sketches and songs; and

Whereas under Mr. Matheson's direction the choir grew into what it is today, ranging in members from eight to 80, while performing its mix of folk, traditional, and local songs in and around the Riverport area; and

Whereas the choir celebrates its 25th Anniversary this year;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly recognize the anniversary of the Riverport and Area Community Choir and acknowledge its contributions to the community at large.

RESOLUTION NO. 140

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas for the last 25 years the Department of Natural Resources has annually recognized woodlot owners across the province in the western, central, and eastern regions, respectively; and

Whereas the winners are selected from a panel of their peers; and

Whereas Hiram and Ernest Carver, a father and son team from New Germany, have been recognized as the Provincial and Western Region Woodland Owners of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly recognize the Carvers and their contribution to managing and maintaining their woodland for the betterment of the present and future of Nova Scotia's forests.

RESOLUTION NO. 141

By: Mr. Alfie MacLeod (Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg)

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

Whereas the Donkin Brass Band recently celebrated its 95th Anniversary; and

Whereas the Donkin Brass Band has performed at countless community events and parades on the island throughout its long history; and

Whereas the band has given many hours to its community and has brought pleasure to everyone who has followed them over the last 95 years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate the Donkin Brass Band on celebrating their 95 years together and wish them many more successful years filled with music.

RESOLUTION NO. 142

By: Mr. Alfie MacLeod (Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg)

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

Whereas Blaise Abbass and his partner, Janet, have brought a bygone era back to life with the showing of the Abbass Collection; and

Whereas Blaise and Janet spent months sorting through thousands of negatives to assemble a collection of photos that his father, John Abbass, captured of Sydney and the surrounding region between 1946 and the late 1960s; and

Whereas the Abbass Collection is on display at Sydney's Cape Breton Centre for Heritage and Science;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Blaise and Janet on the Abbass Collection and also thank them for sharing an important part of Cape Breton's history.

RESOLUTION NO. 143

By: Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the goal of the Nova Scotia Instructional Leadership Academy Program is to improve the capacity for school-based instructional leadership, aimed at increasing student learning and achievement in Nova Scotia public schools; and

Whereas Karen Wallace has been the principal of the Falmouth District School for the past seven years and has spent the last three years visiting classrooms, speaking with teachers, reviewing educational case studies and attending class to expand her knowledge on the effectiveness of instruction, creating a school-wide inclusive culture of high expectations, student achievement and best practices; and

Whereas Karen graduated as valedictorian of her class in the Nova Scotia Instructional Leadership Academy Program from the Nova Scotia Educational Leadership Consortium;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate her for achieving her Diploma in Instructional Leadership and wish her all the best.

RESOLUTION NO. 144

By: Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas books have been around for many hundreds of years and are still the preferred source of information for many people of all ages; and

Whereas Heather Drew recently retired as the librarian at Avon View High School, where she always made sure the shelves were stocked with her students' requests; and

Whereas before her time at Avon View High School, Ms. Drew was the librarian at the West Hants Middle School, where she shared her enthusiasm and love of books with the students every day;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Heather Drew on her retirement and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 145

By: Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Avon View High School girls' rugby team was in Summerside, P.E.I. in the Spring of 2014 to play at the 18th annual David Voyer Memorial Rugby Tournament, where the girls were victorious and returned home with the girls' championship banner; and

Whereas the three-day event hosted 23 Senior AAA teams from Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, with 12 male and 11 female teams; and

Whereas the Avon View Avalanche girls' rugby team also received a total team effort as all 20 players on hand contributed in the final game against the North Nova Gryphons from New Glasgow with a 12-0 victory in the championship game;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Avon View Avalanche girls' rugby team.

RESOLUTION NO. 146

By: Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas young Nova Scotia golfers have earned the Nova Scotia Golf Association's 2014 Murray Purcell Bursaries; and

Whereas local native Jake Lloy from the Avon Valley Golf and Country Club received a \$1,500 bursary as he was one of eight student golfers from the province to be awarded a bursary; and

Whereas Jake competed in many Nova Scotia Golf Association events with his experience as a golfer and is looking forward to continuing golfing at St. Thomas University, where he will be studying economics;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jake Lloy and wish him all the best at university and in what will certainly be a great future of golf.

RESOLUTION NO. 147

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Excellence in Nova Scotia Wines was established by Lieutenant Governor J.J. Grant to recognize the exceptional quality of locally sourced and produced wines; and

Whereas located on the Avon Peninsula in Hants County, Avondale Sky Winery has one of the oldest vineyards in the province and one of the newest wineries; and

Whereas Avondale Sky Winery: Martock 2012 was chosen as one of three best among all Nova Scotia wines submitted for consideration and was presented with the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Excellence in Nova Scotia Wines in July;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Avondale Sky Winery on this great achievement and wish them continued success in the winery business.

RESOLUTION NO. 148

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 there are many volunteers in Hantsport doing whatever they can to make this town what it is today, with the many recreational programs at the Hantsport Memorial Community Centre, Canada Day celebrations, Winter Carnival weekend, and the Hantsport Homecoming Concert; and

Whereas many volunteers volunteer their time as coaches for sports teams, maintenance, and activities at the community centre and found a way to keep the pool open this year, started a dog park, an outdoor rink, and countless other community events;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate all volunteers of the Town of Hantsport for their substantial amount of volunteer work and for showing that the true spirit of Hantsport shines through in its volunteers.

RESOLUTION NO. 149

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 Falmouth motorcycle racer Jacob Shaw O'Leary started his racing career, he was following in the footsteps of his brother and father, who are also accomplished racers, and they are all part of the O'Leary Brothers Racing Team; and

Whereas the O'Leary Racing Team wanted to accomplish their long-term goal, as 1998 was the last time that the East Coast brought home a national championship, and Jacob worked on his skills with all his family on dirt bikes in an oval at their home; and

Whereas Jacob proved to be a racer to be reckoned with, as he moved on in all rounds and in the final round won the Honda CBR250R National Series, which was a dream come true for the entire team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jacob Shaw O'Leary and the rest of the O'Leary Racing Team for bringing a national title back to the East Coast.

RESOLUTION NO. 150

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 Leesa White, the owner of Our Mother's Keepers in Windsor, launched her 100 Days for \$1,000 campaign at her store last Spring; and

Whereas at the end of the 100 days Leesa had raised over \$1,400 for the Hants County branch of the SPCA with the assistance of local businesses, artisans, and residents, who also donated items toward the fundraising efforts; and

Whereas as part of the deal, Leesa shed her long curly locks with a buzz cut by One on One Hairstyling owner Amanda Brown Burgess;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Leesa White for her selfless fundraising efforts to help fund the local SPCA and wish her all the best.

RESOLUTION NO. 151

By: Chuck Porter, MLA (Hants West)

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

Whereas this summer the West Hants Minor Baseball Association was proud of their Windsor Knights Midget AA baseball team; and

Whereas the provincial gold medal game was held in Shelburne with the Windsor Knights competing against the Pictou County Albions, the game going three extra innings to break a tie, with the Knights claiming victory 7-6; and

Whereas the Windsor Knights went on to represent Nova Scotia at the Atlantic Championships in Prince Edward Island;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Windsor Knights Midget AA baseball team on capturing the provincial gold.

RESOLUTION NO. 152

By: Chuck Porter, MLA (Hants West)

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

Whereas both the Nova Scotia U-17 and U-15 boys captured bronze medals in July 2014 during the Canada Basketball Nationals held in Edmonton; and

Whereas Mitch Temprow, from Three Mile Plains, was a key player in the national tournament, scoring 13 points in their first game which resulted in an 80-69 win over Alberta; and

Whereas Mr. Temprow also squeaked in 3 points during the bronze medal game win over New Brunswick;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mitch Temprow on his team claiming the bronze medal during the Canada Basketball Nationals 2014, and wish him all the best in future games.

RESOLUTION NO. 153

By: Chuck Porter, MLA (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Canada Basketball Nationals were held in Edmonton during the month of July 2014, with several local students participating on the U-15 and the U-17 teams; and

Whereas Maia Timmons of Hantsport played on the U-15 girls team, scoring 5 points in their opening game, 15 points in game 2, and 13 points in game 3; and

Whereas on day 5 of the tournament, Ms. Timmons continued her streak, scoring 18 points during their 68-50 win over Alberta, and 12 points as the team beat out New Brunswick to finish in 5th place;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Maia Timmons on her outstanding basketball abilities during the Canada Basketball Nationals 2014, and wish her all the best in future games.

RESOLUTION NO. 154

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Justice)

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

Whereas a number of Halifax families gathered on Sunday, October 5th, under the name of Basket Brigade of Halifax, to anonymously coordinate an act of generosity to help feed 100 people in need this Thanksgiving; and

Whereas the Basket Brigade of Halifax partnered with the Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank in Halifax to accept cash and food donations; and

Whereas The Basket Brigade has helped children and families learn about the value of giving and to start thinking about others at a young age;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Basket Brigade of Halifax for their act of generosity, and wish the families of this initiative good health and success in the future.