



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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Second Session

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 382, VETS Canada: Work - Recognize, The Premier.....	1368
Vote - Affirmative.....	1368
Res. 383, EECD - Sch. Staff: Student Protection - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey.....	1369
Vote - Affirmative.....	1369
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:	
No. 51, Motor Vehicle Act, Hon. G. MacLellan .....	1370
No. 52, Consumer Protection Act and Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act, Hon. M. Furey.....	1370
No. 53, Veterans Appreciation Act, Hon. J. Baillie .....	1370

No. 54, Healthy Living Tax Credit for Adults Act, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	1370
No. 55, Helping Seniors Stay at Home Act, Mr. T. Houston.....	1370
No. 56, Strengthening and Preservation of Community Buildings Act, Mr. L. Harrison .....	1370
[GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:]	
Res. 384, Springhill Mine Disaster (23/10/1958): Miners Memories - Honour, Hon. Z. Churchill.....	1371
Vote - Affirmative.....	1371
NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 385, Springhill Bump (23/10/1958): Victims - Remember, Hon. J. Baillie .....	1372
Vote - Affirmative.....	1372
Res. 386, Civillo, Cpl. Nathan: Death of - Tribute, Hon. M. MacDonald .....	1372
Vote - Affirmative.....	1373
Res. 387, MacSween, Mr. Robin: Inspire Award for Service - Congrats., Ms. P. Arab .....	1373
Vote - Affirmative.....	1374
Res. 388, Civillo, Cpl. Nathan/Vincent, WO Patrice: Death of - Tribute, Hon. J. Baillie .....	1374
Vote - Affirmative.....	1374
Res. 389, Nat. Res. - Firewood Suppliers: Min. - Meet, Hon. S. Belliveau .....	1375
Res. 390, Russell, Bruce: Tax Court (Can.) - Appt., Hon. K. Regan.....	1375
Vote - Affirmative.....	1376
Res. 391, First Responders - Thank, Mr. L. Harrison .....	1376
Vote - Affirmative.....	1377
Res. 392, Manuel, Melburne & Marilyn - Anniv. (60 <sup>th</sup> ), Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....	1377
Vote - Affirmative.....	1378
Res. 393, Streeter, Pamela: RBC Entrepreneur Award - Congrats., Mr. B. Jessome.....	1378
Vote - Affirmative.....	1378
Res. 394, Hungarian Revolution: Courage - Remember, Mr. J. Lohr .....	1378
Vote - Affirmative.....	1379
Res. 395, Fitzpatrick, John S.: Weldon Award - Congrats., Hon. L. Diab .....	1379
Vote - Affirmative.....	1380

Res. 396, Wear Well Garments: Mobius Award - Congrats., Mr. T. Houston.....	1380
Vote - Affirmative.....	1381
Res. 397, Blenkhorn, Ms. Joey: Singing Competition - Well Wishes, Ms. L. Zann.....	1381
Vote - Affirmative.....	1381
Res. 398, MacLeod, Alyssa: Achievements - Congrats., Ms. P. Eyking.....	1382
Vote - Affirmative.....	1382
Res. 399, Main-à-Dieu Commun. Dev. Assoc. - Anniv. (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Mr. A. MacLeod (by Mr. E. Orrell).....	1382
Vote - Affirmative.....	1383
Res. 400, Hazzard, Pastor Keith: Homelessness Work - Appreciation Express, Hon. P. Dunn.....	1383
Vote - Affirmative.....	1384
Res. 401, Regan, Hon. Geoff: Inspire Award for Service - Congrats., Ms. P. Arab.....	1384
Vote - Affirmative.....	1385
Res. 402, Collins, Julie: Literacy Prog. Award - Congrats., Mr. E. Orrell.....	1385
Vote - Affirmative.....	1385
Res. 403, Weir Ross, Jennifer: Pictou Co. Sports Heritage Hall of Fame - Congrats., Ms. K. MacFarlane.....	1386
Vote - Affirmative.....	1386
Res. 404, Bethany United Parish: Fall Fair - Congrats., Hon. L. Diab.....	1386
Vote - Affirmative.....	1387
Res. 405, Henderson, Terry: Umpire Assoc. Life Membership Award - Congrats., Mr. L. Harrison.....	1387
Vote - Affirmative.....	1388
Res. 406, Marsh, Chris/Boutilier, Mitchell: Heroism - Congrats., Mr. E. Orrell.....	1388
Vote - Affirmative.....	1388
Res. 407, MacDonald, Dwaine/Trinity Maintenance Solutions: Efficiency N.S. Award - Congrats., Mr. T. Houston.....	1389
Vote - Affirmative.....	1389
<b>ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS:</b>	
No. 166, Prem. - Public Security: Enhancement - Plans, Hon. J. Baillie.....	1389
No. 167, Prem. - Corporate Welfare: Promise - Breach Explain, Hon. M. MacDonald.....	1391
No. 168, Prem. - Public Bldgs. Security Expert - Details, Hon. J. Baillie.....	1393
No. 169, Prem. - Apprenticeships: Creation - Plans, Hon. M. MacDonald.....	1396

No. 170, Environ.: Boat Hbr. - Private Testing, Mr. T. Houston.....	1398
No. 171, Fin. & Policy Bd.: Tax Review - Details, Hon. M. MacDonald .....	1400
No. 172, Health & Wellness - Oncotype DX Test: Decision - Time Frame, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	1402
No. 173, Nat. Res. - Firewood: Accessibility - Plan, Hon. S. Belliveau .....	1403
No. 174, Justice: Miller Case - Update, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1405
No. 175, Mun. Affs. - Prov./Mun. Collaboration: Improvement - Actions, Mr. J. Lohr .....	1405
No. 176, Nat. Res. - Lays Lake Outdoor Assoc.: Signs - Consultation, Mr. L. Harrison .....	1406
No. 177, Health & Wellness: N.S. Nurses - Adequacy, Hon. David Wilson .....	1407
<b>GOVERNMENT BUSINESS:</b>	
<b>PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:</b>	
No. 50, Halifax Regional Municipality Charter	
Hon. M. Furey.....	1408
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1409
Hon. David Wilson .....	1410
Mr. E. Orrell.....	1411
Mr. I. Rankin.....	1412
Mr. K. Irving.....	1413
Hon. M. Furey.....	1414
Vote - Affirmative.....	1414
<b>PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR SECOND READING:</b>	
No. 44, Victoria Hall Continuation Act	
Ms. P. Arab .....	1414
Hon. M. MacDonald .....	1415
Ms. P. Arab .....	1416
Vote - Affirmative.....	1416
<b>[PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:]</b>	
No. 49, Economic Development in Nova Scotia Improvement Act	
Hon. M. Samson .....	1417
Hon. J. Baillie .....	1419
Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....	1425
Mr. L. Hines.....	1429
Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	1431
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1433
Hon. M. Samson .....	1433
Vote - Affirmative.....	1439
ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Fri., Oct. 24 <sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.....	1440

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):

Res. 408, Turnbull, Ms. Blayre - Nat'l. Hockey Team: Selection - Congrats., Hon. P. Dunn.....	1441
Res. 409, Nix, Jim: CGSA Award - Congrats., Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	1441
Res. 410, Osborne, Courteney/Timberlea Tundra Pounders: Success - Wish, Mr. I. Rankin .....	1442



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2014**

**Sixty-second General Assembly**

**Second Session**

**2:00 P.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

**DEPUTY SPEAKER**

Ms. Margaret Miller

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

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege today, and in accordance with Rule 29(2) I have given you notice of my intention to rise on this question of privilege.

Tuesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, during Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers, the Premier stated, “. . . I want to remind this House that in 2006 it was the New Democratic Party that voted against a national child care plan that would have dealt with this issue not only for this province but indeed the entire country.”

However, Mr. Speaker, the vote on the national child care plan the Paul Martin Government introduced was held in the Spring of 2005, not 2006 - and I will table a number of documents that I'm going to refer to at the end of this intervention.

The program in question was outlined in Section 28 of Bill C-43. There were two recorded votes held on that budget which contained the national child care plan. The recorded vote on second reading was held on May 19, 2005, and the vote on third reading was held on June 16, 2005. As the record of both recorded votes clearly shows, the NDP voted in favour of Bill C-43 and the national child care program, not against, as the Premier alleged in his statements on Tuesday, and again yesterday.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, in the 2006 NDP platform the NDP not only promised to maintain the previously introduced national child care plan but also promised to enshrine it in legislation and increase the amount of funding provided to provinces by \$250 million annually.

Mr. Speaker, to push this point even further, the 2006 federal budget, which saw the Harper Government replace the national child care program with the national child care benefit, did not have a recorded vote due to a mix-up, but the NDP, along with the Liberal Party, had indicated that they would be voting against that budget. Needless to say, it didn't matter because the Conservatives, with the support of the Bloc Québécois, already had enough votes to pass that budget. Therefore, there can be no question that the manner in which the member presented the material is misleading and stands in direct contrast to the actual substance and information presented in the documents I will table.

Mr. Speaker, in 1999, in a report from the United Kingdom Joint Committee on Parliamentary Privilege, delineating a number of categories of conduct which, while not exhaustive, would constitute contempt of Parliament, they include: "deliberately attempting to mislead the House or a committee (by way of statement, evidence, or petition);" That comes from the U.K. Joint Committee on Parliamentary Privilege, First Report, 1999.

As recorded in *O'Brien and Bosc*, ". . . the following elements have to be established when it is alleged that a Member is in contempt for deliberately misleading the House: one, it must be proven that the statement was misleading; two, it must be established that the Member making the statement knew at the time that the statement was incorrect; and three, that in making that statement, the Member intended to mislead the House." That comes from *O'Brien and Bosc*, chapter 3, footnote 128.

Mr. Speaker, on the first point, on the first requirement as shown, there can be no question that the statements made by the Premier were indeed misleading. On the second, the Premier had access to the voting record in the House of Commons on the national child care plan as the record is part of the public record. And, three, finally the member used this information within his question in such a way as to mislead the House of Assembly.

The issue of affordable child care for Nova Scotians is fundamental to the ability of young families to live, work and raise a family in our province. For the Premier to present

false information in order to avoid debating the issue is a disservice to this House, its members and the people of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that the evidence I have presented supports the case of deliberately misleading the House and as such I would ask that you put the question to the House. Beauchesne states, “A genuine question of privilege is a most serious matter and should be taken seriously by the House.” That comes from Beauchesne, Page 12. On the face of it, this matter would constitute a contempt of the House of Assembly.

With the above explanation, if you, Mr. Speaker, find that I have raised a *prima facie* question of privilege, I shall move the following motion:

Be it resolved that the statements made by the Premier during Question Period on October 21, 2014, were misleading, that the member shall apologize to the House of Assembly and that his statements be stricken from the record.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I'll take that point of privilege under advisement and report back to the House at my earliest convenience.

The honourable Premier.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, at no time have I intended to mislead this House. Contrary to what has been presented to you, it is not my habit to follow the voting pattern of the New Democratic Party, but let me be certain, what I said in this House was that in 2006 the New Democratic Party voted against a government that was going to institute a national child care program and by doing so they killed that national child care program.

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

#### **PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

#### **PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

#### **TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

#### **STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

#### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.



THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, may I do an introduction before I read my notice of motion?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

THE PREMIER: I'd like to draw the attention of the members to the east gallery where we have with us Jim Lowther. Jim is a founder and national president of Veterans Emergency Transition Services, called VETS Canada. With Jim is Scott Gaddes. Scott is the team lead here in the province for Boots on the Ground, and that is the program here in Nova Scotia that supports VETS. I would ask them to stand and receive a warm welcome from all members of the House of Assembly. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 382**

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

Whereas VETS Canada, or Veterans Emergency Transition Services, was started four years ago as a grassroots group providing help to homeless veterans; and

Whereas VETS Canada is now the third largest of all volunteer veterans organizations in the country and its teams across the nation have helped hundreds of veterans from coast to coast; and

Whereas Boots on the Ground is a VETS Canada program that sends teams into shelters to find and help veterans get off the streets and back on their feet;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the work of VETS Canada and thank them for their dedication to helping veterans across our country.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

[Standing Ovation]

The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

**RESOLUTION NO. 383**

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

Whereas student safety is a priority for all school staff, every day of the school year; and

Whereas the heightened awareness to student safety during the last 48 hours has resulted in quick and caring response from all of our school staff; and

Whereas in some schools, staff have placed their schools in a “controlled access” or “hold and secure” mode, as a precaution to protect our students;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate and show appreciation for the actions taken by our school staff in order to protect our students.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hants East.

MS. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, may I make introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. MILLER: Thank you. I would like to ask all members of this House to please direct their attention to the east gallery where we have several guests present. I'll read off their names and ask that they please stand to receive the warm welcome of the House. The first is Andrew Murray, the CEO of MADD Canada; next is Susan MacAskill, she is a

chapter services manager of Atlantic Canada; Jeanne Bourgeois, chapter member for Inverness South; Brian Ward, director of Highway Engineering Services; Jennifer Mark, road safety coordinator; and Stephanie Turner, senior program coordinator.

These wonderful people are all here in support of the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal's bill this morning that is making amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act that will save lives in Nova Scotia. I would please ask this House to give them a warm round of applause. (Applause)

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 51 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 293 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Motor Vehicle Act. (Hon. Geoff MacLellan)**

**Bill No. 52 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 92 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Consumer Protection Act, and Chapter 6 of the Acts of 2006, the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act. (Hon. Mark Furey)**

**Bill No. 53 - Entitled an Act Respecting Number Plates on the Vehicles of Veterans. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)**

**Bill No. 54 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 217 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Income Tax Act, to Provide a Healthy Living Tax Credit for Adults. (Hon. Christopher d'Entremont)**

**Bill No. 55 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 419 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Senior Citizens' Financial Aid Act. (Mr. Tim Houston)**

**Bill No. 56 - Entitled an Act to Provide Funding for the Maintenance and Preservation of Community Buildings. (Mr. Larry Harrison)**

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, with the unanimous consent of the House, could you revert to the order of business, Government Notices of Motion, for one motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

**GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

**RESOLUTION NO. 384**

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

Whereas today, in the shadow of yesterday's horrific events in the nation's capital, we pause to remember a tragedy closer to home, the Springhill Bump of 1958; and

Whereas an earthquake-like tremor hit the mine at 8:06 p.m. 56 years ago today, leaving miners trapped in the dust and the dark more than four kilometres from the mine's entrance and more than a kilometre underground; and

Whereas the Bump of 1958 is the largest ever to occur in North American mining, an event that devastated the people and the sense of community of the quiet Cumberland County town;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House honour the memory of the 75 miners who died in the Springhill mine disaster and give thanks for the rescue of 99 miners through the valiant efforts of draegermen and fellow miners and the good people of Springhill.

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.

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 385**

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

Whereas on 8:06 p.m. on October 23, 1958, the No. 2 Colliery just outside the Town of Springhill was struck by an underground shift in the mine, known as a bump; and

Whereas of 174 miners working in the mine at the time of the bump, 75 perished and 99 were trapped; and

Whereas draeger teams and teams of barefaced miners worked around the clock to rescue the trapped miners, it wasn't until November 1<sup>st</sup> that the last man was rescued from the No. 2 Colliery;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly pause to remember the 75 lives lost in the Springhill bump, and the bravery of the many who worked to save their fellow miners.

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 Interim Leader of the New Democratic Party.

**RESOLUTION NO. 386**

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

Whereas Corporal Nathan Cirillo, a young man, a reservist from Hamilton, Ontario, with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada regiment, was shot and killed yesterday in a cowardly attack in our nation's capital; and

Whereas Corporal Nathan Cirillo is fondly remembered by family and friends as a proud Canadian who wanted to serve his country; and

Whereas Corporal Nathan Cirillo leaves behind a young son, grieving family and friends, and a nation shocked and saddened by yesterday's events;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly send our most heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Corporal Nathan Cirillo, and ask that all Canadians resolve to stand together to protect the democratic values that make our country so respected around the world.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Fairview-Clayton Park.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 387**

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

Whereas Robin MacSween works as both a ground ambulance and clinical support paramedic with Emergency Health Services, and also as an advanced care paramedic in the QEII Emergency Department; and

Whereas Mr. MacSween is a single parent to three wonderful children, he balances both a busy work schedule and rich family life, and is also an active volunteer - he is a paramedic preceptor mentoring new paramedics, providing guidance and support as they start field training as students and volunteers at his children's preschool and with St. John Ambulance as medical first responder and volunteers within the schoolTex system, educating children on safety and giving ambulance and equipment tours; and

Whereas Mr. Robin MacSween is this year's winner of the Inspire Award for Service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. MacSween for all his hard work and dedication, and wish him continued success in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 388**

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

Whereas Corporal Nathan Cirillo was murdered yesterday while standing on guard at the National War Memorial; and

Whereas Corporal Cirillo's death came just two days after Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent was murdered in St. Jean-sur-Richelieu; and

Whereas members of the Canadian Forces risk their lives to protect freedom not only on foreign battlegrounds, but here on home soil;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly pay tribute to the lives of Corporal Nathan Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent, and thank all members of the Canadian Forces for their commitment to freedom and their dedication to our country.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**RESOLUTION NO. 389**

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

Whereas the Minister of Natural Resources stated on October 9, 2014, that firewood used by Nova Scotians does not qualify as an energy source; and

Whereas the Liberal Government promised in their election campaign to keep energy costs down; and

Whereas many Nova Scotians, especially in rural Nova Scotia, use wood to heat their homes to reduce their power bills;

Therefore be it resolved that the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development encourage the Minister of Natural Resources to meet with firewood suppliers to get a better understanding of how the use of firewood can heat a home and reduce power bills.

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 Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

**RESOLUTION NO. 390**

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

Whereas McInnes Cooper Halifax partner Bruce Russell, QC, has been named as one of five private-sector tax lawyers to the Tax Court of Canada Bench and Bar Committee; and

Whereas Bruce's three-year term will mark the first time that a private sector lawyer from Atlantic Canada has been named to the committee, which assists with



dialogue between the court and the taxation bar regarding proceedings and practices before the court; and

Whereas Bruce, who is one of three Atlantic Canadian lawyers named in Canada's leading 2013 ranked litigation lawyers, is perennially listed in *Best Lawyers Canada*, is a lifetime governor of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, has served on the boards of governors of Dalhousie University and Halifax Grammar School and is currently a governor of the Atlantic Theology School;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Bruce Russell on his outstanding accomplishments and offer best wishes on his national role of service to the Tax Court of Canada.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 391**

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

Whereas the tragic events of yesterday and today leave us heartbroken and disappointed, yet we must remember it is events like this that show us the endurance of the human spirit; and

Whereas we wish to pay tribute to the brave men and women who go to work each day to protect public safety; and

Whereas the bravery of the first responders and the heroic actions of Kevin Vickers, Sergeant-at-Arms, make us proud to be a part of this democracy;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly give thanks to our selfless first responders and commend them for putting their lives on the line each day to protect us.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

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

### **RESOLUTION NO. 392**

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 anniversaries are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of two individuals united as one; and

Whereas it was once said that a marriage anniversary is a celebration of love, trust, partnership, tolerance and tenacity, but the order varies for any given year; and

Whereas on November 27, 2014, Mr. Melbourne and Mrs. Marilyn Manuel of Seabright, Nova Scotia, will celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Manuel on this remarkable milestone in their life together and wish them many more happy years.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Lucasville.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 393**

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

Whereas Pamela Streeter is the owner and executive director of Creative Kids Education Centre and Birch Hills Academy in Hammonds Plains; and

Whereas the RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards recognize female business owners from across Canada who make impressive and substantial contributions to the local, Canadian and global economy; and

Whereas out of 4,000 nominees, Ms. Streeter has been named a finalist for the 2014 RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards for the Micro-Business Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ms. Streeter on the extraordinary honour of being a nominee for such a prestigious award.

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. 394**

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

Whereas October 23<sup>rd</sup> marks the 58<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution; and

Whereas the revolution was a spontaneous nationwide revolt against the government of the Hungarian People's Republic and its Soviet-imposed policies that lasted from October 23 to November 10, 1956; and

Whereas when the Soviet forces crushed the revolution, over 2,500 Hungarians had been killed in the fight for freedom and 200,000 Hungarians fled their homeland as refugees;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly remember the courage of the Hungarian people as they celebrate their national holiday today.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 395**

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

Whereas the Dalhousie Law Alumni Association, in support of the School of Law, presents an annual award recognizing alumni who have made outstanding contributions to the community of the legal profession; and

Whereas John S. Fitzpatrick was this year's recipient of the Weldon Award for Unselfish Public Service; and

Whereas his 30-year legal career and continuous volunteer commitments have culminated in being officially recognized for this noteworthy public service merit;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Fitzpatrick on this remarkable achievement and wish him the very best in all of his future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Pictou East.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 396**

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

Whereas WearWell Garments Limited, under the direction of president and chief operating officer Stirling MacLean, has been awarded the Best Small Business in Nova Scotia Award from the RRFB's Mobius Award of Environmental Excellence; and

Whereas in addition to everyday recycling and composting, the staff of WearWell Garments recycle 100,000 pounds of fabric per year, creating zero waste; and

Whereas an innovative process re-fibres that fabric into a durable material commonly used for car mats, proving once again the old adage that "everything old is new again";

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate WearWell Garments for their forward thinking and their stewardship of the environment.

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. 397**

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

Whereas 13-year-old Truro resident Joey Blenkhorn won the New Brunswick Ex 2014 Young Talent Search for singing; and

Whereas Joey will now be heading to New York to compete in the New York Dream Night Talent Search; and

Whereas a win in New York could help launch Joey in her future singing career;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Joey Blenkhorn on her hard work and determination to become a successful singer, and wish her the best of luck in the Big Apple.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, may I have permission to make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. EYKING: I'd like to draw everyone's attention to the east gallery, I'd like to introduce Alyssa MacLeod and her dad, Richard. Alyssa is Ms. Canada International for

2014. She is also my friend, my country neighbour and attended school with my kids, so if you could all give her a warm welcome, please. (Applause)

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

### **RESOLUTION NO. 398**

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

Whereas Alyssa MacLeod of Boularderie has been named Miss Canada International 2014; and

Whereas Ms. MacLeod is a former patient and ambassador of Shriner's Hospital for Children in Montreal and has overcome and embraced challenges that she has faced; and

Whereas Ms. MacLeod will use her role as Ms. Canada International 2014 to deliver her message, The Power of Perseverance, encouraging children with disabilities to reach their dreams;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly recognize the achievements of Ms. MacLeod and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 399**

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

Whereas the Main-à-Dieu Community Development Association is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; and

Whereas the Main-à-Dieu Community Development Association is a very active association in the community that has made the Coastal Discovery Centre a mainstay of the area; and

Whereas the Main-à-Dieu Community Development Association is keeping Main-à-Dieu a very viable community by bringing all the residents together;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Main-à-Dieu Community Development Association on celebrating their 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

Just before we get to the honourable member for Fairview-Clayton Park, I'll take a second to remind everybody that resolutions are to be no more than three short, clear, concise statements in the "Whereas" section and one "Therefore". The honourable member's previous resolution contained five sentences in one "Whereas" so I'll give her a second to edit that one and we'll come back to her.

The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 400**

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

Whereas Pictou County resident Pastor Keith Hazzard has made it his life's work to support the needy in his community; and

Whereas New Glasgow residents are fortunate to have Pastor Hazzard as the executive director of both the Life Shelter and Pictou County Roots for Youth Society; and



Whereas through Pastor Hazzard's diligence in his dual role with these two important facilities, he does provide a safe and welcoming place for those individuals who find themselves unable to go home or indeed have no home to go to;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate and express their appreciation for Pastor Keith Hazzard as he continues to address the needs of the homeless in our community of New Glasgow and its surrounding areas.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Fairview-Clayton Park.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 401**

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

Whereas the honourable Geoff Regan is the Member of Parliament for Halifax West who, before being elected in 1993, was the President of the Bedford Board of Trade, practised law and was an active member of his community, serving as chair of the Metro Food Bank and Beacon House; and

Whereas Mr. Regan works tirelessly for community issues such as education, environmental protection, health promotion and the community access program; and

Whereas the honourable Geoff Regan is this year's winner of the Inspire Award for Public Service;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Regan for all his hard work and dedication and wish him continued success in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 402**

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

Whereas *Cape Breton Post* reporter Julie Collins is going to be recognized for her work promoting a literacy program through the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board; and

Whereas Julie will receive the Adopt-A-Library Literacy Program Award from Lieutenant Governor J.J. Grant this week at Government House; and

Whereas Carmelita Cechetto-Shea, library consultant for the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board, said she has no hesitation in nominating Julie for this award as she was truly a crusader of promoting reading;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Julie on her award and remember her words, that reading is the key to lifelong learning.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Pictou West.

**RESOLUTION NO. 403**

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

Whereas Jennifer (Weir) Ross of Loch Broom was inducted into the Pictou County Sports Heritage Hall of Fame on October 18, 2014, for her shooting abilities from 1975 to 1980; and

Whereas Jennifer was a member of the Royal Canadian Air Cadet Corps and the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association, was the top junior shooter in Nova Scotia from 1975 to 1977, and placed first overall three times at different national events; and

Whereas in 1979, Jennifer qualified for the Royal Canadian Bisley Team that competed in England, where the team placed second but Jennifer placed first in a cadet shoot - setting a Canadian record - and received a special medal;

Therefore be it resolved that all Members of the Legislative Assembly join me in congratulating Jennifer (Weir) Ross on her induction into the Pictou County Sports Heritage Hall of Fame.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

**RESOLUTION NO. 404**

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

Whereas the parish of Bethany United hosted their 11<sup>th</sup> annual Fall Fair on an unseasonably warm and very sunny day on October 18<sup>th</sup>; and

Whereas the event provided shoppers with a myriad of items of home decor and crafts, a separate hall for a flea market, a room that quickly sold out of baked goods and preserves, and tables with jewellery and books; and

Whereas families could enjoy pumpkin painting, pony rides, and cake walks, and for lunch, fish or corn chowder, barbecue, and their famous gingerbread;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Bethany United and all the hard-working volunteers for creating a spectacular Fall Fair.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 405**

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

Whereas Brookfield resident Terry Henderson was recently presented with the Fundy Region Umpires Association Life Membership Award; and

Whereas Mr. Henderson was a director for the Fundy region for 42 years; and

Whereas Mr. Henderson has umpired for 52 years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Terry Henderson on receiving his Life Membership Award for his dedicated umpiring career and thank him for the many hours he has devoted to baseball in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 406**

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

Whereas in late July, Chris Marsh and Mitchell Boutilier noticed smoke coming from a neighbour's house; and

Whereas these young men rushed to the home of Lloyd Bona, and Mitchell began banging on the door while Chris ran for help; and

Whereas thanks to the efforts of Chris and Mitchell, Mr. Bona was alerted to the fire and fled his house;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate these two heroic young men who did the right thing to help a neighbour.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Pictou East.

**RESOLUTION NO. 407**

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

Whereas Dwaine MacDonald founded Trinity Maintenance Solutions in 2006 because medical issues made it impossible to continue in his job; and

Whereas he brought a fledgling company of three employees to 69 full-time jobs in three locations by helping low-income people make their homes more energy efficient and affordable; and

Whereas the success of Trinity Maintenance Solutions was recently validated when Efficiency Nova Scotia presented them a Bright Business Award for outstanding delivery of services, solutions or education related to energy efficiency;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dwaine MacDonald and Trinity Maintenance Solutions on earning this prestigious award.

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 2:52 p.m. We will conclude at 3:52 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**PREM. - PUBLIC SECURITY: ENHANCEMENT - PLANS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier, and it's on the topic of public security. Just before I ask it, I do want to take a moment in light of the events in downtown Halifax today and commend the Halifax Regional Police Service, our peace

officers, and all those who were involved in handling a security threat downtown and bringing it to a resolution where an individual was arrested. I'm sure all members of the House are thankful for the work that they did here in our own capital city this morning. (Applause)

We all watched in shock yesterday at the tragic events that unfolded in our nation's capital only to find out today we have a threat right here in Halifax. The tragic events in Ottawa and the threat today don't stop us, however, from doing our job. The work of government goes on. In so doing, we reaffirm our unbending commitment to our democratic institutions.

I would like to ask the Premier, could he update the House and all Nova Scotians about any enhanced plans that are in place in light of today's events to protect public safety?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I also want to recognize the tremendous work done by law enforcement personnel across our province. The events of yesterday in Ottawa, I think, caused all of us to pause and recognize we're at a moment in time - we're not sure how much things are going to change, but we know they're going to change for sure.

The response from Rear-Admiral Newton, who is in charge of Maritime Forces Atlantic, has been ongoing. They have put in place protocols to ensure that military personnel, as they move about doing their daily routine, can do so in a safe, secure environment. I want to thank the public who have been notifying law enforcement officers whenever something looks out of the ordinary. The response that we've seen today tells us all that protocols put in place will ensure the safety of the citizens of this province.

For those who work for government and government institutions, we have put government buildings under the leadership of Deputy Minister Darrow. They will be doing a complete security check of all buildings that fall under the purview of the Province of Nova Scotia.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Premier for that answer. Halifax is a port city. We have an important airport, of course the seaport. Many people call on Halifax to gain entry to our country. My question to the Premier is, will he advise the House, and through the House all Nova Scotians, on any enhanced measures he's aware of to protect public safety through our international airport and seaport?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I do want to acknowledge that there is and has been no imminent threat that we're hearing from Ottawa regarding directly to military bases here or indeed the province. I spoke to Rear-Admiral Newton - that would fall under his leadership - and at this moment in time they're doing as they have been doing with all of

the aspects related to the port, ensuring the safety of not only the personnel on that base, but indeed the area.

We, as a province, have leaned on the great leadership of Rear-Admiral Newton and the Canadian Armed Forces when it comes to depending and defining the level of security required in our harbour.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Premier's answer. All Nova Scotians and all Canadians are mourning the tragic deaths of soldiers Patrice Vincent and Nathan Cirillo and looking to ensure that our Canadian Forces themselves are protected. Halifax itself is home to a major naval base and major army installations, among others.

I'd like to ask the Premier, can he advise the House and all Nova Scotians of any enhanced measures he can share to protect the members of the Canadian Army, the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force who are serving here in Halifax?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I think there's no doubt that all of us, first of all, want to commend the tremendous work being done by members of the Canadian Armed Forces. As the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party would know, the direction that those members of the Forces would follow would be from their command. In this case, Rear-Admiral Newton would be in charge of not only the Navy, but indeed the entire military operation here in Atlantic Canada.

It has been recently put out that members of the Forces have been given the option to report to work in civilian clothes. They've been encouraged out and about and when they're in military uniform to use caution. We know that access to military bases has been enhanced, but again, they feel, through the support that they have, that the risk to their personnel and to Nova Scotians is low. We can all rest assured that citizens are doing their part to alerting military personnel and law enforcement when things are out of the ordinary.

Again, one of the things I know my family was grateful for, and I am sure all members' families in this House, is once we heard word this morning that there was an incident going on in the proximity of downtown, the law enforcement responded in such a professional and quick manner and the protocols in place worked to protect all of us.

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

#### **PREM. - CORPORATE WELFARE: PROMISE - BREACH EXPLAIN**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Premier. In last year's election, the Premier and his Liberal Party promised Nova Scotians that if they were elected government they would end corporate welfare. I'll table this shortly - it's the section on economic development in the Liberal Party platform.



Yesterday, the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism in the Liberal Government announced new tax breaks for large corporations, amounting to \$30 million. My question to the Premier is, why has the Premier decided to break his promise to end corporate welfare?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. This government did exactly what it said it was going to do. It was going to take the chequebook out of the hands of Cabinet. We all saw what happened when the previous government was in power and continued to write cheque after cheque after cheque with no job guarantee and no commitment to the people of the Province of Nova Scotia.

What the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism announced today was a tax initiative that would only be paid out to the manufacturing sector across this province after they had made the entire investment on their own right. The entire investment would be made by the company and only after that fact would they be eligible for this tax credit.

This is a direct incentive, Mr. Speaker, for manufacturing and export opportunities in this province, the very thing that this province needs to continue to do to drive good economic opportunity and to support the private sector who are making the investments - not like the previous government did, which was to continue to write blank cheques to anyone who asked.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal platform also said that in addition to ending corporate welfare, if elected government, what the Premier and his Party would do would be to refocus on small business.

This is Small Business Week. The announcement of the tax incentive yesterday, the tax giveaways, was to the large corporations. So I'm wondering if the Premier would explain what he has to say to the small business owners in the province who believed that he and his government would end corporate welfare, when in fact they see a new \$30 million tax give away to large corporations.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. What I would say to small business owners is that we responded very early in our mandate by increasing small business loans in conjunction with the Credit Union. We went from guaranteeing that commitment to small businesses from 75 per cent to 90 per cent across the board. Very early on in our mandate, we ensured that they had the capital to invest in their businesses and that they knew that their government was going to be a partner with them.

The Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism has been talking and will be introducing legislation that will provide an opportunity to young Nova Scotians

who can find an employer that will hire them. The program is called Graduate to Opportunities. It's a direct impact to keep more young people in this province.

We've invested in research opportunities in this province, we've broadened the apprenticeship opportunities - all those things are positive news for small businesses across this province. This government will continue to work with all employers to ensure that every possibility to keep young people in this province will be maintained.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the signature promise of that Premier and that party was to end corporate welfare in the province of Nova Scotia and refocus on small business. The announcement yesterday is a breaking of that signature promise. Mr. Speaker, I want to now ask the Premier through you, will he now admit that he never had any intention of ending corporate welfare when he criss-crossed this province from one end to the other in last year's election?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the Interim Leader of the New Democratic Party for the performance, but the reality is we've kept our commitment to the people of this province. We've invested in small businesses by ensuring that we provided capital that they could invest in their business and we help support them.

We're going to continue to do so, not only in this budget, but every budget as long we're given the privilege to be the government of this province. We're going to continue to provide opportunities for young Nova Scotians to work here, provide incentives to employers to hire young Nova Scotians by broadening apprenticeship opportunities. By investing in research opportunities, we'll continue to drive job growth.

But let me clear. Unlike the New Democratic Party, we will support large businesses. They will have to invest their own money. When this crowd was in power, they wrote a blank cheque. What we're doing is saying to the company, you invest on the tax side, we'll help.

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

#### **PREM. - PUBLIC BLDGS.: SECURITY EXPERT - DETAILS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're all appreciative of the work that our law enforcement officers, our peace officers, our Canadian Forces personnel and others have done all the time, certainly yesterday in Ottawa and today here in Halifax. Now it will soon be time for us to do our job, and that is to make sure they have the tools they need to do their job and updated and modernized protocols so they can do their job best and as safe as possible.

I understand the Premier has indicated that a security expert will be hired to look at the protocols around our public buildings, whether they are the ports or City Hall or even

Province House here. I'd like to ask the Premier to share with the House what he can about the work of this security expert.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, what I said was that, under the leadership of Deputy Minister Darrow, there will be a committee struck to look at the security of public buildings. They will determine who they need to rely on to bring in to have a look. We are, as the member would know, very fortunate here in Nova Scotia to have the Navy just down the street with a tremendous amount of resources. We are the home to H-Division here as part of our national police force.

We saw the response today by Halifax Regional Police Force when it came to the incident that took place. We are very blessed to have partners who have expertise inside of their respective institutions. We will be relying on all of them to be part of this ongoing look at security to ensure that people can go to and from work in this province in a safe manner. As we all know, 99.9 per cent of the time it is not an issue, but we need to be vigilant to ensure that the incidents that took place yesterday in Ottawa do not have the ability to be repeated in other parts our province or, indeed, the country.

MR. BAILLIE: Last week in Banff, Canada's Public Safety Minister actually talked about this new threat of home grown terrorism, where native-born Canadians will become radicalized and are a new and emerging threat in our country, and sure enough, we saw exactly that yesterday in our nation's capital. Mr. Speaker, often they are targeting public institutions. Downtown Halifax contains a number of our provincial public institutions, many of them, and literally thousands of Nova Scotians work in these places.

I will ask the Premier whether the security review done by the security expert will include a look at this new threat - although there is no existing threat today, Mr. Speaker, I hope not, anyway - this new threat of homegrown terrorism.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, They will have an opportunity to look at the security of the institutions. I am sure they will review the protocols that were used today in terms of when buildings were locked down to make sure how quickly we can become safe.

I was moved, quite frankly, today when I had the good fortune of watching the proceedings at Parliament Hill when I heard the Prime Minister, the Leader of the New Democratic Party and the Leader of the Liberal Party speak and talk about what took place yesterday in Ottawa. All of them, to a person, spoke about what an inclusive, multicultural country we have, how proud that all of us should be of that, and how proud I know all of us are of that. We should continue to recognize that what happened yesterday was a criminal act by a sick individual, and it should be directly pointed at that criminal act and that sick individual and not, Mr. Speaker, as it's being radicalized in some cases. It does none of us good to head in that direction.

I know I'm going beyond my time but it's important to say this. Today I went to our Office of Immigration because what took place in Halifax took place outside of their windows. There was an employee of our province of Muslim descent who wanted to tell me how proud he was to be Canadian, to be in this province, and how proud he is of his Muslim heritage. I couldn't tell you how proud I was to be able to tell him how proud I was to have him as a member of the Public Service, how proud I was in his ability to worship in this country as he sees fit. We will do everything we can to make sure that we continue to remain a vigilant, multi-cultural society, so that all of us can continue to worship the way we and our families feel most comfortable.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, in the interests of the great country that we have, let me just add, very briefly, to the Premier's remarks. We are all proud that Canada is a country of freedoms where anyone in the world can come and live, worship, and earn a living as they please. That is why so many millions of people around the world admire the country that we have built here in Canada, and here in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, the fact that we are all come together as one, whether it's on Parliament Hill yesterday and this morning or here in this Chamber today, is because we all want to make the case clearly, in a united way, whether you are in government or Opposition, that no one should jump to conclusions, that every Canadian citizen deserves full and equal protection under the law, including the presumption of innocence, that this country seeks out sick individuals, as the Premier put it, specifically that all of us, whether they are Muslim or Jewish or Christian or otherwise, can live in freedom.

Mr. Speaker, it's the very same point the Premier was making in his speech just a moment ago, and we are united on this, and that's why we are asking these questions about public safety.

My final question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. We have now had a test of the public communications system. Reaching members of the general public at times like this is very important, and I will ask the Premier if he is satisfied that our public communications in times like this is up to date and able to handle these situations, or whether they will also be included in a review by the security expert?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party for his remarks leading into the question. I want to assure him that the review will look at the institutions and the protocols that took place by government agencies. We all know that whenever an incident of any type happens to our large institutions, the Canadian military, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Halifax Regional Police Force, all of those are looked at in a way, in a review for best practices, a way we can improve, so I'm sure that will be part of it.

One of the things that happened yesterday as events in Ottawa were unfolding - and I think all of us should be proud of this - the level of collaboration that took place by the

police forces across this province, calling in chiefs of police in communities across the province and as being part of that the Canadian military.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a time when we saw the very best in our public institutions and how proud all of us should be, and I know the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party would echo this, how proud all of us should be at the way they responded, not with their eyes on the particular government or agency they are part of but in the common good of all of us. They did so and showed great leadership. That's why you saw what happened today end as quickly as I think any of us could have hoped for to do so.

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

### **PREM. - APPRENTICESHIPS: CREATION - PLANS**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Premier.

Under the Liberal Government, Nova Scotia has lost close to 9,000 jobs and no demographic has been harder hit than new graduates. The Ivany report states that one of the ways we can help keep young people from leaving our province is to create more apprenticeship opportunities. Mr. Speaker, I think we can all agree that ensuring that our young apprentices and graduates are given more opportunities is a good thing, and I know the Liberal Government is building on the work of the previous government in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the Premier is, can he tell the House what his plan is to create more apprenticeship opportunities for young Nova Scotians?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the honourable member would know that it is the responsibility of government to provide the apprenticeship opportunities. Why ratios have been changed - those changes are taking place in co-operation with the private sector. We are very proud of the fact that we're the only province that has been able to reach an agreement with the Province of Alberta when it comes to recognizing both educational requirements in our province, as well as recognizing that we will count the hours earned in our respective provinces.

I want to say to all young Nova Scotians who are working outside of this province today that we provided mobility under the legislation that is coming forward, that you don't have to stay in Alberta for five years, the two years you may be there will count back in this province and the hours will count back in this province.

But, let me be clear, it will be the private sector that will provide those opportunities, we will set the framework.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Premier for his answer.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to plans, the Liberal Government in Opposition, their members were very clear on the need for plans with targets. The now Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, for example, told *Metro News* on November 25, 2011, “From our perspective, if there are no targets in a plan, there’s no plan.” I’ll table that.

Mr. Speaker, just so this House can be assured that the Liberal Government does indeed have a real plan for apprenticeship, can the Premier tell this House what specific targets his government has set for new apprenticeship opportunities over the next three years.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, what I think the - I was going to call you the Leader (Laughter) What I think the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: He’d be a good leader.

THE PREMIER: He would be, Mr. Speaker. He would probably be the second-best one in the House. (Applause)

I know what he was referring to is that this government spent so much time trying to take credit for fictitious jobs while what we were looking for was to identify where the real jobs were.

What we’ve created is an opportunity for the private sector to broaden the possibilities for apprentices in this province. We’ve created an arrangement with Alberta that will allow the flow of young men and women who are working between our provinces. Just for the record in this House, all members will get an opportunity to see the next phase of that when the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education introduces a bill tomorrow.

MS. MACDONALD: Well, we’ll see how fictitious the jobs are when that government starts taking credit for jobs in the shipyards over the next few years.

On the heels of cutting the Graduate Retention Rebate, which imposed the largest tax increase in our province’s history on new grads, yesterday the Liberals announced a \$30 million tax break for big corporations. So my question for the Premier is this, why aren’t companies required to hire a specific number of apprentices and new grads in order to be eligible for the Liberal Government’s new large tax break for corporations?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I do want to clarify a few points she made. What happened - this government stopped the Graduate Retention Rebate program because it actually was not retaining people in this province. We did not claw it back; we stopped it. But the largest tax increase on all Nova Scotians was the 2 per cent hike that government did on the HST, which was \$400 million. (Interruption)

I hear someone yelling, why didn't you take it off? Mr. Speaker, it's because we're trying to pay the credit card that they ran up.

Let me assure the honourable member, Mr. Speaker, this government will not try to take credit for jobs that are created down at the Irving shipyard. We will put the credit exactly where it is, on the hardworking men and women. What we opposed was the blank cheque they wrote unnecessarily. That's what we oppose.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **ENVIRON.: BOAT HBR. - PRIVATE TESTING**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the Minister of Environment. Last week we learned that Paul Sobey, a well-respected and prominent businessman, had independent soil samples taken and tests conducted regarding concerns over the effluent that flows into Boat Harbour. Mr. Sobey offered these results to the minister, but he was told no. The government had tried to frustrate Mr. Sobey's efforts to get the samples to begin with and when he got them anyway and offered them to them, he was told that they were not interested and that they should instead give the results to Northern Pulp.

Mr. Speaker, I can't for the life of me figure out why the minister would not be interested in looking at these test results. So my question today is, why does the minister not believe the independent test results Paul Sobey generated are worthy of consideration?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for the question. Obviously it is an issue of great concern for the people in and around his riding.

With respect to the tests in question, I'm not aware of where and when Mr. Sobey brought those tests to the department. I am aware of some correspondence with another individual in the community involved with that same group of people conducting that testing work who did write to me advising me of these test results. I wrote the individual back, I believe, in September of this year, indicating they should bring those test results to our office in the Granton area of Pictou County.

I have checked with the office and have no record of that. Recently after the news reports where Mr. Sobey did bring to attention that there was apparently some indication that there was no interest in those test results, there was an individual from the Government of Nova Scotia that did follow up with Mr. Sobey, had conversations with him and advised him to bring that information of those test results to our attention. Of course, we would like to take a look at all information and evidence that is pertinent to the work that we are doing here. Thank you.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that answer. It is refreshing to hear him say that he is interested in information because certainly the perception is out there that the government is not really interested in talking to people, not interested in doing everything possible to remedy the Boat Harbour situation.

In fact, the government has refused to conduct public meetings with regard to Boat Harbour. They won't talk to people in the full community and it is unclear what actions or what interactions the minister has had with representatives from the mill. My question today is, has the minister ever visited Boat Harbour or personally met with senior mill management first-hand?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, since we are talking specifically about Boat Harbour, I would like to look back at the member's Facebook posts during the June incident that took place where he questioned my honourability with respect to dealing with this situation, yet only a few days later we achieved a historic agreement with the representatives of the Chief and Council of Pictou Landing First Nation. We brought to end a peaceful resolution, an historic resolution to the situation that was taking place at that time. It was an agreement that was favourable to the band council and the members of Pictou Landing First Nation. We certainly haven't been hiding from information or being accessible or available to comment on this.

In fact, right now there are ongoing community consultations taking place, open houses being hosted by the proponent, Northern Pulp, as well there will be additional consultation on the industrial approval - all work that's never been done, never been open and accessible by any government in the past that I'm aware of. This government, my department, under my watch, is being more accessible, more open and more transparent on this file than ever before.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I know the minister likes to take credit for historic and monumental agreements but we have seen no results.

My second supplementary will be for the Premier. I understand from his answer that he hasn't met with the mill people and he hasn't been to Boat Harbour.

Last week I asked the minister about the makeup of his Boat Harbour committee and whether the minister would consider adding a few more community voices to that committee to round it out. He said, no, there are no plans to change the composition of that, no plans to listen to the broader community. The minister certainly gives the impression that he has all the answers and he has his blinders on. He does not wish to speak to Nova Scotians. He won't talk to middle management. He has no interest in the results of tests that are brought forward so my question today for the Premier is, will the Premier intervene and give this file to someone who is willing to let the people be heard and collectively search for a solution to Boat Harbour?



THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to correct the honourable member in his answer. He suggested that the minister was opposed to letting people on the panel; exactly what he said was that that panel has been struck. There has been ongoing work that is down the road. It would set this process back.

We are committed to Pictou Landing and the people of Pictou County, and indeed all of Nova Scotia, to deal with this environmental challenge in Boat Harbour. Successive governments have turned away from it. I want to tell you, when that blockade was happening, no wonder Chief Paul was suspicious of governments, because of the way they were treated in Pictou Landing by Progressive Conservative Governments in the past, promise after promise.

The Minister of Environment did the right thing. He went to Pictou Landing, he met with Chief Paul, and he met with citizens of the community. He ended that blockade to ensure it happened in a peaceful way.

Let me add this: we made a commitment to the cleanup of Boat Harbour. Time after time, members from Pictou stand up in this House asking us to cut this tax, cut that tax, fix that classroom, clean up Boat Harbour, fix the mill. They can't have it both ways. They had better decide, Mr. Speaker, whether they're going to stand up and support a government that is working with the people of Pictou County or if they are only going to stand up for the self-interest of the Leader of their Party.

MR. SPEAKER: Just before we move on to the next question real quick, we're over a half hour in and we've just got five complete questions. So in anticipation of next week, when we're going to go down to 45 seconds for question and answer, we're roughly double here, so let's use the last half hour to practice our shorter questions.

The honourable Interim Leader of the New Democratic Party.

#### **FIN. & POLICY BD.: TAX REVIEW - DETAILS**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I'll be as quick as I can. My question through you is to the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board. Earlier this year, the minister ordered a tax review, but in the meantime, this government has continued to cut tax rebates or introduce new corporate tax breaks. For example, in April the minister announced the largest tax increase for young graduates in the history of our province when she eliminated the Graduate Retention Rebate.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the minister is, why did the minister spend \$100,000 to hire someone to do a tax review if she wasn't going to wait for the review to be complete before making changes to tax policy?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to answer the question about the tax review. The tax system that we have in place today is a complete mishmash or hodgepodge of tax policies over many, many years. It has never been reviewed. We're having a look at all the tax credits and all of the tax rates to see how we can best stimulate the economy or help Nova Scotians, essentially help make Nova Scotia a better place. Mr. Speaker, that is why we're doing a complete review of all the taxes.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her response. The Graduate Retention Rebate was worth \$50 million this year, and yesterday the government announced \$30 million in new corporate tax breaks for large corporations. Perhaps it was the minister's plan all along to use the Graduate Retention Rebate funding to support the government's new corporate tax giveaway.

My question for the minister is this, why does she think that big business deserves a tax break more than Nova Scotian graduates, who carry the highest student debt load in the country?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, the member is mistaken in her linking of any of these taxes and credits. The credit that was announced yesterday for business is a credit after they make a large investment on productivity, on improvements. It will only be offered when there has been that investment in capital equipment and improvements. That's very important.

Mr. Speaker, I know you're not looking for long answers this afternoon, but I would like to mention that on the Graduate Retention Rebate, it was clear that that was a program that did not work to do what it was set out to do. For that reason, we cannot afford to have a continued support for things that don't work. We've reinvested in other ways, which I know that you have heard about in the past. Thank you.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the Graduate Retention Rebate resulted in 1,600 more students being in the province between 2009 and 2011. So the tax review (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Interim Leader of the New Democratic Party has the floor.

MS. MACDONALD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The tax review the minister ordered is due at the end of the month, and students and graduates I talked to remain hopeful that the \$50 million dollars in funding that was so quickly snatched away from them will be reinvested in programs for young graduates and students.

Can the minister tell this House whether or not any of this funding will be reinvested in programs for students and young graduates?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note that the member opposite has again raised the question that came out of the briefing note, which I have raised a point of privilege about. She is again misleading the House in saying that the briefing note insinuates that there was a retention. The briefing note says very clearly that one might be mistaken to think that that was the number, but there were many other factors that led to that small number of students staying. It was not because our province had a Graduate Retention Rebate. I wish the member would read it again with her eyes wide open and pay attention to it. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - ONCOTYPE DX TEST: DECISION - TIME FRAME**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I recently met with representatives from Rethink Breast Cancer, an organization designed to raise awareness and support for young women with breast cancer. These women also met with the Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness that day to discuss plans to incorporate a test called Oncotype DX. It's a diagnostic test in our health care system. If he doesn't know exactly what that is, I'll table that as well.

Most women are overwhelmed when the time comes to decide on a course of treatment. This test can prevent needless chemotherapy. It has been approved and recommended by the Breast Disease Site Group in Nova Scotia and it's utilized in six other provinces. A decision on whether or not it will be utilized in Nova Scotia has been pending for more than a year.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Health and Wellness tell us when we can expect a decision on this test?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: What I can tell the honourable member is that currently, we have about 14 cancer drugs that are on our list that we are working through in order to be able to get those in the queue for the appropriate treatments. That's one of the ones that we will be looking at to be able to provide.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: It's not a drug. It's a test that can be done. Rethink Breast Cancer tells that Nova Scotia is lagging behind in offering this test to women. We are one of the last provinces in the country to make a decision on funding. It's estimated that 175 women in our province could benefit from Oncotype DX. The cost is minimal compared to forcing women to undergo costly and potentially unnecessary treatments.

There's an opportunity to save these patients from having to endure terrible side effects of chemotherapy and keep them in our hospitals, and it would of course benefit all sides on a savings as well as a better value of life for those members. Does the minister agree that this would be of great benefit to Nova Scotians?

MR. GLAVINE: I was thinking about a briefing that I just had on a breast cancer drug that extends life for anywhere from three to six months, and of course with young, with mothers, or with anybody, that still is important to be able to fund. The member opposite is talking about a test that can be beneficial and the deputy minister has brought this to my attention and it will be one of those areas that we will be taking a look at. I think on the prevention side, the more we can do, that indeed is good medicine.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the answer from the minister. A study that was conducted in B.C. found that there was a 30 per cent change in the original treatment recommendations once they used this diagnostic test. Ontario has funded this test since 2010 and has reported a success rate of 97 per cent. This could make the lives of women diagnosed with breast cancer much easier. In such a difficult time the health care system should have the resources it needs to most appropriately assign a treatment plan.

So my final question - comment - to the minister is, can he make a decision, sooner rather than later? I would like to see it by the end of this session, but of course I hope he does it as quickly as possible.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, this was a topic of discussion, in fact just yesterday when I went to the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Breast Cancer Action Nova Scotia, in Bedford. One of the areas that one of the research scientists who was there was telling me, in fact, is that a number of very young women in our province - 20- and 30-year-olds - are being diagnosed with breast cancer. The course of treatment is very, very significant for their futures, so I thank the member opposite for raising this issue and we'll see where we go with this in very short order.

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

#### **NAT. RES. - FIREWOOD: ACCESSIBILITY - PLAN**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. This issue of the shortage of firewood continues to grow and we all know it's getting colder. This month the minister acknowledged the issue but left the onus on the private sector, saying, "Our ability to interfere in these current market factors is limited." I will table that from Hansard - limited, but not non-existent.

My question to the minister is, what is his plan this winter if residents are unable to get access to affordable firewood to heat their homes?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question from the member, and I appreciate him tabling that quote because that is absolutely true. What we're faced with is a market condition that is resulting from a contraction of the forestry sector. There's enough wood out there to be cut; there are not enough cutting the wood. We've done what we can to support the situation by opening up Crown lands to tender for

firewood specifically and that resulted in mixed success. If the member opposite has any further suggestions about what the Crown can do to help this particular situation, we're all ears.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister to pay complete attention to the following second part here. The minister has said himself that he is concerned with the current shortage. The Bowater land was purchased for recreational use, as well as commercial use. We don't have a shortage of suppliers, we have a shortage - I repeat, a shortage - of access to Crown land when we need it the most.

My question to the minister is, will you give the existing firewood suppliers access to these lands to meet the demand, and soon to be a critical need, for firewood?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, we actually have opened up Crown land to tender, as I mentioned in my previous answer. That was met with mixed success. In the area that that member currently represents there was a tender issued, because of the lack of contractors that we have there were no bids placed on that tender.

We are very concerned about this issue and the impact on people in their homes and their ability to heat their homes. If the member does have any concrete advice or suggestions, solutions, to other ways the Crown can be involved in supporting this particular issue, again, we're all ears.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, in the words of the wood suppliers in the southern part of Nova Scotia, the tenders that the minister is referring to, that he issued this August, is simply garbage, or window dressing. It doesn't accommodate the need that I'm trying to address here today. We can't wait and see or have a wait-and-see approach when it comes to the health and safety of families; we just can't do that.

Mr. Speaker, my final question through you to the minister is, will he show leadership and commit to meeting with the wood suppliers to develop immediate access to land, a plan to address this wood shortage?

MR. CHURCHILL: We have opened up Crown lands in an attempt to increase supply for firewood in Nova Scotia. We have done that already; we did it months ago, Mr. Speaker, at a time when the wood needed to be cut to be dried. We are open to other suggestions in terms of how the Crown can be of use here but I need to note for the sake and clarity of the House, 80 per cent of the wood supply is coming off of private lands, not Crown. Crown's ability to impact this current situation is very limited.

If the member thinks that government policy is what is impacting this, then perhaps he can go back and explain to his people how the 125,000 green metric tonnes that he gave to Northern Pulp isn't actually impacting this situation.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

### **JUSTICE: MILLER CASE - UPDATE**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: My question is for the Minister of Justice. Although it happened 24 years ago, the Clayton Miller case continues to receive attention in his hometown of New Waterford and certainly right across the province. My question to the minister is, can the minister give us an update on this case?

HON. LENA DIAB: I thank the member opposite, a very important question. In terms of an update, I am currently awaiting the medical examiner's report. Thank you.

MR. MACMASTER: I think a lot of people were interested to see that development, to see the medical examiner doing a review. Can the minister give us some indication on timeline for when that report will be presented back to government?

MS. DIAB: For the benefit of my colleagues in the House and for the benefit of everyone listening, this is a very important issue for both Mr. and Mrs. Miller personally, as well as the entire Nova Scotia community. All indication that I have received is we are not going to rush this; we are going to ensure that we do everything that we can do to ensure that the medical examiner has everything within his purview to provide us with an accurate report. Thank you.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, certainly without any interest in rushing the minister or this activity along but I would like to ask how would the Justice Department respond to the medical examiner's review should it indicate that something took place that is different than what has been accepted to date?

MS. DIAB: It is a very important question and it is one that is definitely worth asking in the House. As the Minister of Justice I am not going to speculate as to what the medical examiner is going to provide in his report. When the report is finalized, the medical examiner will contact me and will also contact both Mr. and Mrs. Miller and explain his findings to them, and at that point we will then be in a position to make any further updates to the public. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

### **MUN. AFFS. - PROV./MUN. COLLABORATION: IMPROVEMENT - ACTIONS**

MR. JOHN LOHR: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Mr. Speaker, the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal Review and the consultative report summary have been published, and I know they are of great interest to every one of our constituencies. On Page 3 it says about the opportunities to improve collaboration: the committee found that there are significant opportunities for the province and its municipal

partners to work more collaboratively, and a lack of municipal involvement in the development of regulations has led to intense financial pressures on municipalities. I'll table that.

Mr. Speaker, my question is, what has the minister done to improve collaboration?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. Over the past year, I've travelled to 52 of the 54 municipalities and I've met individually with the mayors and councils in each and every one of those communities. This coming week, I'll complete all of the 54 municipalities when I meet with the Halifax Regional Municipality on Monday evening.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for that reply. I notice in this document, on October 31<sup>st</sup> there will be a meeting in Wolfville. In the Valley, we have an event called Halloween, and October 31<sup>st</sup> on a Friday night is not an especially auspicious time for consultation on this report.

This is of great interest in the Annapolis Valley. In Kings County alone, we have seven villages, three towns and the municipality. I'm wondering if the minister can comment, why was the night of October 31<sup>st</sup> in Wolfville selected for a meeting to review this?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I just want to advise my colleague that the meeting scheduled for Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup> is actually in the afternoon and not the evening.

MR. LOHR: I stand corrected. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **NAT. RES. - LAYS LAKE OUTDOOR ASSOC.: SIGNS - CONSULTATION**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Last week, I met with a group, the Lays Lake Outdoor Association. They were concerned about signs being put up in the Ship Harbour Long Lake area. They didn't know that these signs were going to be put up and they felt that they were left out of any consultation in the process.

I'm just asking the minister, has he any idea why they would not have been consulted, I guess, about lands that they have used for a number of years now?

MR. SPEAKER: Would the member clarify what kind of signs.

MR. HARRISON: The signs were - no more motorized vehicles on the land. That's ATVs, trucks, whatever.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'm not entirely sure offhand of the specifics around the signage there, but it very well might be that that is an area where those vehicles have not been permitted. I would have to consult with our parks and protected areas plan to see exactly what the plan is for that area and what is allowed and what isn't.

MR. HARRISON: Just one more question. Recently, a resident learned that the Dalhousie Faculty of Management is working in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Environment to organize a parks and protected areas forum for practitioners to discuss challenges and opportunities related to sustainable recreation.

Again, the Lays Lake Outdoor Association has not been consulted at all and was not invited for that consultation. I'm just wondering, is it possible for the minister to go and meet with that association to find ways in which they can use areas that they've used now for decades?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, engagement with the public and public groups is obviously very important to our government. It's very important for that process. This is the first I've heard of this particular organization and I'm very happy to take the member up on his offer to meet with those folks and discuss with them what their issues, questions and concerns are.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: N.S. NURSES - ADEQUACY**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, in April of this year, the Premier informed us that our province has plenty of nurses. He told *The Chronicle Herald* that Nova Scotia has a higher-than-average overall nurse-to-patient ratio and mused aloud, "The question becomes what more . . . do you want?" I'll table that from the Premier.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, does the minister agree with the Premier that there are enough nurses in Nova Scotia?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, at the present time we have moved over the past decade from about 61 per cent of our nurses staying in the province to a very healthy 90 per cent of all nurse graduates staying in the Province of Nova Scotia. This year we had a remarkable moment when the 83 graduates at CBU all became employed right here in our province.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, that's mostly because we have a competitive pay and benefit package for our health care workers, something I know this government doesn't support. Unfortunately, the minister's preoccupation with the amalgamation over



the last year has allowed a serious situation to get worse. The minister has agreed that  
(Interruptions)

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

MR. DAVID WILSON: The minister had agreed that there's a looming crisis and nursing shortage. I'd like to know from the minister, what is he doing about the shortage of nurses at the Roseway Hospital that has created an undue closure rate that I think all would agree is too much?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, Roseway is a bit of an exception in our province where it is nurses that are in shorter supply in that area, but we know that . . .

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

### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

### **PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 50.

### **Bill No. 50 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 50, an Act to Amend Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008, the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, be read for a second time.

Today I'm pleased to rise in the House to speak to amendments to the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter that support a request from the municipality regarding capital charges for new development. As I've said since becoming minister, I want to have open dialogue with our municipalities and engage them in ongoing discussions that allow us to work together on behalf of citizens and communities. Introducing these amendments

is one example of how the provincial government has engaged and listened to municipalities such as HRM.

The changes introduced to the HRM Charter provide council with more flexibility to recover the costs of infrastructure that arise from new development within the municipality. With these changes, council will be required to amend or adopt a bylaw to implement recovery of these growth-related capital costs from new development. HRM will be consulting with the development industry and the public prior to approval of such a bylaw change.

We recognize that new development brings additional demands. This change will help HRM cover costs associated with fire services, libraries and recreation facilities like arenas, parks and trails. It will be up to the municipality to determine if or when new charges will be levied to capital costs. HRM Council presently has authority to recover costs from developers to build and maintain roads and sidewalks, solid waste management systems, waste water collection and treatment facilities, and electrical distribution systems.

This amendment to the Charter expands that list to include the items I've mentioned just a moment ago. This is a matter of ensuring fairness. We recognize that current property owners should not have to pay additional property taxes for growth-related capital costs associated with new development.

As part of our review of this request, we looked across the country at what other jurisdictions do regarding recovery of capital costs. We found that many cities, including Ottawa, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Toronto, have in place new growth development charges. These charges are seen as a fiscal management tool, but they also help with urban growth and development policy for municipalities.

We're making this change to ensure that those who benefit most from new growth contribute directly to the cost of that development. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks, and I look forward to my colleagues in the Opposition.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable member for Inverness.

**MR. ALLAN MACMASTER:** Mr. Speaker, when I was looking at this legislation I was trying to get my head around it and I'm looking forward to the Law Amendments Committee, if there are any presentations. It's always interesting to see what people think of legislation when it's brought forward here.

It is my understanding that this measure was requested by the City of Halifax to give them flexibility to recover the costs for fire services, libraries, recreation facilities and such. I can certainly take the point made by the minister that one of the intentions is not to negatively impact on existing property owners by increasing their taxes to pay for new

growth in the city. I can understand that, but I am having some difficulty with this and perhaps, as I become more familiar with the legislation, my comfort will increase.

I guess one of the things I've thought about is all throughout the history of having property tax, it has always paid for things. Certainly in my area, on a much smaller scale, property tax helps to pay for water systems and fire service. There is growth sometimes in rural areas - certainly not to the extent that we see in a city like Halifax - but I know that has always been the way it has been done.

It's interesting to hear that there are cities that are moving toward this type of arrangement. I understand that the City of Halifax will also be consulting with people including developers. I would expect developers wouldn't be overly excited about this legislation but they certainly do have the option in their development activity to pass along any added costs that they bear as a result of changes proposed with this bill. That could be in the way of higher lease rates for people who may be renting buildings and properties that they are developing or, I suppose, it could come in the purchase price of new homes in an area that's being developed.

I believe one of my other colleagues will be speaking, as well, on this matter and there are some points he would like to raise with respect to CBRM, and I would allow him to do that directly because he is from that area and best apt to represent those matters. I look forward to hearing more and learning more about this bill, and I look forward to presentations in the Law Amendments Committee if there are people who wish to make a presentation. With that, thank you Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: I'm glad to stand up and speak on this legislation, Mr. Speaker. I know it's important for the municipality to ensure that they can maintain the services that they provide a residence of HRM, and I know this change in the Halifax Charter is really enabling legislation or enabling change to allow the municipality to do that. But I do have some concerns around this, and some of those concerns are around the prices of homes that we see here around the capital city. There have been significant increases over the last 10 to 15 years of the price of homes, and it's not just downtown.

Out in the suburbs where I live and where I represent, housing costs are a concern, especially to young people trying for the first time to purchase their homes. Even though this legislation will enable the municipality to charge developers for new developments or subdivisions, that cost is ultimately going to be passed on to the new homeowners. Those developers aren't going to pay that out of their profits and just absorb those costs. They'll be transferred down to the price of the new home.

Just recently I had the opportunity to go out for a Sunday drive - not that I do this a lot, but my wife wanted to go into a few open homes that are up and around my area. There

are some great developers out there who do amazing work but the shock that I got was the cost of these homes. I purchased my home over 16, 17 years ago for - and I don't mind saying - \$110,000 - a brand new home. The homes that are close to me now, semi-detached, are going for \$240,000 or \$250,000. Single dwelling homes are selling now, close to me in the Sackville community, for \$360,000. These are huge increases in just a short period of time. With this legislation going through, I assume we will see those increase even more as we move on.

The other area of concern is that - I think we all receive from time to time market reports from a whole range of areas - one of them is new home starts and they are dramatically decreased, have been decreasing over the last year or more. The industry and the developers realize that there are fewer buyers out there who are purchasing new homes, especially here and around HRM. My fear is that with this added cost, we will see that continue to slide. It is a losing proposition for the municipality because they lose out on the property taxes paid when someone purchases a home.

The other concern I have is that if this will allow the municipality to pass that on to the developers and then of course pass it on to the new homeowners, once they purchase a home in areas around the province, I know in the municipalities they also sometimes charge a local area rate, for a community centre, for example. So there are costs that they are able to recover now for some of the services that were outlined in this change to the Charter. I'm concerned that this might put the cost of a new home just out of reach of many of our young people.

We know the goal of the Ivany report is to try to ensure that we have an environment here in Nova Scotia that is appealing, especially to young people after they graduate. We know that since many of our new graduates have huge debt loads, even more now that the Graduate Retention Rebate has been eliminated, that the cost of a home, if it continues to go up, will really put it out of the equation for these new graduates to purchase their first home. We are seeing more and more renters throughout the municipality and it is unfortunate to see that because I think all young people should have the opportunity to be able to purchase their first home, their new home, and put down roots here. I think by moving in this direction that we are going to limit that.

As the previous member spoke, we do want to see this get to Law Amendments Committee to see what concerns may come from the residents, from developers, from people who have an interest in this. I look forward to hearing those comments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a few comments about Bill No. 50, amendments to the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. As has been said earlier, it is our understanding that Halifax has requested the amendments to this Charter to

allow them some flexibility in recovering costs to their fire services, their libraries and their recreation facilities.

We know that these services make communities more vibrant. They make them dynamic and with these services, Mr. Speaker, they encourage people to move into that area, to buy homes there and to raise their families there. It seems fair the cost of these services not be paid by the existing property owners, which we understand, but the developers are going to charge these costs back to the homeowner or the home buyer and it is going to be paid somehow by the person that way.

Mr. Speaker, let me change my tone for a second here. I have been in this Legislature for three years now and I've seen three or four - and I could be corrected on that - changes to the HRM Charter since I've been here and I believe as we refine the HRM Charter, it is time that we turn our heads to the CBRM Charter as well. As second-largest municipality in the province, CBRM is trying to form a charter for our municipality.

As the mayor says, as HRM is saying, he will allow the community to respond directly to its own challenges and opportunities, and allow the municipality to function more effectively and more efficiently. It would save it from having to come to the province to make certain changes in things that can be done very easily, and would save a lot of steps in between.

I hope the HRM listens to the voices of the people in their city, because that's who helps build these cities and move them forward. We are counting on Halifax to act responsibly with this authority, but I also urge the minister to consider legislation for the CBRM.

I look forward to seeing what is said in Law Amendments Committee and as this bill moves through third reading and is passed. I look forward to see what they'll say, so that when we do, or if we do, get CBRM a charter, we can use these words and use the lessons learned with the HRM in the CBRM. With those few words I will take my seat.

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

MR. IAIN RANKIN: With this enabling legislation, it's important to realize that this does not in any way curtail development. The main impetus for the charter amendments is really to make the charter more permissive in nature. This does nothing more than permit authority on land planning, which includes development fees on a full range of costs relating to various identified municipal infrastructure downstream of a said development. It really is to allow the municipality to be masters of their own domain.

The quality of these decisions should be with the local municipal council. After all, council is the government closest to their people. Through this legislation, henceforth, it would not be for the province to substitute their opinion for HRM. This follows the

prevailing tone of jurisprudence across Canada recognizing inclusive powers with their jurisdiction. The province does not favour managing municipal planning. This legislation offers no opinions on the quality of the decisions made at council, rather on the municipalities' ability to make those decisions, and I think it's important that all members restrict their own private views on whether or not the developers have this charge or the taxes are raised as a whole. Those private opinions really should remain that way.

The cost of housing is a concern, as mentioned by members on the other side, but there is really no matter of fact that this will have any impact on the cost of housing. It's not as if these developers have a specific profit margin that they have to hit in order to make the price of sale on a house. It's much more dictated on the market. The market is there, and with this huge supply of units, I can't see any salience in the argument that a developer will try to increase the cost of these units thinking that they'll possibly be able to sell it faster.

It is council that should be able to make the decision they are asking for, and I think that we should be able to put this forward and allow them to do what they're asking for. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

MR. KEITH IRVING: I thought I would rise and make a couple of comments on this legislation as well. As an architect and someone who has been very interested in planning - both city and rural planning - I think there are a few things that we must recognize with respect to what Halifax is asking for.

Really, what Halifax is trying to do is to find ways to encourage development in the downtown core and not allow sprawl to occur unencumbered. There are very few tools for a municipality to control sprawl, and one of the ways to control sprawl is through charges like this. I think it's important to recognize that the member for Sackville-Cobequid is making an assumption that perhaps this would increase the cost of the housing, and of that being passed on to the consumer.

Another way to look at this is that the market value of that undeveloped land will actually drop, potentially, and the developer would pay actually less for that land because it is not worth the same because it has development charges that would be applied to that if was chosen to be developed.

It brings some equilibrium to this green fields sprawling land and the more centralized land values that developers have to make these choices in terms of where to develop and the economics of that. I think that's an important point - don't just assume that these development charges will be applied to the house; it may be applied, in a negative way, to the value of the land on the periphery of our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. MARK FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to close debate on Bill No. 50, and I want to thank the members in Opposition and on this side of the House for their comments.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 50. Would all those in favour of the motion please Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

#### **PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill No. 44

#### **Bill No. 44 -Victoria Hall Continuation Act.**

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

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 44 be now read for a second time.

Today I rise to speak during second reading of Bill No. 44, and I'd like to take a few moments to discuss some of the critical services and functions that Victoria Hall here in Halifax provides. This organization provides care and housing for women over 65 who are not in need of a nursing home. This kind of housing is important because it provides seniors with care while retaining their independence in the community.

Victoria Hall is a charity registered with the Canada Revenue Agency. It is one of the oldest continuing charities in the province and was one of the 10 charitable organizations named in the will of Sir William Young, a former Premier who established a charitable trust in 1877. For over 150 years Victoria Hall provided shelter, care, and community to elderly women in its historic red building on Gottingen St.

When operation of that elderly facility proved unsustainable, the building was sold and the residents moved to the beautiful Caritas Residence at Mount Saint Vincent University, where Victoria Hall's clients now reside. The care services that are provided to its residents include medication management, personal care, housekeeping and laundry, and well-planned dietary services.

Doctors who make house calls is another important service that ensures those who need additional care can receive it without needing to leave their residence. Additional services that assist ease of living for those residing at the Victoria Hall are things like blood services and foot care. Having these service providers come in rather than having residents go out, makes getting access to these services as easy as it possibly can be.

In addition to the medical care that is available at Victoria Hall, many social activities are provided to the members to ensure that they are not without a sense of community and belonging. Some of the various activities include exercise groups, bingo, musical and cultural outings, and movie nights. These are just some of the activities available to residents living at Victoria Hall.

The reasons for seeking to have moved under the Societies Act is twofold - one, so that it can switch over to a more modern model of governance that is currently permitted under a 77-year-old Statute; and two, to reflect the change in the operations of Victoria Hall. In short, the bill is a matter of housekeeping that allows the organization to continue its charitable work with mature women with a modernized organization and governance.

This bill is important to me because the facility allows residents to maintain their dignity, their independence and social life, all of which are key to providing a healthy and active lifestyle to all Nova Scotians. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm not going to take a great deal of time. I just want to rise in my place and acknowledge the great work of the board of Victoria Hall.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, and as the member said, Victoria Hall was on Gottingen Street for many, many years until it was recently sold, and the old beautiful heritage property that was Victoria Hall is still there. I was very sad when the decision was made - and I understand why the decision was made, but very sad when the organization decided that it would cease operating out of that site. I used to joke and tell people that I had my room all picked out in Victoria Hall.

Just so people know, the origins and the history of this really pretty interesting charitable organization - it was founded back in the time when social services in our country were not very well established and people had to rely on charity, or their own



means. There were many, many women who had given their lives in service to others who had no means of supporting themselves in their old age. At the time, there were people in our city who came together and said that to see people destitute after a lifetime of service to others was just not right. So this charitable organization was established, and for many, many years, it offered safe, secure shelter for women in their elderly years.

One of the fondest memories I have of being at Victoria Hall was my first election when I was out meeting people in the constituency and asking for their support. One of the ladies I met at Victoria Hall, who is still alive and is now, I think, 100 or 101 - and that would have been 16 or 17 years ago - said to me that one of the things that she most loved about Victoria Hall was that it was an organization not only for women but it was primarily run by women. She thought that this - and the fact that the organization had survived for all of those years - really had a lesson there about the importance of women taking on leadership roles in the planning and the delivering of public services and social services in our province, which I completely support and concur with.

So I just want to make a few remarks and I want to say to the members, Mr. Speaker, that on one of the anniversaries of Victoria Hall, a resident wrote a small history of Victoria Hall and had it at the celebration of their anniversary, and I was able to acquire some of additional copies and brought them, and gave them to our Legislative Library. So if anybody has an interest in some of the social history of charitable organizations in Nova Scotia and this particular organization, there's a lovely little history based on the records that this individual was able to find - I can't remember if she was a resident or if her mom was a resident - and she wrote this small book.

Anyway, it's a lovely overview and I would highly recommend to anyone who's interested to go to the Legislative Library and they'll dig it out for you; it will be quite interesting to read. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable member for Fairview-Clayton Park.

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I do thank the honourable member for her comments on Victoria Hall. With that, I'd like to close debate on Bill No. 44.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 44. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. 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. 49.

**Bill No. 49 - Economic Development in Nova Scotia Improvement Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 49 be now read a second time.

Bill No. 49, the Economic Development in Nova Scotia Improvement Act, is legislation that fundamentally changes the way economic development is done in Nova Scotia. This bill follows through on our government's plan to allow the private sector to lead economic growth in Nova Scotia. It positions Nova Scotia as a more attractive place in Canada for manufacturers and processors to invest.

Mr. Speaker, it is about attracting new business and making sure existing Nova Scotia businesses become more productive, export more and grow.

Depuis le tout début, ce gouvernement a dit qu'en ce qui concerne la croissance de l'économie, le statu quo n'est pas acceptable. Nous ne sommes pas seuls. Les experts, les dirigeants d'entreprises, sont d'accord que nous devons aborder le développement économique d'une façon différente. Grâce à cette loi, nous suivons cette orientation et nous poursuivons le processus qui vise à changer la façon dont nous faisons les choses dans cette province.

The Premier has made it very clear that we need to create a competitive economic environment focused on growing good, sustainable jobs. The best people to lead that effort are the people in the private sector.

All the changes put forward in this legislation align directly with this government's principles. The roles of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, Nova Scotia Business Incorporated and Innovacorp will be realigned. This legislation will ensure clarity, reduce duplication, take funding decisions for businesses out of politicians' hands, cut red tape and speed up turnaround time for businesses and increase accountability for taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Speaker, business experts and community leaders, not Cabinet, will manage our boards and make investment decisions that are in the best interests of our economy. The days of government picking winners and losers are finally over. Nova Scotia Business Incorporated will have the authority to approve larger projects; that means faster decisions and greater clarity.

These are all things businesses have wanted, but with this additional authority comes increased accountability. Nova Scotia Business Incorporated and all of our economic development organizations will be required to produce five-year plans and be subject to independent reviews. As the report from the Commission on Building Our New Economy stated, “With regard to government’s economic development policies and programs, the game changer here is . . . greater integration and better coordination to improve transparency for the public and accessibility for business.” Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that we are taking Ray Ivany’s words and making them reality.

The legislation also introduces a new tax credit for projects over \$15 million. These are projects that represent a long-term commitment to the Nova Scotia economy. They also have the potential to benefit entire communities and regions. In fact, most of the companies that would even qualify for this new tax credit are located in rural Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, this reflects advice the government received in the Tom Traves Review of Economic Development Assistance Tools. To quote Dr. Traves, he said, “Most jurisdictions provide incentives to persuade businesses to expand or locate within its borders. To compete, it appears, sometimes we must pay to play, but we must do so effectively and efficiently.”

This legislation makes sure Nova Scotia is in the game and competitive with the best jurisdictions for business. Along with the tax credit, we are improving the Capital Rebate Program. This program will now support projects up to \$15 million, where the tax credit would kick in. Companies of many different sizes across many different sectors will benefit as they make significant capital investments in their businesses and our province.

Most importantly, these incentives are available only after a company has made its own capital investment. This is meaningful and fundamental change.

What this means is we have a range of options for companies of all sizes. On the one hand, 97 per cent of Nova Scotia businesses are small businesses, but on the other hand 71 per cent of Nova Scotians work for medium- and large-sized businesses. I’m proud to say that this legislation stands firmly behind businesses large and small.

Plus, outside of this legislation, we still have many programs to support small businesses, start-ups and our ambitious entrepreneurs. To name just a few, we have the Credit Union Small Business Loan Guarantee Program, the Global Business Accelerator Program - which I announced the recipients just a few days ago - the Small Business

Development Program and the very popular Productivity and Innovation Voucher Program, along with many others. Together, the new tax credit, the improved rebate program and our small business program level the playing field for business in Nova Scotia.

Le secteur privé doit assumer la direction. Les entrepreneurs et dirigeants d'entreprises sont ceux qui créent des emplois, qui réinvestissent dans la collectivité et qui incitent les jeunes à rester ici. Le travail du gouvernement est d'offrir du soutien et de créer les conditions qui permettront aux entreprises de réussir, et c'est ce qui fait cette loi.

We are moving forward with a new approach to economic development in Nova Scotia, positioning the private sector to lead economic growth. Our new approach also means more arm's-length decision making, being more transparent and accountable, streamlining and improving service delivery and ending free money for businesses.

Over the past year, we've made many important changes in economic development. We've introduced a new accountability Act and website that reports more information on financial assistance to business than any other province in the country. We've also created Invest Nova Scotia; we will soon be announcing the first board members of Invest Nova Scotia.

Le 17 juillet dernier, nous avons mis en œuvre un plan spécifique pour changer la façon dont le gouvernement et ses organismes de développement économique font affaire. Nous passons aux prochaines étapes de ce processus et nous jetons les bases pour des améliorations futures.

In the coming weeks and months, we will take further steps. We will issue a request for proposals for a new venture capital fund, and very shortly, as I indicated, we will be announcing the members of Invest Nova Scotia.

We're at a turning point. We know that we can't keep going the way we were going. Our province is facing daunting economic and fiscal challenges. We can, however, turn our economy around if we are prepared to act together. It's not going to be easy, but I have every confidence that we can do it. We all have an important role to play and this legislation is another step in the right direction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merci beaucoup.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and say just a few words on this bill, Bill No. 40, which is entitled an Act to Improve Economic Development in Nova Scotia.

There can be no doubt that economic development in Nova Scotia does need to be improved. The results of our struggling economy speak for themselves. If handing out

large amounts of money to large companies that come and go had worked - given the 40-, 50-, 60-year history and billions of dollars that have been spent doing just that - every Nova Scotian would have three jobs by now. They'd all be living and working here in Nova Scotia, but they don't and they're aren't.

The reason is that what has been done has not been working, and Nova Scotians have been telling all Parties in this House that very thing for some time. In the election that was concluded last year, that was one of the things I believe voters were saying, that we can't keep going on like this. It is absolutely important to improve the way that economic growth is encouraged in this province.

Unfortunately, this bill does not make a great change to the way economic development happens at the government level. This is a great example of what one of our greatest entrepreneurs, one of our most ambitious and most successful businesspeople, Mr. Ken Rowe, said the other day, "We should not continue to paint the mast we have a hole in the boat." This is a great example of what he is talking about. This is an attempt to repaint the mast again while there is a big hole in the boat.

Nova Scotians don't have to have been here that long to know, for example, that at one point in time we had a government fund, as a province, to give money to business, called the Industrial Expansion Fund. It was actually created 50 years ago, and it got into the hands of government after government. Hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars were expended, and we don't have a province where there are jobs for everybody today. In fact, we have one of the worst rates of economic growth.

The NDP got into office, and their answer to that problem was to rename it something else. They called it the Nova Scotia Jobs Fund, but we all know what actually happened. There was a new coat of paint on that mast, a new name, but hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars continued to be expended out of that fund to some of the largest and richest companies in Atlantic Canada. That's what the voters of Nova Scotia voted against in the election of 2013, and a Party was elected to office, the Liberal Party, that said, we're going to end that.

Here we have a bill today in this House, Mr. Speaker, and what does it do? It renames the NDP Jobs Fund to Invest Nova Scotia - another coat of paint. Now, the minister can say that that's going to be hard to do, and it's going to be a great change, but it's a change in the name again, and Nova Scotians are going to see through that.

I hope we all agree that real change to the way that the government encourages economic development is required. In fact, there was an entire Ivany report that basically pointed to 19 different ways to do just that, whether it was to increase our exports or to improve the fiscal situation of the province or to increase immigration or to increase the portion of Nova Scotians participating in our workforce, and yet the government has dragged its feet on the Ivany report. So far they are zero for 19 on those recommendations,

and that's become a point of frustration for all Nova Scotians, including me, Mr. Speaker. I believe that by going ahead and joining the committee that the government appointed, I'm doing my bit and we on this side are doing our bit to encourage the government along to actually get something done on the Ivany report.

Yet here we are in October of 2014, the government's been in a year, the Ivany report's been out since last February, and they are zero for 19 on its recommendations. Despite that clear roadmap of recommendations, you'd have to look through it pretty hard before you'd find where it says, here's an idea, just change the name of the fund and find another way to give large amounts of money to large companies. I don't think that's what it says, Mr. Speaker. So they are off-track again.

That is one of the problems we have with this bill. There are some things about the bill that we like, by the way, and we are going to talk about that today as well, but we might as well call it what it is: painting the mast another new colour while there is a big hole in the boat, Mr. Speaker; that is our point.

Now the minister also says - and I've heard the Premier say this - that they tell the private sector it is their job to lead on economic growth. Of course, we are the Progressive Conservatives, we absolutely believe that it is our entrepreneurs, it's our job creators, it's the private sector that is the source of generation of economic growth and wealth and prosperity. Absolutely, that is a fundamental belief on our side of the House, Mr. Speaker. But where we differ from the Liberals is they seem to believe that is the end of the story.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what? There is actually this thing called leadership that our entrepreneurs can expect and should expect from the government itself. That is what is missing in this bill, what is missing in this government's entire approach to economic development. They say oh no, there's no role for us, that's the private sector. Well do you know what? There is a role for government here. They are to provide leadership and that is not happening.

For example, you can't say to the private sector - take, for example, the companies that develop our natural resources - and say, you go and do your thing but we're going to ban one of the new ways to create new jobs in this province. That's not leadership; that's actually holding them back. It's a great example of how a government can actually get in the way of growing the economy, as this government has done as we all know. One of the biggest bills they have brought to this House in their time, if not the biggest, actually bans a new way of creating new jobs in the province.

You can call this fund whatever you want, Mr. Speaker, and you can throw as much money at large companies as you want. When the government on one hand wants to encourage it, even again with our taxpayers' money, but on the other hand bans a new way of creating jobs, that sends a very negative message to our entrepreneurs and to people across the country who might want to invest in Nova Scotia. We know that's happening.

We heard it in the Law Amendments Committee and I know we'll hear it again, as long as the government continues to stumble along and not make real change to the way the jobs are created or encourage new ways of creating new jobs in the province.

Here is another one. If you ask Nova Scotia business leaders, small and large, what gets in the way of them doing their job, they are very clear about what gets in the way - in fact they have been surveyed repeatedly about what gets in the way. What comes up are the big three: the tax burden in Nova Scotia, the regulatory burden in Nova Scotia and our energy costs - 1, 2, 3. Every time, Mr. Speaker. Now if we had a government that truly wanted to unleash the potential of the private sector, they would actually listen to what they are telling them and deal with those things.

Mr. Speaker, we have asked in this House about the tax and regulatory review and whether any Nova Scotian can look forward to some relief from our taxes which are the highest in the country - let alone our small businesses or the private sector that they keep turning to and saying it's their job - and the answer is no, it won't. In other words, when this great committee reports back, we are just going to see the deck of cards shuffled in a different way.

If the government seriously wanted to find a way to level the playing field, as they say, and create the winning conditions for the private sector to grow, they would be doing a tax and regulatory review that actually found a way to give everybody, large and small, an equal break on their tax rate but that's not happening, Mr. Speaker.

On energy prices, something the government campaigned on, making the point that we have among the highest energy prices in the country - by the way, energy prices being very important to the manufacturers that the minister wants to give a new tax credit to today - now we know that our energy prices are not going to go down or be held the same. They have already gone up twice in the Liberals' turn in office and the biggest promise - if you look at your bill from January 2014, depending on whether you get it in January or February, you will see it's higher than the year before on the base charge and on the energy efficiency fee. Both approved by the URB to be fair, but both happened in the last year.

Their answer to that, to eliminate the efficiency fee, is actually not what they promised - it's to put it right back on to our power bills somewhere else. Well, our business leaders, large and small, are smart enough to see through that charade. They can tell a shell game when they see one and so their third issue that holds them back, energy prices, is getting nothing from the government after all.

No wonder the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism has to bring in another big way of giving a lot of money to business when the things that actually hold them back all stay the same today as they were a year ago, or two years ago, or five years ago. That's part of the problem. If you want to level the playing field for everybody,

then we should level the playing field for everybody, not just the biggest companies that can apply for a \$15 million threshold tax credit.

It's because of that, and no wonder, that business confidence in the last year in Nova Scotia has plummeted. As we reported yesterday our capital city went from 17<sup>th</sup> out of 40 - not great but it's at least average, as a place to do business - in one year it went from 17<sup>th</sup> to 38<sup>th</sup> out of 40. The reason wasn't the tax credits and the government's generosity with our money wasn't high enough, the reason was that our taxes are too high generally, our power rates are among the highest in the country and the regulatory burden is too great and it holds them back - all that red tape. But nothing in this bill is going to help with those things.

Not only does the government say, oh no, that's up to the private sector, we might hold them back by banning some things that they might like to do to create jobs - they don't even listen to the private sector that they're holding up, who are saying quite the opposite, that we need help on these general things and not more rich tax credits.

I just find it interesting that we brought an idea to this House. Small businesses are the real generator of economic growth in the province - its profits stay right here in our home communities. Most Nova Scotians work for a small business. They tend to grow, if they're encouraged, into larger businesses, home grown, that we can all be proud of. We suggested why don't we cut the tax rate for small business? Maybe even to zero - think outside the box, like Ray Ivany said, and try something new. The government heckled and said oh, no, we can't do that, we can't afford that.

Well, this bill costs \$30 million at least by the government's own estimate. You could wipe out the small business tax or come very close to wiping it out with that same \$30 million. So instead of finding a way to make this place the best in the country for small business, they took the same amount of money and said we're going to use that as a tax credit to our largest businesses. Mr. Speaker, that's not what Nova Scotians want. That's not what they want to see, but that's what this bill does.

I think this might have been pointed out earlier, but for all Nova Scotians who want our young people to stay and live and work here after they graduate, the government said there's not \$30 million for the Graduate Retention Rebate Program, they can't afford it so they cut it. How ironic that that same \$30 million is now going back into our budget as the cost of this large business tax credit the government is proposing today.

It is tough to balance the budget, I get that. We want them to balance the budget, but there is a certain point where you set priorities. Their priorities are not our small businesses or they would have looked at the small business tax rate with the same amount of money. Their priority was not our young graduates or they would have kept the Graduate Retention Rebate with the same amount of money. Their priority is a tax credit for our largest



companies, which is just the way the previous governments, for too long, have gone wrong before. It doesn't work.

If it did work, given the history that Nova Scotia has, as I made the point earlier, we'd all have three jobs today. Yet here we go again, banging our head against the wall, hoping it will work out differently this time, painting the mast a different colour and leaving the hole in the boat unrepaired. That is what this bill really does.

How ironic that the bill comes forward today - Small Business Week. As if it is not going to be galling enough to our small businesses that the government has this great idea of a tax credit for the largest businesses, they actually introduced and called it for debate during Small Business Week. It is amazing to me that the government is already that far out of touch with what goes on in the real economy, large and small, of this province.

I'm going to have to leave it to the government to somehow explain this next point, because I can't. When you campaign against handouts for business and then you come in with a tax break to those very same businesses, in the same amounts - the same large amounts - Nova Scotians are going to scratch their heads and wonder, what's the difference? When you make promises about stopping the old way of finding free money for large businesses, and then turn around and say, if you buy a new piece of equipment, we are going to give you a lot of that money back, the business ends up in the same place, with taxpayer money in their pocket that they would otherwise owe to the government.

If that is not a shell game, I don't know what is, other than what the Minister of Energy did with our power bills, I guess. It now appears that the government is going to take Nova Scotia Business Inc., which was set up to be independent of the government, and find a back doorway to keep their fingers in that pie by providing direction to what Nova Scotia Business Inc. is going to do. It is great that they are going to have an independent audit every five years of how they are doing, compared to the audit that already happens about how they are doing.

Now the government is reinserting itself into the picture of Nova Scotia Business Inc. They were warned about the perils of doing that and not just by us, because I happen to have here some commentary from the former member of this House, the member for Cape Breton South who was a Liberal member, I believe a previous Minister of Economic Development, if my memory serves me correctly, who spoke about the perils of allowing a Cabinet to reach back into these kinds of decisions, even indirectly.

He said, in this place, on November 14, 2000, recorded by Hansard, that the problem with that is, ". . . the government in power will get greedy. The government in power will want this corporation to look after all these people who are going to try to get re-elected. They are going to want to look after them all." I won't even repeat the rest of what he warned. He was making the point that you can't be half pregnant. You are either going to have an independent agency or you are not. But by reinserting Cabinet as some

kind of behind-the-scenes director of Nova Scotia Business Inc., these kinds of risk come back into play.

The member for Cape Breton South also warned (Interruption) Mr. Speaker, a warning is a warning and if it is relevant it is relevant. It is going to be a vehicle to allow the government to do what they want. You know, there were some pretty wise people who go back a long time. This one, actually, is a warning about the very thing we are talking about which is the government reinserting itself into these decisions and he said it is going to be a vehicle to allow the government to do what they want, for whom they want, and not necessarily open the process to small-business interests. How interesting.

In this province they will want to have a vehicle to access government. This would take that right out the window, he warned, of what the government is exactly about to do now - how prophetic he was, Mr. Speaker. Of course I will table that. I don't know if you need to table Hansard but I will table that for the benefit of anyone who is interested.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to reaffirm a few basic truths, that the best way to encourage the private sector to create the jobs we need is to actually do something different than the way it was done before. That means bringing in tax rates and regulations that are equal and applicable to everybody, that level the playing field, and that allow our entrepreneurs to make decisions about where to invest, free of the distortions that the government creates, and that when we have investors coming to the province or in the province that want to try a new way to create new jobs, that we don't ban them from doing so. Until that day comes, there is no tax credit large enough that the Liberals can dream up that is going to paper over the fundamental flaws that they leave in place, that this is a province with a high cost of living, with a high tax burden, with high power rates, with too much red tape that leaves our entrepreneurs doing paperwork instead of growing their businesses and hiring their fellow Nova Scotians.

Nothing in this bill changes any of those fundamentals or shows any leadership. It is bad enough that the government has no ideas on those things of its own but they were actually given a road map called the Ivany report, with 19 goals that we could all work towards. But rather than actually getting on with the job of legislating those, they chose to legislate this, and that is the problem. Thank you very much for your time.

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

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to stand here today and speak on Bill No. 49. It is quite ironic that it is Small Business Week, when it was over just a year ago that the now Liberal Government promised to refocus their efforts on small business, yet the focus has actually been on losing 9,000 jobs in our province.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think the small businesses believe the refocus meant the loss of 9,000 jobs, nor do I think they thought a 10-year tax break for large corporate manufacturers or large corporate processors who do have \$15 million to invest initially. I do not know of any small business that would have \$15 million worth of assets they could invest in order to receive such a substantial tax rebate.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the Liberal Government promised to make changes and all that has been done in terms of (Interruption) I heard a member say we are, well I know the changes that have been made, they have been window-dressing changes. This is even evident in Bill No. 49, even in the small writing that you see in the small parts. You look at even Clause 1, and what it says, “renames the defined expression of ‘financial assistance’ as ‘business development incentive’.” That is simply once again the perception game that I have to give the Liberal Government high marks on because that is what they are all about; it’s about image and perception, so that is to provide the people of Nova Scotia with the perception that they are not giving financial incentives or assistance. We are not going to give financial assistance because we are not going to use that language any more. The language that we are going to use is that we’re going to be providing business development . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret’s has the floor.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: I didn’t know the microphone was off, so I’ll start off with the fact that the point is, you take even the language to develop a public image and perception in a bill, so we’re going to change the name of “financial assistance” to “business development incentive” That is part of the perception and image game of the Liberal Government.

As my colleague by me says, it’s smoke and mirrors, and hoping that people in their busy lives, individuals who do not pay a lot of attention to politics, are not going to be able to catch and capture those slight changes that are really just part of window dressing. We’ve seen this over and over again, and the promises that have been made and the promises that have not been kept. (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. People on this side of the House will have an opportunity to have their remarks when the honourable member is finished. The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret’s has the floor.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate that. What I would like to point out is that this is the first substantial economic development bill from this government, and what does it do? It does support large companies.

I'm not saying that large companies do not play an important role in our economy, because we know that they do, and they have always been an important part of our economy. That is why, if we look back in history, it doesn't matter what political Party has been on the government side. They have seen the significance and the importance to invest, and the fact is that those investments have made a difference in our province - and a positive difference.

How can a Party say that they are not going to do something, and turn around within a year, and their first substantial bill does exactly what they promised the people of Nova Scotia - it would be quite different if that wasn't part of an election platform saying to people of Nova Scotia that they are no longer going to give large business any financial incentives, yet this is exactly what has happened in the announcement that we heard the other day with respect to the investments of \$15 million, if you're a large corporation, to get this tax rebate up to 10 years.

That's the problem that not only I have, but I know that Nova Scotians will have. They're learning that. They're seeing that. As much as the window dressing and panicking and trying to cover that window with things that are not factual or the reality or misleading Nova Scotians, they'll get it, and it's part of my job and part of being in Opposition to make sure that they do get it.

I often think that I sometimes hear comments from members from the other side who did not sit in Opposition, and I would recommend and suggest that sometime they take the time and look over Hansard and read it very carefully from 2009 to 2013. Read what was said from their very own members while they were sitting in Opposition and talking about such things, saying, where are the job targets? We need job targets. You can't go forward with an economic development plan without job targets.

If you put that in Hansard, you probably would see it coming up hundreds of times from those who now sit in government and were asking the government of the day those very questions.

I had the opportunity to sit on the government side and hear what was yelled across to us, the same things in terms of the economy is bad, that's the reason we're losing the jobs. Well, that was no excuse from the Opposition when we were on that side, so I find it quite ironic in talking about dollars to large corporations, and what is this government doing? They're doing the exact same thing. It's been done for many years in this province, because we know that giving and investing in large business is important but it is also as important to invest in small business. We had the opportunity for the first time in decades to decrease the small business tax each and every year, in order to assist small businesses in their economic development.

So it is about the promises that have been broken. I am not here to be the one - I am not the final judge of that. The people of Nova Scotia will be. As many times as one tries to

do the window dressing, there will be others who will be pulling back that window dressing and it will be out there that these things are happening, that they are saying one thing but doing the other.

What we see, Mr. Speaker, is that the Liberals of the 1980s gave major dollars to large corporations and it is the same with the government of 2014, the same Liberal Government. There isn't any difference in the behaviour, in the philosophy, in who is being supported and the window dressing around that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I urge anybody on this side of the House that if they have any conversations to perhaps take them in the back room. Thank you.

The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret's has the floor.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, there was a mention about the Ivany report. When we take a close analysis of the Ivany report and we see what was suggested, those suggestions aren't being carried forward. We have seen that because the Ivany report talked about taking rural communities and the resources they have and what is available in communities and work and collaborate with communities to expand on that. There are many projects that we have talked about on this side of the House, both my colleagues in the Progressive Conservatives and in the NDP, that there is no cooperation in supporting this.

As people know in this House, the Oak Island bill has been very important to me and that is one major project that could fit into the Ivany report because we would be looking at a future of years and decades in preserving and protecting the local tourism and economy, yet we cannot get support for that because the idea is a short-term. We have a television series and after that is finished, that's it - right? So we are going to support that yet we are not going to support the local economy, the natural resources are there or protect what is being found. That is just one example of many.

It is a shame that the people of Nova Scotia had heard one thing and I think that they put a lot of trust in that what they heard was going to become reality but it is not at all. What is happening is the window dressing. We can see that with this bill in changing the language. We can see that in the fact of setting up commissions or committees that are supposed to be independent but yet behind the scenes they are not independent and there is connection with Treasury Board or connection with Cabinet members.

This government is handling the corporate finances in the province and to stand in the House and say that they are not they are removed from it and to stand in the House and say it is the responsibility totally of corporations is talking in a whole different language because it is not reality and they know that.

All you have to do, Mr. Speaker, is ask those students who are investing at least \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year into their education and having a challenge in doing that, then they hear an announcement where major corporations that have \$15 million to put up in an investment are getting up to \$30 million, it is costing. What's happened is that we have taken \$45 million from our students, the very people who we say we want to invest in and help - we eliminate the Graduate Retention Rebate and we turn around and give \$30 million to large corporations. Now, how does that fit in with the promises that were made by the Party that is now running the Province of Nova Scotia?

It is not things that I am making up in the evening or I am dreaming about because it is in writing. We have seen it in newspaper ads that were published before the election. We have seen it in articles in the newspaper even afterwards - all these promises but yet all we are getting is window dressing and that is the fact. I have the great privilege to stand in the House and bring these points forward to the government of the day but it will not be my final decision, it will be the people of Nova Scotia.

When you do say something, you may believe that you are doing what you are doing but when you say something, it all comes out, not in words; it comes out in the final action. There will be a day that people will be taking the time and they will be reviewing what was promised, each one in a list, and they will discover whether or not they believe that those promises were kept. To date we haven't seen any of those promises kept, except for losing 9,000 jobs and being very good in interior decorating and making sure that there is window dressing going on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie.

MR. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak to this wise, superior piece of legislation. This bill follows through on our plan outlined in July to allow the private sector to lead economic growth in Nova Scotia. It will make Nova Scotia a more attractive place for manufacturers and processors to invest. This will attract new businesses to Nova Scotia and help existing businesses become more productive, export more and grow. All of the changes in this bill align directly with this government's principles: private sector-led economic development, more accountability, less red tape.

This bill alone will ensure clarity, reduce duplication, take funding decisions for business out of politician's hands, cut red tape and speed up turnaround time for business, and increase accountability for taxpayers' dollars. Business experts, not Cabinet, will lead our boards and make investment decisions that are in the best interests of our economy. We have started by improving one program designed to help business lead economic growth and we are creating a new tax credit for the very same reason.

The Capital Rebate Program is designed for small- and medium-sized businesses looking to make investments in capital. We are increasing the amount available to a

business to \$3 million. We are giving control of the program to NSBI to ensure it is arm's length from Cabinet. We are adding new accountability measures that will ensure projects funded through this program better align with the economic objectives of Nova Scotians.

The tax credit is a 15 per cent refundable corporate income tax credit and it becomes effective January 1, 2015. Credit applies to capital costs of qualified property. These two measures are designed to help us target manufacturers and processors that export. The Ivany report speaks to the importance of increasing our exports; both of these programs will help. Another reason these programs are important is because they help our manufacturers, companies that are mainly located in rural Nova Scotia. These programs will result in tens of millions of dollars of investment in rural economic development.

Yesterday it was disappointing to hear the Progressive Conservative Leader criticize such a heavy investment in rural economic development. That Leader and his largely rural caucus should welcome capital investment in rural Nova Scotia because capital investment means job creation. Instead of supporting this measure - a job creation measure with a disproportionate and well-deserved impact on rural Nova Scotia - that Leader and his caucus stood and said no. They said no to rural economic development, they said no to helping rural companies export, and they said no to investment in their constituencies and their ridings.

The Progressive Conservative Leader of the Official Opposition also said we should have a capital program for small business. We do. As I already noted above we've expanded and improved a capital rebate program so that small and medium-sized Nova Scotia businesses can invest higher and export.

Those of us on this side of the House understand how small business and big business work. The relationship is not a dichotomy, it is a synergy. You just look across this province, you look at the small businesses that are spawned by heavy investments in this province. Take a look at the folks in Pictou County talking about Northern Pulp and how many people in small businesses depend on that business. How many? Bakeries, restaurants, hotels. (Interruptions) That's right. We need to respect that relationship.

There is no better fertilizer for small business than heavy, large capital investments in Nova Scotia. Check it out. That's the fact. Earlier in our mandate we also doubled the amount of money available to small businesses through the Small Business Loan Guarantee Program, from \$25 million to \$50 million. We have started changing the way we do economic development in our province so that our system is more responsive.

Valerie Payn, president and chief executive officer of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, said the changes will reduce development program overlap and speed up service to new businesses. She said: "I am absolutely certain this will reduce the amount of red tape faced by entrepreneurs, which I hear about every single day." And I'll be pleased to table that.

We are moving forward with a new approach to economic development in Nova Scotia, positioning the private sector to lead economic growth. Our new approach also means more arm's-length decision making, being more transparent and accountable, streamlining and improving service delivery, and ending free money for businesses. Over the past year we've made many important changes in economic development, including introducing a new accountability Act and website that reports more information on financial assistance to business than any other province in this great country, and creating Invest Nova Scotia.

Our province is facing daunting economic and fiscal challenges. We can, however, turn our economy around if we are prepared to act together - a strong message from the Ivany report. It's not going to be easy, but we can do it. We all have an important role to play and this legislation is another important step in the right direction. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou-West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I think he is our local chamber thespian.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank everyone else who has spoken on Bill No. 49. Actually, I like the bill. Now, I had some notes, and I'm going to try maybe not to follow the notes and kind of speak what I really feel about it because as I sat down, it was just introduced yesterday and last night I looked at it, I'm not a Philadelphia lawyer by any means, just sort of navigating my way through reading bills, but there are some really good things about it.

I know that there's no doubt that economic development in our province has to improve. I think we're going through the longest economic cleansing that we've ever gone through, and I worry that we haven't maybe hit rock bottom yet. I'm a little disappointed in the member for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie, just because he directed his statements - he looked over at me, and I know the value of Northern Pulp in my community, but I also know that there are 40-some businesses that have gone out of business in the last year.

I've been a small business owner all my life, and that's why I think this bill has a lot of credibility to it. But unfortunately, I don't think there's a lot there for small business, certainly not small businesses that employ two to three people, like I did. I think business confidence is something that is at an all-time low in Nova Scotia, and I worry about leadership here, and helping small businesses. I think that the government's role should be a little bit more about lowering taxes and lowering power rates, and reducing government red tape. Those are the government actions that will truly position the private sector to thrive and grow and create jobs. I do think this bill lacks a bit of that.



As you may recall, Mr. Speaker, I introduced a bill, Bill No. 4, The Tax-free Zone for Small Business Act, and I would hope that the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism would look again at my bill. I know he's not listening at the moment, so he's not going to, probably. (Interruptions)

Oh, sorry, I didn't mean that. I just would like the minister to hear this part, because - it's too bad that when we come up with such a great bill - I really do believe it - I wish there was an opportunity to sit down together and morph together our ideas to create something that is worthy of all Nova Scotians who are in business. That's what I'm trying to say.

So once again, Bill No. 4 is before the House, and it would (Interruptions) Bill No. 4 is before the House, and I would ask that the minister have a look at that bill and see that it is as worthy as the bill that he is putting forth, and that, at this point in time, I feel I could support. I do want to look over it more, to clarify that I do have a good understanding of it. I have to say, I do like the idea of the Capital Rebate Program that's expanding. That's something that could be very helpful to a number of businesses in Nova Scotia.

We need to listen more to businesses in Nova Scotia, and that's something that our caucus is trying to do more of. I want to reaffirm our position on that. We feel that the business people in Nova Scotia will help us decide what makes sense, and what is going to move Nova Scotia forward. I think if we continue to engage in conversation with them, we will see that we can create bills that will not just benefit large corporations. I do believe this bill has a lot of meat and potatoes to it - and I do, I think it's a pretty good bill - but I do think that it is lacking the support for small businesses.

Maybe we all identify small businesses differently. My bill was aiming at those businesses that make between \$300,000 and \$500,000 a year. We know that small businesses are the backbone to Nova Scotia. I really wish - I'll say it again - I do want you to look at Bill No. 4 again, because I think that this bill and Bill No. 4 would impress a lot of Nova Scotians if the two were passed. I really believe that we're serving not just large corporations but the small industry as well. I know that a lot of businesses in my area will be impressed. Michelin's in my constituency, and Northern Pulp, and I know they're going to benefit from this bill. I'm happy about that. But once again (Interruptions)

I'm speaking for myself; I'm speaking for myself. (Applause) That doesn't take away the fact that there is a lot that my Leader said that I concur with, there is a lot that the member from the NDP said that I concur with, and the member for Guysborough-Eastern Passage, as well as the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

Once again, I'm going to take my seat, I'm not going to go on and on, but I look forward to listening to more about this bill, if there is anything that maybe the minister heard me say that he doesn't think I understand, or he wants to clarify, I welcome him to come to me to clarify that.

Oh, there is one thing that I did want to question. I am confused a little bit about whether or not Cabinet does have any control. So I read it and I think they do, but then I saw your expression when my Leader said it and you were like oh no, so I do want to clarify that so I have a complete understanding. On that note I'll take my seat, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order to correct the member. I am the proud member for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie and not Guysborough-Eastern Passage. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I thank the member for bringing that to our attention, although it is not a point of order.

The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: I'm going to be brief, I wasn't even going to speak but I was listening to those spirited comments from the member for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie.

Mr. Speaker, I think there is always going to be some connection between government and business in terms of encouraging business development. I was amused because I know and I think it obviously resonated with Nova Scotians because we have a new government today, but I know there was concern by Nova Scotians that the previous government was putting too much money out there to business, and I think that did resonate with people.

One of the points I'd like to make is that when I think about these businesses that will benefit, if they are manufacturing operations one of their big costs is power, and I know the member for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie knows and the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, we are abutting each other with our constituencies, we know that the paper mill in Point Tupper depends, its success depends, certainly partially, on the cost of power and being the largest power user in the province.

I just would like to make the point that while it's good to be providing some encouragement to businesses in the province, let's make sure that we have the right energy policy that's driving decisions of Nova Scotia Power so that these organizations can be assured a future success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I listened intently, other than for the two seconds I was interrupted by members of the Opposition when the member for Pictou West was trying to speak, and pointed that out - other than that I was listening very intently. In

fact, in my closing remarks I would like to think I'm going to actually prove how intently I was listening to the remarks made by the members of the Opposition.

First, Mr. Speaker, I think it's always best in this place to start on a positive note. So let me start by saying that it was refreshing to hear the comments from the member for Pictou West. I think she remarked at the start of her comments that rather than reading the prepared notes in front of her, she was actually going to speak from the heart and speak as she saw this, and I think that was an honest and sincere account on her behalf. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, legislation such as this is not always the easiest to understand, and at the same time there are often questions of assumptions being made which are clearly incorrect. So I do commend her for pointing out some of the elements which she thought were quite favourable and, as well, asking questions about some of the items she had concerns with.

Whenever you bring in a piece of legislation, it is not going to do all things for all people. Concerns have been raised about, well, where is the element for small business? My colleague, the member for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie touched on it very well in saying that as soon as we came to office, the Credit Union Small Business Loan Guarantee Program - its budget was doubled. Not only that but the Premier made a commitment during the campaign that the guarantee provided by the Province of Nova Scotia would move from 75 per cent to 90 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I am not hearing from small businesses in Nova Scotia saying they cannot access capital or that they cannot access money to help grow their business. We used to hear that on a frequent basis because many of our lending institutions considered small businesses to be risky because they didn't have the big collateral to put behind some of the funding requests they were making.

We have tried to make it as easy as possible for the credit union to be able to work with small business in this province. Mr. Speaker, the default rate right now under that program is less than the commercial banks have, which I think is proof of the success that program is having.

Mr. Speaker, I will give credit; the previous government did initiate that program and we did bring some enhancements to it. It was having success; we hope, with these enhancements, it is going to have more success. So that is a direct effort to assist with small business.

The member for Pictou West also mentioned the fact that we need to listen to small business. Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we have been doing. Small business came to us and said one of our biggest challenges in hiring new graduates is they don't have experience and it takes us almost a year, if not more, to get them the experience they need to be the productive employees we need. They said that for that first year it is a

money-loser for our business, which is why we are not encouraged to take new graduates. Because of that we said, how can we help small business hire new graduates, which also benefits new graduates in finding work? That is the one message that we've heard from new graduates: we need a job.

Mr. Speaker, the Graduate to Opportunities program, which we will be announcing very shortly, and applications will be available very shortly, will provide funding for up to the first two years of a new graduate being employed by business in this province. That takes the risk away for small- and medium-size business of bringing in a new graduate, knowing that it will take a year or close to it to bring them up to the level they need for them to be a fully productive employee for their business. That is listening to small business and that is addressing a concern that not only they had but that new graduates were clearly telling us as well.

The member for Pictou West indicated she likes the Capital Rebate Program. The Capital Rebate Program is available to all businesses up to \$15 million. If they are going to purchase new equipment, if they are going to make a significant investment, they are eligible for a 20 per cent rebate under that program.

Now in the spirit of transparency and trying to ensure that no one could come back and say there is still politics in those decisions - that program used to rest in my department, Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. It was administered by civil servants. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I did not even see the applications coming in or those going out because if you qualified, you received it. But just in case someone thought somehow the minister or Cabinet can still get their fingers in on that, we have sent that program off to Nova Scotia Business Inc. and allowed them to administer that program on our behalf, which is the message we heard from the reviews that we had.

Dr. Tom Traves' report clearly made a number of recommendations and in the spirit of transparency - and that was one of the recommendations: send that program over to NSBI so there is no question that if a company qualifies, it will be able to access that funding.

Mr. Speaker, to show you how well that program has worked for small business and medium-size business in this province, we had to stop applications this year because we ran out of money. That program exceeded the budget allocation, which is proof that there is confidence in this province amongst our business community. They are putting money back into their business and again, the Capital Rebate Program only provides financing after the investment has been made.

With that came a shortfall. What do we do for investments over \$15 million? There's been a lot of debate in this House over the years. The Leader of the Official Opposition talked about the old Industrial Expansion Fund, and he talked about how successive governments have used that. I was here in 1999 when the John Hamm

Government was elected, and on their platform was no more government money to business. That's what they said: no programs, nothing, they were getting rid of it.

That lasted a year. Once they saw all the companies being lost to other jurisdictions that we were not able to attract here, all of a sudden, they came back and brought back that funding, and they created Nova Scotia Business Incorporated. If I'm not mistaken, I believe the Leader of the Official Opposition was chief of staff at some point during that. He would recall what happened when a government completely removed itself from working with business and incentives to keep them here. It was an absolute failure, and he would know that. To stand in this place and to question what our government is doing - I would suggest that it's complaining for the sake of complaining.

But let's remember, and let there be no doubt - and I believe the member for Pictou West said it very clearly - that the new investment rebate program, over \$15 million in Nova Scotia, really will only apply to a select number of companies. I believe she mentioned two of them, Northern Pulp and Michelin, but Michelin certainly is the one that Nova Scotians attach to and recognize. If I understood correctly, the message from the Leader of the Official Opposition was that he does not support the Province of Nova Scotia working with Michelin to grow their business here in Nova Scotia. For that, I can say shame on the Leader of the Official Opposition for such a suggestion.

We know the impact that that company has had in rural Nova Scotia. The Leader of the Official Opposition can be cute and say, I wasn't referring to Michelin. But if he watched the news last night, he would have known that that's the company that was mentioned as a potential recipient under this rebate, so that should not be a surprise to him. So to stand in this place and say that it's the wrong way to go and it's not the way to do business - we know the impact Michelin has had in this province.

We also know the lost opportunity that we had in the Valley when Michelin was ready to make an expansion and the previous government wasn't ready for it. Instead, that expansion went down to South Carolina in the United States. I can tell you, in working with my colleagues from Kings South and Kings West and with our Premier, we will not lose out on that opportunity the next time it comes around.

We are prepared to work with Michelin and to work with some of our other stakeholders. The question was, how do we do this to ensure that Nova Scotians have absolute transparency and absolute confidence that any of their tax dollars that are being put to these companies are a good investment on their behalf? We looked at the payroll rebate program, and we heard from Nova Scotians when they said, we like the way that program works, because the only time a qualifying business will get access to a payroll rebate is after they've hired the employees and an independent audit has been done, and after the fact, they can qualify for the rebate.

Nova Scotians saw the transparency in that, and they saw the fact that it's not writing a blank cheque. It's not writing a cheque up front for a company to do with as they wish. It was directly attached to results. When we came and put together this tax rebate for investments over \$15 million in manufacturing and processing, it's the same principle of transparency and accountability, in that companies will only be able to access this rebate after the investment has been made.

We remember the former government writing cheques to large companies who turned around and suddenly were buying assets elsewhere. Nova Scotians were left to wonder, was that our money that was used to go buy assets elsewhere? This rebate ensures that any assets or any equipment purchased for manufacturing and processing stays here in Nova Scotia, will be here for the people of Nova Scotia to have jobs with, and will be a benefit to our economy.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Official Opposition also decided to speak about suggested interference by Cabinet with the work of Nova Scotia Business Incorporated; I believe the member for Pictou West raised that as a concern. We have done just the opposite. Right now there are limits as to what deals that Nova Scotia Business Incorporated makes, that their board approves, have to come before Cabinet for approval. We have increased those caps. With the increase, and based on the history of Nova Scotia Business Incorporated work, especially with payroll rebates - 90 per cent of the investments they make, approved by their independent board, will be approved by their board and no longer require Cabinet approval. That is transparency.

What we have said, Mr. Speaker, is that as a province and as a government we have a duty to be able to work with all of our government departments and to be able to identify where we see opportunities for investments in our province and in which sectors. What this legislation will allow is that the government will be able to work with the board of NSBI and identify which sectors we believe they should be focusing on in making their investments.

Now again, in the spirit of co-operation and being nice - to the former government's credit, they focused on the financial services sector with NSBI. They made it clear to them, we believe this is a growing market, you should focus your investments on this, and it has achieved tremendous success. We have a very impressive financial services market here in Halifax that did not exist years ago. We have international players, some of the biggest players in the financial services sector are now here in Halifax and looking to grow. That is an example of where this bill will allow the government to be able to tell Nova Scotia Business Incorporated where we see emerging markets.

For example, we have certainly seen ocean technology attract a lot of attention with the ships contract and some of the spinoff companies that have been attracted to us; that is what this bill would allow. It is not direct inference. It is simply a means of telling them which sectors they should be focusing on, then it is their job to go out find those

companies, attract them to our province, and have their independent board be able to make those decisions on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, if anything, this bill is a further reassurance that our government is distancing itself from the decisions to invest taxpayers' dollars in business initiatives. We are doing exactly what we told the people of Nova Scotia we would. We have taken the cheque book away from Cabinet. We have taken it away from unelected invisible people in the Premier's Office who were negotiating directly with companies, who were making deals behind the elected officials' backs, without their knowledge. That is what we told Nova Scotians would stop and today this bill is putting an end to that practice by ensuring that it is independent agencies that are going to be making these decisions on behalf of Nova Scotians.

As well, Mr. Speaker, you know already in talking about transparency, we set up our Accountability Act. Today any Nova Scotian who has access to the Internet can go on our site and see exactly where our agencies have made investments on their behalf. No other Canadian jurisdiction provides that type of transparency for their residents the way that we do here in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Official Opposition, when he stood up, said that the creation of Invest Nova Scotia is just repainting the mast of a sinking ship. What a sad commentary to hear because once again, where did this recommendation come from? Was it a creation that we just came up with on our own? It was a recommendation from Dr. Tom Traves, former president of Dalhousie University, who we asked to go out on his own and come back with recommendations. He clearly said there are roles for NSBI to play with business; there are roles for Innovacorp to play with start-up companies; there is a role for Economic and Rural Development and Tourism to play with creating policy for economic development. He said, there's still a gap, what about everybody else? You need to create an independent agency that can make investments on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia, which is why we created Invest Nova Scotia - and we will be announcing the inaugural board very shortly.

Mr. Speaker, Invest Nova Scotia is going to be able to look at sector-type investments. Its board will have the ability to make decisions on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia and to make investments which, rather than being for individual companies, will be to the benefit of entire sectors of our economy.

Mr. Speaker, we're very excited by the work of Invest Nova Scotia. In fact, just to help the member for Pictou West and others, when we talk about the large Capital Rebate Program, it is Invest Nova Scotia which will have oversight of that program. So companies that are making investments of over \$15 million in manufacturing or processing will make application to the Invest Nova Scotia board, which will then be processed.

I should point out that when the Leader of the Official Opposition suggested this was just a giveaway and that there was really no value to this or it was the wrong way to go, he may want to speak to his federal counterparts because the capital incentive we have created mirrors a federal incentive which exists in Atlantic Canada for manufacturing and processing. So we are basically mirroring the same type of incentive which was provided by Mr. Harper and the Conservative Government in Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, to suggest that this is an inappropriate course of action, I would suggest that the Leader of the Official Opposition may wish to speak to his federal colleagues because apparently they believe this is an appropriate way of incenting growth amongst large industries here in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I've addressed most of the points that were made. I should point out again the Leader of the Official Opposition suggested that Invest Nova Scotia will be giving money to big business. That is incorrect, that is false. He should know better but, regardless, let me be on the record saying that is incorrect. The previous government had their Jobs Fund which had no bottom to it. It was bottomless where there were no real criteria around it - everything went.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians said no to that on October 8, 2013. They said yes to transparency; they said yes to accountability; they said yes to ensuring that Nova Scotia remains competitive, but not by writing blank cheques - by ensuring that there is a process; by ensuring they can go on a website and see exactly where their money has been invested; by knowing there are going to be strategic plans from all our agencies that do economic development for us; and that at the end of the day we can work with private industry to make strategic investments on their behalf.

As the Premier said, it is by supporting small business, medium business, large business, by supporting Nova Scotians that we are going to grow this economy and we are going to turn this economy around. Merci beaucoup. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 49. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Well, Mr. Speaker, after having put the House through that, I figure that should be enough for today. (Interruptions) I believe I could have unanimous consent for that.



Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. The House will sit tomorrow, Friday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, from the hour of 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Following the daily routine we will have bills for second reading, which will include Bill Nos. 51 and 52 and, if time allows, the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure members are probably well aware, but our new Rules will be starting as of next week. Law Amendments Committee will sit on Monday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, and the House will resume on Tuesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., for those who are looking to do long-term planning. So with that, I move that the House now rise to meet again at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again tomorrow at the hour of 9:00 a.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

[The House rose at 5:45 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 408**

By: Hon. Pat Dunn (Pictou Centre)

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

Whereas Stellarton native Blayre Turnbull has always excelled in the field of athletics, particularly hockey; and

Whereas through Blayre's dedication and commitment to her chosen sport, she has continually risen to the top of her game, having been a member of the Team Atlantic in 2009 Canadian U-19 Nationals and 2010 with the National Women's U-18 Team and is presently the captain of the University of Wisconsin Badgers NCAA women's hockey team; and

Whereas Blayre has been named as one of 23 players selected to be a part of Canada's National Women's Hockey Team and will compete at the Four Nations Cup to be held on November 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> in Kamloops, B.C.;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate and recognize Blayre for her recent honour as being the first Nova Scotian named to the National team, a designation she will share with her friend and fellow Nova Scotian Jillian Saulnier.

**RESOLUTION NO. 409**

By: Ms. Karla MacFarlane (Pictou West)

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

Whereas Jim Nix, from the Abercrombie Country Club, has been named the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA) superintendent of the year for 2014; and

Whereas the award recognizes a member of the CGSA who has held the position of golf course superintendent for at least five years and has distinguished themselves through dedication to the profession, job performance and contributions to the profession and community; and

Whereas Jim has been superintendent at Abercrombie since 1981, a member of the CGSA since 1983, and holds the association's Accredited Golf Superintendent designation;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislative Assembly congratulate Jim Nix on receiving the CGSA superintendent of the year award.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 410**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas the Timberlea Tundra Pounders, a local running group whose mission statement is to foster a healthy lifestyle by creating a welcoming and supportive environment for runners of all ages and abilities in the Beechville-Lakeside-Timberlea area, has just reached its first year anniversary; and

Whereas the Timberlea Tundra Pounders running club was founded by Courteney Osborne on October 18, 2013 through a Facebook post, and in less than 48 hours there were 84 members, with a current membership of 250-plus people; and

Whereas the opportunity is there for anyone looking to learn to run with specially designed programs that suit the individual needs of beginners, and members run year-round including running in -24 degree temperatures;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Courteney Osborne and the members of the Timberlea Tundra Pounders for their community service and wish them all continued success in the future.