



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014

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HALIFAX, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014

Sixty-second General Assembly

Second Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Ms. Margaret Miller

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We will now begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition. It contains 1,216 names and I have affixed my own name to it. The operative clause reads:

“We call upon Premier McNeil and his government to proceed with a service agreement for CT scan imaging equivalent or better to what is being offered by Atlantic Medical Imaging Services . . . as recommended by Inverness Hospital Chief of Staff Dr. Pillai.”

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

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

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the privilege of announcing a new partnership with one of the country's most innovative and admired companies, General Electric Canada. This dynamic partnership between the Government of Nova Scotia and GE Canada is one of the first of its kind in Canada. It allows high-potential Nova Scotia entrepreneurs and small business owners access to GE-developed intellectual property. With the right mix of people, ideas, and strategy, GE is willing to help move innovative entrepreneurs past barriers to growth, providing not only its intellectual property but also technical expertise, advisory and support services, and market research.

Imaginez ce que ça représente pour les entreprises néo-écossaises d'avoir accès à la bibliothèque de propriété intellectuelle de GE et une expertise technique reconnue mondialement. Imaginez ce que nos entreprises pourraient accomplir si, en plus d'avoir la bonne équipe, la bonne idée et la bonne stratégie, elles avaient l'appui de GE et du gouvernement.

Just to give you a sense of the scope of this opportunity, General Electric's library of intellectual property is estimated to be in the tens of thousands. In 2012 alone, GE filed more than 3,500 patents. It's one of the world's most diversified industrial research organizations. It was clear based on the number of interested business owners in the room this morning and the calibre of the companies they represent that everyone agrees this is a tremendous opportunity for Nova Scotia, the kind that propels not only our businesses, but our economy, forward.

Le partenariat avec GE rejoint aussi un certain nombre de buts et de thèmes mis à l'avant par une commission de la Nouvelle-Écosse et adoptés par le gouvernement : encourager le démarrage d'entreprises et l'entreprenariat, augmenter les exportations, appuyer la recherche et la création des partenariats, appuyer la création d'emplois, attirer des gens talentueux et les garder en Nouvelle-Écosse.

Today we know more than ever before that we must move our new technology, products and services to market quicker. Staff for the Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, Nova Scotia Business Inc., Innovacorp, and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency are working closely with GE to mobilize this partnership.

This morning I announced government support of this unique partnership. Through existing economic development tools, we will provide a mix of supports of up to \$500,000 to Nova Scotia companies depending on the needs of each pilot project. I want to make it

very clear again - the funding we are announcing will be to help Nova Scotia companies work with GE, but the money will go to Nova Scotia companies.

In its first year, the government hopes to support two Nova Scotia companies while working closely with General Electric to establish a long-term relationship. We expect this collaboration to become a long-term win-win relationship that could potentially lead many Nova Scotia businesses to accelerate their growth. On behalf of the Premier and our entire government, I want to thank all of the representatives for General Electric Canada for their support and confidence in the people of Nova Scotia. Merci.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for a copy of his remarks in advance. It's a pleasure to rise today to talk about the incredible innovators in our province. I hope that this partnership does, in fact, provide tangible benefits for Nova Scotians. It comes as no secret that I am a firm believer in enabling job creation through favourable business conditions.

I also believe that there needs to be a strong priority on all sizes of businesses, such as small, medium and large. GE, clearly being a large multinational company, has the resources to further boost development in Nova Scotia and, in fact, in Nova Scotia companies and entrepreneurs. I hope they will do this. We support the opportunity for high-potential Nova Scotia entrepreneurs and small business owners to be given access to GE-developed intellectual property through this unique pilot project.

There are some amazing projects and technologies being developed right here in our own backyard. We have innovation incubators like Volta Labs, which promotes the development of Internet start-ups and entrepreneurship. We have digital innovators like HB Studios, based in Lunenburg; they have created dozens of top-quality video games that have been sold around the world. We have innovators like SimplyCast - they are a leading provider of interactive and multi-channel communications software for organizations worldwide. We have resource industry innovators like Corridor Resources - they are a leading provider of interactive and multi-channel communications software for organizations worldwide as well.

The people behind these companies represent a different kind of risk-taking. Nova Scotia is filled with people who have great ideas that could become successful businesses, but in order for these companies to compete, access to technology and global expertise is invaluable. We live in a global marketplace; we live in a competitive marketplace. This partnership will promote the importance of collaboration in driving innovation.

We also look forward to hearing more about what government intends to do to support smaller businesses and entrepreneurs. These people are the backbones of rural Nova Scotia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for a copy of his statement today. I would also like to say that this is a very positive announcement for the Province of Nova Scotia, to have a partnership with a major corporation such as GE and to encourage innovation in our province.

I do hope we will see this spread out to our smaller rural communities, as the Ivany report has indicated that it's now, that we can't wait. So we'll wait and see. Hopefully there will be some ability for entrepreneurs in smaller rural communities also to be involved in such a program. We know that the program has existed in our province and that it's a good thing that a company such as General Electric has stepped forward and that the government has invited them in, in terms of doing this partnership.

With respect to innovation, it is good for our province because that's the world we live in. We live in a world of high technology. We live in a world of the Internet, although we still do have struggles in some areas of the province to get rural broadband. Hopefully that will be resolved too.

It's very important because of the fact that in the last year, we've lost about 9,000 jobs. So this is a positive going forward in terms of having a company that can help small business. That's one area that's really important, because many times small businesses are struggling and find it difficult in today's society.

I would like to congratulate the government for going forward and partnering with GE, and we look forward to the results in the coming years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nova Scotia is committed to making employment opportunities in the Public Service more accessible for youth. In June, we announced that we were going to make it easier for young people to build Public Service careers in Nova Scotia. We said we were going to take greater steps to attract and retain youth, and that is what we are doing.

We are working on a youth employment strategy in the Public Service sector that will create welcoming conditions in our workplace for young people. There are many talented youth, leaders of the future, contributing to communities across our province. We want to provide opportunities for these bright young students to continue to make contributions to Nova Scotia.

We are looking at how we connect with youth on Public Service opportunities while they are in school, during their post-secondary education and while they are hired in the civil service. We need to begin speaking to our young people while they are still in

school, to spark their interest in everything from forestry, health, inspection, law, public health, social work, communications, human resources, and public administration.

The Public Service offers a wide range of meaningful career opportunities in these fields. We want youth to be aware of the many opportunities available to them and consider government as a future employer.

Just yesterday, government welcomed over 100 Grade 9 students into our workplace in support of the Take Our Kids to Work Day program. These young kids' parents work in the Public Service and live our values every day. During the day, these students had the opportunity to attend a mini career fair and speak with public servants from across departments about the work that they do. I had the fortune of meeting and speaking with these students during their visit and the opportunity to encourage them to consider a career in the Public Service of Nova Scotia.

Outreach to our high schools and post-secondary students is paramount to building awareness and attracting young workers. Other ways we are working to attract youth are through co-op and internship programs, which allow students to gain valuable work experience and often lead to longer-term employment. As part of the youth employment strategy we are looking at how we can further strengthen these programs.

The Government of Nova Scotia hires young people every day. Over the past year, there have been youth hired specifically in the areas of communications, policy, engineering, and public administration. By making these hires we have made a difference in the lives of these youth and provided them with an opportunity to gain valuable experience and develop their careers in the Public Service.

As part of the new strategy we are looking at what government can do to make it easier for youth to have an entry point into the Public Service. One area where we've already begun work is removing experience requirements for some entry-level positions to make more opportunities available to graduates or skilled youth with little experience. Up until this point there was a requirement that every job filled in the Public Service had a two-year minimum work requirement, and that is now gone.

With that, I'm proud to report to this House that we have already hired new graduates from both colleges and universities. We are making good progress on the development of our strategy for youth in the Public Service. We look forward to releasing this strategy and sharing more on this and other initiatives in 2015. Thank you.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for providing us with an advance copy of his statement today. Ensuring young people in our province have jobs is something we believe is incredibly important. We have seen thousands of young

people leave the province to find work elsewhere because there are no opportunities here in Nova Scotia.

We are pleased to see that the government has acknowledged this is a problem. The Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has made it clear she has no choice but to look at the size of the Public Service in order to tackle our massive deficit. The Minister of Internal Services also indicated that as many as 300 Public Service jobs will be eliminated as a result of the streamlining that he is undertaking.

There is a temptation to stand here and say that things, while true, are completely unrealistic if we're not being 100 per cent truthful. Public Service jobs would be an excellent job for young Nova Scotians, and we believe they would bring a fresh outlook to some of our departments. The Public Service has implemented a hiring freeze. This will obviously limit the number of positions that are being filled by both young people and others seeking employment with the government.

The reality is that if Nova Scotia's public sector is going to be strong and a place that young people can enter and prosper, our overall economy must improve. In addition to the Public Service, the government should be focusing on promoting economic growth in our province more generally. By banning new opportunities for job creation and creating an environment of high taxes, high electricity rates, and too much red tape, we are driving some of these businesses away. We want young people to stay here and raise their families, but the government has done more to ensure that this doesn't happen than that it does.

They took away the Graduate Retention Rebate, which removed much of the incentive recent grads had to stay and work in Nova Scotia. They have banned future opportunities, and they have saddled residents and business with high taxes and expensive policies that simply make it difficult for people to grow their business and hire these bright young Nova Scotians.

We agree the government needs to take the necessary steps to retain and attract young people to our province, but they need to take a comprehensive approach. They should not focus primarily within the Public Service, especially in the face of a hiring freeze. We need the best for the job regardless of their age.

The minister mentioned Take Our Kids to Work Day. It is always encouraging to see young people taking an interest in the workforce, and we hope that government policies encourage growth in this province so they will have opportunities as they grow up and finish school.

If he can make changes that will allow young people to enter the workforce when they graduate and stay here, our economy and all Nova Scotians will benefit from their continued contributions. It's incredibly important that we get moving on this now so that

our province will be able to provide them with a future, and future generations with the wonderful services we have available to us today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank the minister for the advance copy.

This statement today is high on platitudes and low on substance. The reality is there are no targets here. We've not talked about how we're going to get into hiring young people. The Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, in her financial update, has said that she would look at, there would at least have to be more than one job gone in a location before they look at filling it. So that's a barrier to get over.

If it wasn't so serious it would be almost laughable when the minister talked about attracting workers to health care. We really attacked those workers just a little over a month ago and yet the minister thinks that all is forgiven. This would be a great place to work.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have to stand up and talk on this statement for very long because the lack of substance doesn't really give me anything to talk about. The reality here is that this government, since its election, we have lost almost 10,000 jobs.

AN HON. MEMBER: That's a hangover from your . . .

MR. CORBETT: Talking about hangovers, Mr. Speaker, if the minister wants to get up and talk about hangovers, these were all on their watch. (Interruptions) Why don't they get up and acknowledge that? They want to be the future - quit living in the past; bring it forward. Every job that was lost. In a business that you would think would be almost recession proof, a Tim Hortons closed under their watch - a Tim Hortons. (Interruption) Oh, now listen . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable House Leader for the New Democratic Party has the floor.

MR. CORBETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Isn't this fun, eh? Don't ever criticize, that should be the mantra. There are no targets; no young people will get work out of this. It's already happening; they're already talking about (Interruption)

This is so much fun, because you know what? They believe this stuff. They may believe it, but we know the difference and Nova Scotians know the difference. It's the same as flavoured tobacco - you don't have to smoke them to know they're no good for you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

GOVERNMENT NOTICE OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 627

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

Whereas on November 9th and 10th of 1938, terrible atrocities were put upon the Jewish people as the Nazis murdered, ransacked and destroyed, while thousands were sent to concentration camps; and

Whereas Kristallnacht, or Night of the Broken Glass, is named for the broken glass that covered the streets of Nazi Germany during these horrific attacks; and

Whereas this appalling assault on the Jewish people was an alarm to the world of the ruthless and calculated anti-Semitic regime of the Nazis;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House never forget this dark event in our world's history, and remain ever-vigilant in the defence of attacks on human rights and lives around the globe.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and if I could make an introduction first?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: In the east gallery is Kelly Power. She is a pancreatic cancer survivor and she'll be running her first full marathon in June as a celebration of being a

five-year survivor. She is director on Craig's Cause Pancreatic Cancer Society's Board of Directors - and having run several marathons I wish you luck through the winter training. (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 628

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

Whereas pancreatic cancer has the highest fatality of all cancers, 94 per cent will pass away within five short years; and

Whereas there has been very little change to pancreatic cancer treatment in the past 30 years in Canada; and

Whereas the Craig's Cause Pancreatic Cancer Society is committed to fighting the disease by raising awareness and improving survival rates;

Therefore be it resolved that November 13, 2014, be recognized as World Pancreatic Day for the first time 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 Deputy Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 629

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

Whereas each year on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month Nova Scotians and other Canadians gather to honour our living war veterans and to remember those who gave their lives in service of our great nation; and

Whereas we are able to enjoy and remember because of the peace and freedom that we enjoy thanks to those brave Canadians who have served; and

Whereas recent events in Ottawa and Quebec remind us more than ever of the sacrifices made by members of our Canadian Armed Forces while serving their country not only abroad but here at home;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly encourage Nova Scotians to wear a poppy in respect of all of our veterans and encourage attendance at a Remembrance Day service in communities across our province on November 11th.

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

BOWATER LANDS - ACCESS

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, if a tree falls in the woods and no one is around to hear it, does it still make a sound? If the previous government purchased the Bowater land for recreational and commercial use, yet the public is still kept from accessing these lands, should they make a noise?

So far the only action the Minister of Natural Resources has done is direct his department to create a map. Mr. Speaker, the people of Nova Scotia know where the Crown lands are located. They want to have access to that land, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Could I have an introduction please.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. BERNARD: In the east gallery I have Mr. Joe Gibson. A lot of people would know, particularly the Premier, that Joe Gibson is the executive director of Freedom Foundation in Dartmouth North. He is an extraordinary advocate in the community on behalf of men who are living with addictions and has provided his leadership to that organization for 25 years, so if we could have the warm welcome of the House for Joe. (Applause)

FREEDOM FDN. (DART. NORTH)

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago it was my honour to address the crowd who assembled to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Freedom Foundation of Nova Scotia. The Freedom Foundation aims to provide services to men to foster recovery from addictions, be it alcohol, gambling, or drugs. Since their inception 25 years ago, they have assisted 998 men on the road to recovery. They are in a crucial business of saving lives. They offer a rare thing: a place where men can be safe, feel supported, and work on their recovery.

Their sole executive director during these 25 years has been Joe Gibson. Joe, along with the board of directors and his dedicated staff, have made a monumental difference in the lives of men battling addictions, and are a wonderful community partner in Dartmouth North. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Executive Director Joe and the Freedom Foundation on their 25th Anniversary and thank them for the vital service they provide in our community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

BOSSÉ, ALAIN - PICTOU CO. C OF C AWARD

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, on October 16th, the Pictou County Chamber of Commerce held its annual Business Achievement Awards dinner. I am excited to say that out of the six awards, three went to businesses located in Pictou West.

The Barrie MacMillan Entrepreneur of the Year award went to Alain Bossé, the Kilted Chef. Alain has travelled across Canada, the United States, Europe and South America promoting Atlantic Canada commodities such as lobster, mussels, apples and wild blueberries. Alain is passionate about “buy local, eat local.” He believes that educating young people about good food habits is the key to a healthier future and that the

youth will ensure that the food industry is held accountable for the food that we eat tomorrow. Congratulations to Alain.

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

FIREWOOD

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I have raised the shortage of firewood in this House many times, and I *wood* love to show what was left on my desk on October 30th. I understand the Rules and it *wood* be out of order to use a prop. I feel this gift of not one piece, not two pieces, but *tree* pieces were *knot* from some *splinter* group or *planted* by some *board* MLA. I can say I never *saw* this coming.

Mr. Speaker, life sometimes is a *beech*. I need to *branch* out in order to find that poor *sap* who did this. As of today, I am *stumped*. (Standing ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: Well, the member is certainly adding fuel to the fire. (Laughter)

The honourable member for Hants East.

KELLY, DAN & MARY - DANCE CLASSES

MS. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I don't know if I can make my statement with a straight face after that one. That was remarkable. Thank you for the entertainment this morning.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to rise and speak of Dan and Mary Kelly, a talented husband and wife team from Elmsdale. Dan grew up in rural Cape Breton and, along with his four brothers and five sisters, was taught by his mother to waltz and jive. Mary, who was raised in Enfield, shared her father's love of music and dance and spent many Sundays being taught by him to dance. Together, they were a formidable team, and they went on to take private dance lessons and achieved a silver level in dance competitions.

The Kellys loved what they did so much that they wanted to share their love of dancing with people in their communities. They put an ad in the paper and on the local cable TV station offering dance lessons in the hopes of attracting four or five like-minded couples, and ended up with over 40 couples.

For over eight years, their classes have been a social event that gives them and their students the opportunity to meet people from the area, provide exercise in a fun way and, in the best way possible, to enjoy life. Thank you to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable member for Inverness.

COX, LEO: ATL. AGRIC. HALL OF FAME - INDUCTION (2014)

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, Leo Cox has been inducted into the Atlantic Agricultural Hall of Fame for 2014. From the uncertainty of life growing up in Holland during World War II to an industrious career in Canada in agriculture, Leo has always shown leadership. His faith and his love of family made him strong as a child and made the man who worked hard to build a successful family business.

Leo also worked hard for his community. From his strong support of 4-H clubs to his work with the Inverness Hospital Foundation, Leo is highly regarded by the people of Inverness County. When he first came to Mabou, he saw the need for farmers to save money and enjoy more profit from their labour. He began a co-operative, trucking livestock and purchasing machinery to improve lives for the families who made their living on the farm. He did the same for woodlot owners.

May the members of this House of Assembly thank Leo Cox for his contribution to our Province of Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: BIG TOBACCO - GOV'T. RESPONSE

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, in 2011, as Health and Wellness Minister, I had the privilege of releasing a new Comprehensive Tobacco Control Strategy for Nova Scotia to help decrease disease and death related to tobacco use and to protect Nova Scotians from the tobacco industry. The strategy was a plan to be implemented over five years and was developed in consultation with over 40 organizations such as Doctors Nova Scotia, the Canadian Cancer Society, community health boards and Smoke Free Nova Scotia.

It is disappointing to see the work of so many Nova Scotians undermined by this government's reluctance to stand up to Big Tobacco and their lobbyists.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

DOCTORS N.S. - KIDS RUN CLUB

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, Doctors Nova Scotia was the first medical association in Canada to offer a free running program to schools called the Kids' Run Club, which is now in its 11th consecutive year. More than 18,000 young runners from nearly 270 schools and groups across the province took part in the program last year and

nearly 300 girls from 17 junior and senior high schools across the province took part in the girls-only program.

The Kids' Run Club has been adopted in Alberta and is now being considered by other provinces. Doctors Nova Scotia has received two national awards for the Kids' Run Club, the 2006 Health Promotion and Innovation Award of Excellence from the Canadian Institute of Child Health and the 2012 Ron Draper Health Promotion Award from the Canadian Public Health Association.

I ask that all my colleagues give a big thank you to Doctors Nova Scotia and all youth involved in this program.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

RANDSLAND FARMS - ANNA. VALLEY C OF C AWARD (2014)

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, last night the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce handed out their 2014 Business Awards. Randsland Farms received the Exporter of the Year award. Randsland Farms has long been known as Atlantic Canada's choice supplier of broccoli from its home in Medford. They supply the food service and retail markets of Atlantic Canada and are expanding into the U.S.

It is a real pleasure to congratulate Bruce, Mary, Andrew, Julie and Marshall Rand on receiving this well-deserved award. On a personal note, I'll congratulate the runner-up company, Farmer John's Herbs, which is our business.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island.

HFX. ATL. MLA - *THE COAST'S BEST* MLA

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, it is ironic that the member for Halifax Atlantic would bump me earlier. Every MLA in this House works very hard for their constituents. Today I would like to recognize my colleague whom I have said is the model of how we should connect with our constituents. The MLA for Halifax Atlantic was today named *The Coast's* best MLA and I agree. (Applause) And I would agree that he is a deserving recipient of that award. Thank you.

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

REMEMBRANCE DAY: GRATITUDE - SHOW

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, the familiar symbol of the poppy is adorning the lapels of proud Canadians for the last few weeks as the country prepares to recognize one of its most significant days on the calendar. Every year, beginning on the last Friday of

October up until Remembrance Day, members of the Royal Canadian Legion branches across the country conduct the annual poppy campaign. For decades the poppy has stood as a sign of remembrance and is a symbolic reminder of the sacrifices made by those who have fallen in war and military operations.

As Canadians we owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to men and women who have made the supreme sacrifice during war time. Remembrance Day offers us the opportunity to show how grateful we are and enjoy all the rights and freedoms we are privileged to enjoy as Canadians, lest we forget.

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

BUILDING FUTURES EMPLOYMENT SOC.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, for more than 30 years Building Futures Employment Society, previously known as Anchor Industries, has been helping families in Bedford, Sackville, Fall River and surrounding communities by providing meaningful and individualized job opportunities and recreational day options for adults with intellectual challenges. Whether preparing hot, homemade meals in the Ladle Restaurant or putting their office skills to work in The PrintShop, the clients at Building Futures are gaining valuable skills that are transferable to work in the community.

I'm very pleased to say again this year I will be the auctioneer for their annual Christmas Auction and Bazaar coming up Saturday, November 15th at the Building Futures office on Glendale Avenue in Lower Sackville. There will be seafood chowder, baked goods, homemade preserves and some great auction items, so I encourage everyone to come out and support this great cause. Thank you.

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

TIR - TAILGATING/WINTER TIRES

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, as you know, I drive almost five hours from my constituency and my home in Bras d'Or to Halifax very regularly. I also have a geographically large constituency that I travel around regularly. In light of what I often see on the roads, I urge all drivers to take extra care to leave space between you and the car in front of you. It is just one piece of being a safe driver, but an important one. One of the most frequent types of crashes on major highways is the rear-end crash, and to avoid them, as outlined in the Nova Scotia Driver's Handbook, all drivers should maintain a minimum following distance of two seconds, and not tail-gate.

Secondly, with the turn in the weather this week, I urge all drivers to put winter tires on their vehicles. I've made an appointment to put my tires on my vehicle and I encourage all Nova Scotians to do the same. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

PICTOU CO. 20/20

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: On October 8th, a group of over 200 people met at the Nova Scotia Community College, Pictou Campus, to discuss the future of Pictou County. The main objective was to gather ideas on how to move Pictou County forward to create a culture of positivity and success. Pictou County is in a time of transition and must take a united approach in moving forward. Dave Freckelton, principal of the NSCC, was the guest speaker for the evening. The initiative, known as Pictou County 20/20, was organized by five dynamic women: Susan MacConnell, Nancy MacConnell-Maxner, Jaime Smith, Janice Fraser, and Sally O'Neill. I look forward to assisting in any way I can to make Pictou County an even better place to work and live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

LUN. ACAD. OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE (LAMP)

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: For more than 100 years, the Lunenburg Academy served the Town of Lunenburg as a place of education. Almost three years after it ceased being a school, the legacy continues. The iconic building is now home to the Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance, which officially opened its doors just a few weeks ago. LAMP, as it is known, provides carefully selected young performers from around the world with a tranquil environment where they can concentrate on their music development and their artistic growth. This is an ideal environment for individual musicians and ensembles to prepare for performances, auditions, recordings, competitions, and to expand their repertoires. It is also an ideal fit for the Town of Lunenburg, which is becoming a growing hub for the arts and culture in Nova Scotia and the world over. I ask you to join me in wishing the Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance a bright and prosperous future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MACDONALD, JOHN DAN ANGUS ALASDAIR IAIN: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, John Dan Angus Alasdair Iain MacDonald of Judique, a decorated veteran of World War II, passed away this year. I knew John Dan. We would often share a little bit of Gaelic coming into church on Sundays. I remember him showing me the scar on his knuckle where he was struck by a sniper's bullet. He was a big, powerful man, and even when he was in his 90s, I'd be afraid to tackle him myself.

He joined the Lake Superior Regiment, which was part of the Canadian Advance that liberated Belgium and Holland. During the final push through Germany in 1945, he

was wounded for a second time, but again he returned to action to help liberate Russian prisoners near Brest, Germany. A man of faith, he always ensured that German prisoners were allowed to keep their Bible.

His distinguished service was recognized by the country he helped to liberate when he received Holland's medal of honour in 2009. As we remember those who served, on Remembrance Day this year, let us honour John Dan for the important contribution he made to the world during his lifetime. Thank you.

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

MR. BEN JESSOME: I beg leave to make a quick introduction, please.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. JESSOME: I would like the members to direct their attention to the east gallery. A former co-worker of mine, Pat MacLeod, joins us in the House today. I'll ask everybody to welcome her to the House of Assembly this afternoon.

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

PHILLIPS, LT. JOHN - COMMUN. CONTRIBUTION

MS. JOYCE TREEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the dedication, hard work and service of a tremendous member of my community, Lieutenant John Phillips. Lieutenant John Phillips joined the Canadian Military as a Regular Force member in October 1967, and the Reserve Force in January 1999. He has served a remarkable 44 and a half years in uniform. In addition to his service to our country, he is a tremendous advocate and volunteer within our community. He volunteers his time at the International Shrine Clown Association, the Masons, and Community Watch. In addition to these activities, he is also actively involved in the Sea Cadet program, the largest youth program in Canada, and has been since September 1997.

I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating Lieutenant Phillips for his outstanding military service and exceptional community volunteerism. I wish him the best of health and happiness in his future endeavours. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale on an introduction.

HON. LENA DIAB: I would also like to do a statement, if that's okay, but I will start with an introduction. I ask everybody to turn their attention to the east gallery, where we have with us today two gentlemen by the names of Joseph Landry and Brian Gazeley. I ask that they stand and be recognized, please. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

LANDRY, JOSEPH/GAZELEY, BRIAN - SCULPTURES

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, it's my great pleasure to rise this afternoon and speak about Joseph Landry and Brian Gazeley, internationally-acclaimed artists who created the sculpture of George Washington known as the "Cornerstone of the Nation" at their studio right here in Nova Scotia - in fact, right in Hammonds Plains - to celebrate the opening of the new Ford Orientation Center and the Donald W. Reynolds Museum.

Among their remarkable pieces have been unique sculptures commissioned to celebrate the 100th birthday of Rose Kennedy and the 99th birthday of the Queen Mother. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has a pair of their bronzes right at her home here in Canada, and Saint Peter's Church in New York City has a bust in its collection created from reconstituted remains of the World Trade Center.

What is most impressive though, Mr. Speaker and members of the House - I want to thank them this afternoon for the courage and the inspiration not only that they provided to me but also in the endeavours of everything that they've done for the entire Nova Scotia community in running movie nights right under the stars on summer weekends, right outside their lawn, providing the Hammond Plains people and all of Halifax and Nova Scotia with free movies and popcorn. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

LANDRU, BRYANT - WCB FUNDS

MR. TIM HOUSTON: I rise this afternoon to say a few words about Bryan Landru, a young man, a young father who was injured at work and lives in pain. Mr. Speaker, the normally simple act of simply getting up and down can cause him excruciating pain. After much discussion and hoop-jumping, the Workers' Compensation Board finally approved the purchase of living aids for his home - items like bars for his bathroom.

Now he waits and waits for the Workers' Compensation Board to approve funds to have these items installed. Like the CT scanner in Inverness, these items sit in their original packaging in his home as he waits for somebody to install them. Why? Mr. Speaker, as a government we have to do better for people like Bryan Landru.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

N.S. WINE DEV. BD.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, earlier this year our government took an important step forward for the development of the wine industry in this province when the

Minister of Agriculture established the Nova Scotia Wine Development Board. This board brings together the expertise and experience in the wine industry to guide the thinking on how we continue to grow this important industry. There are now over 70 farms growing grapes in our province, and nearly 20 wineries, with sales of nearly \$17 million of wine sales last year.

The wineries also serve as an important and growing tourist attraction for our province, by the number of wine tours now operating. Other provinces and states that have been successful at growing their wine industry have done so through their collaboration between business owners and entrepreneurs, the research community, policy specialists, and political leadership - precisely the model we see with the Wine Development Board.

Mr. Speaker, the establishment of the Wine Development Board is an important step in unlocking the potential for the wine industry, and I commend the minister for this forward-looking decision. Thank you.

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

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICES - ATTENDANCE

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Recognizing the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform is very important, and the tributes shared in the House are just one way to honour and thank them. Attending one of the many Remembrance Day services is another. Mrs. Helen Kendrick, a veteran of the Second World War serving with the Women's Division of the Royal Canadian Air Force, faithfully attends two services annually, in Brookfield and Middle Stewiacke.

Mrs. Kendrick remembers a time when veterans in Middle Stewiacke filled three rows of church pews during these services, and now there are only two people remaining - her and Mr. Henry Fisher. These services hold deep meaning for our veterans and it must become the public's duty and responsibility to ensure these services remain meaningful, lest we forget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HFX. NORTH WEST TRAILS ASSOC.

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Halifax North West Trails Association is a wonderful community group run by volunteers that promote, protect, and maintain many Halifax trails and walkways. The Halifax North West Trails Association could not thrive without the hard work of volunteers like Bob and Wendy McDonald, who have been organizing guided hikes for all fitness levels for many years. Bob and Wendy are both being strong advocates for health and wellness as well as advocates for our brooks, wetlands, woodlands, and flora and fauna alike.

On behalf of all of the members of the House of Assembly, I would like to congratulate the Halifax North West Trails Association for their efforts in maintaining and improving the trails in our communities. They do it much better than I read members' statements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MACKAY, KAYLEIGH: PARADE OF LIGHTS - MARSHALL

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to recognize Kayleigh MacKay, an eight-year-old Grade 3 student at Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Elementary School, for becoming the marshal for *The Chronicle Herald* Holiday Parade of Lights Christmas parade happening on November 15th of this year. She edged out an Olympic athlete and a few award winners.

Kayleigh is a cancer survivor and has been actively involved in fundraising campaigns for the Cancer Society, the Children's Wish Foundation, and the IWK Health Centre Telethon to name a few. She was also the recipient of the Young Miss Nova Scotia title last summer. Good luck and best wishes on this prestigious honour, Kayleigh.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

CLAYTON PARK WEST MLA - ACSA AWARD

HON. MARK FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege for me to rise in the House today and recognize a colleague. Last night I had the privilege to attend the Atlantic Convenience Stores Association awards gala, where the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, the MLA for Clayton Park West, was nominated as a nominee for the Industry Partner and Leader (Regulatory) Award.

The minister has long been an advocate for small business in Opposition and an advocate for small business in government. Her reputation precedes her in the small business community. The minister understands how convenience store retailing touches the lives of so many people in so many communities. In recognizing the minister as the recipient of the Industry Partner and Leader (Regulatory) Award, the ACSA referenced how important it is to honour the people who are catalysts for positive change and growth. Congratulations to the minister.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. DELOREY: It seems that introductions are all the norm now with our new rules; lots of people are visiting the House. I would like to ask one of my constituents I see up in the east gallery, Mr. Moses Coady, if you could stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I make an introduction please?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. IRVING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the House to turn to the east gallery, where we have two hard-working municipal colleagues from the County of Inverness: a good friend of mine, Mr. Jim Mustard, the outgoing deputy warden. Jim is the son of a world-renowned researcher in the work on advocating for children and early childhood education. Jim is continuing the work of his father in that work in the community. He is also joined by Alfred Poirier, the incoming deputy. Please have the House give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

ELMSDALE LANDSCAPING LTD.

MS. MARGARET MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak today about the wonderful businesses in my riding and one in particular: Elmsdale Landscaping Ltd. Elmsdale Landscaping Ltd. has been in business for over 50 years and employs approximately 150 people. They are one of the largest landscaping companies as well as sod producers in the region of Atlantic Canada. They also have the largest program in Eastern Canada that uses source separated organic compost as a soil conditioner, which in essence completes the ecological cycle from green cart to green yard.

This organization was the recent recipient of the East Hants and Districts Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award for 2014. I want to offer them my congratulations and laud them for a job well done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING - BUY LOCAL

MS. PAMEYKING: Mr. Speaker, with the Christmas season coming quickly upon us, I know many Nova Scotians will be shopping for family and friends for the holidays, and I encourage all members and all Nova Scotians to buy local this Christmas, and all year round, wherever possible.

There is no doubt that you can find the perfect gift for everyone on your list right here in Nova Scotia in local shops, galleries, boutiques, and craft fairs. I encourage you to search out craft shows and fairs like the Holiday Affair: Gifts Made with Passion, a pop-up show organized by jewellery maker Peter Bauer of Boularderie. You can buy delicious local food and beverages for your parties and family meals. Small local and independent businesses in our community support our entrepreneurs, artisans and local producers who are an essential part of our economy here in Nova Scotia.

I look forward to spending my shopping dollars right here in Nova Scotia this holiday season and all year-round. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

KUTCHER, DR. STAN - ORDER OF N.S.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, before I start I'd like to also point out that the members for Halifax Needham and Dartmouth North were also recognized as the best of MLAs. Both are role models of mine, and it's an honour to work with both of them.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a friend of mine, Dr. Stan Kutcher. Premier McNeil announced this week the inductees into the Order of Nova Scotia, and Dr. Kutcher was among the recipients of the highest honour in the Province of Nova Scotia, that recognizes Nova Scotians for their outstanding contributions and achievements.

I am so proud to hear that Stan was recognized for his outstanding work in adolescent mental health advocacy and health service innovations. Stan is truly an outstanding Nova Scotian who has made huge contributions in his profession and still manages to remain involved in the grassroots organization of his community.

Stan and his wife, Jan, can always be counted on to help out at a local event. I am so proud to count Stan as a friend and wish him continued success. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

IODE BOSCAWEN CHAP. (LUN.) - ANNIV. (100TH)

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, 100 years is an amazing milestone and it has been 100 years and counting for the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, Boscawen Chapter, in Lunenburg. On October 6th over a dozen present and past members gathered in Mahone Bay to celebrate.

The chapter was officially founded in Lunenburg on October 9, 1914, during the outbreak of the First World War. Along with raising countless dollars in support of the war effort, the IODE also developed a War Memorial Scholarship Fund to honour soldiers who

fought in the conflict, and by 1919 over \$1 million had been raised for that initiative. To this day, the IODE gives five \$15,000 scholarships to students taking doctorate studies.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the members of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, Boscawen Chapter, Lunenburg.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

FARMWORKS INVESTMENT CO-OP

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians were challenged in the Ivany report to direct our energies toward building integrated, sustainable economies in our province that add value to the natural resources we are blessed with. There is no better example of this than our agri-food business sector. In just three years FarmWorks Investment Co-op has leveraged almost \$0.75 million into 29 rural food production and distribution businesses throughout Nova Scotia.

Through our province's orchard replacement program we are replacing lower-valued apple varieties with varieties that have higher value and higher export potential; next week Wolfville will play host to the 4th Devour! Food and Film Fest that celebrates our food and wine culture in Nova Scotia; and this summer our wineries experienced high visitation through the added experiences like the Wolfville Magic Winery Bus.

Mr. Speaker, none of these examples of value-added investment experiences existed five years ago. This is how Nova Scotia will foster a new generation of opportunities for our families. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: We have 30 seconds. If I talk really slow, I could say the time has expired for Member's Statements. We'll now prepare for Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers - I'll say that again, we'll now move on to Oral Questions Put by Members.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

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

DEP. PREM.: FLAVOURED TOBACCO BAN - FLIP-FLOP

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier. The government's complete flip-flop on banning flavoured tobacco has angered just about everybody. Here are the groups that were supportive of a ban on flavoured tobacco: many community health boards, Doctors Nova Scotia, Smoke-Free Nova Scotia and the

Canadian Cancer Society among many others. Here are the two that spoke against banning flavoured tobacco: Rothmans Benson & Hedges, and Imperial Tobacco.

Everyone is wondering what happened. Why did the government ignore all that good advice and go with these two instead? I would like to ask the Deputy Premier to explain to this House why the government dropped its obviously good ban on flavoured tobacco.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say a few words about this in answer to the question. I think the first and most important thing to know is that this bill will be the most progressive bill on e-cigarettes and treating it as tobacco in the country. Yes, it will.

Mr. Speaker, I know that is true. It will mean that no longer will e-cigarettes be treated just as a commodity, they will be treated like tobacco. They will be kept out of the hands of young people. Normalization of their smoking will no longer be the case. That in itself is every reason to celebrate the passage of this bill.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite the Deputy Premier to tell that to the 3,600 teenage Nova Scotians who are going to start smoking in the next 12 months, beginning with flavoured tobacco.

Far from being progressive, they have gutted this bill and they've made it a joke. It is a shadow of what it was just two days ago and 3,600 young Nova Scotians are going to now have access to flavoured tobacco and begin smoking, who wouldn't otherwise. That is nothing to be proud of. It is shameful and they have made a mess of it.

I'll ask the Deputy Premier, how can she explain how this government managed to bungle something as important as protecting young Nova Scotians from flavoured smoking?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, as I said, this legislation is strong legislation and it's the right legislation for today. I think there is no better reason than to look at what the Public Health Officer Dr. Strang said yesterday, he said very strongly that it will be a better bill later, when we strengthen it later, after consultation.

Mr. Speaker, it's very interesting that this government is criticized when we don't consult and now criticized when we do. That's something. (Applause)

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like the Deputy Premier to show me where one person on this side of the House said, go and ask Rothmans Benson & Hedges what they think or go and ask Imperial Tobacco. No one ever said to consult them but that's what they have done. (Applause)

Do you know what they think, Mr. Speaker? Do you know what their words are? Here is a quote from Phillip Morris: “The ability to attract new smokers and develop them into a young adult franchise is key to brand development.” That’s who the government has sided with today and I will table that quote for the Deputy Premier. They may be proud of what they have done but there are 3,600 teenagers counting on them to get it right.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the member have a question?

MR. BAILLIE: I will ask the Deputy Premier, will they do the right thing and put that ban in place while this House is still sitting in this session?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the many people who were not at Law Amendments Committee, perhaps we should be reminded that the members of the Progressive Conservative Party asked time and again about consultation on this bill and we have allowed time for consultation. There will now be that.

Mr. Speaker, our government listened and we’re going to take the time.
(Interruptions)

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - CHIEF PUB. HEALTH OFFICER:
CONSULTATION - LACK EXPLAIN**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: My question through you, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. There is no disputing the fact that flavoured tobacco, like all tobacco, causes harm. Dr. Strang, the province’s Chief Medical Officer, supports a ban on flavoured tobacco and yesterday I was very surprised when I learned that Dr. Strang had not been consulted by the minister about his plan to retreat from a ban on flavoured tobacco.

My question through you, Mr. Speaker, is did the minister not consult the Chief Public Health Officer for this province about his decision to continue allowing the sale of flavoured tobacco in Nova Scotia?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what the honourable member opposite is not conveying to the House and to the public of Nova Scotia is that there was going to be nothing happening until proclamation on May 31st. By then the work that Dr. Strang has put into tobacco cessation and reduction in our province will be part of a strengthened piece of legislation.

MS. MACDONALD: It just gets more and more bizarre, these answers.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia's most recent Tobacco Control Strategy which was released in 2011 was developed with the involvement of many, many stakeholders across the province. The strategy recommends that government "... support new public health tobacco control measures to prevent tobacco manufacturers from being able to attract new users and retain existing smokers." I'll table that strategy.

I want to ask the minister, why is he walking away from the work of over 40 organizations in this province who are concerned about the need to reduce disease and death related to tobacco use?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what that former minister and her government did was walk away and do nothing since 2011.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister wasn't able to explain his position on allowing the sale of flavoured tobacco. First he said he needed time to consult, then he said the federal government would be working on it. Last week he said the federal government wouldn't be able to bring in strong enough measures. And I'll table that.

I want to ask the minister why he can't just resolve to ban flavoured tobacco and undermine the tobacco industry, not the health promotion advocates of this province.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I can tell the member opposite, and all the House, is that by May 31st, regardless of what the federal government does, we will have the strongest legislation around flavoured tobacco in the country.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

AGRIC.: N.S. CABBAGE GROWERS - ASSISTANCE

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture.

Last week I asked the minister about Quebec cabbage farmers flooding our province with cabbage and selling it below the cost of production. This practice is forcing Nova Scotia farmers out of the cabbage business. The minister told the House that he's doing everything he possibly can to help Nova Scotia cabbage farmers.

Would the minister please outline what he has done to help Nova Scotia cabbage growers?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the honourable member. Indeed, we are going to be working with the industry to resolve this problem, hopefully in the long term. Oftentimes this is a case of cost and cost control on a

local facility. Most of the farming industry doesn't have that tool in place and we're going to work towards that in the future.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for that answer.

A past president of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Richard Melvin, has suggested help to cabbage growers. Among his ideas is forming a working group to document the situation and identify solutions. Another is to have departmental staff document the enriched agricultural programming that exists in Quebec and allows such lower prices to occur for cabbage and other horticultural groups. Will the minister commit today to consulting with Richard Melvin and Horticulture Nova Scotia in exploring this suggestion?

MR. COLWELL: We are always very interested in getting suggestions from industry, and we will indeed consult with them, just as we will consult with many other people as we move forward to try to make Nova Scotia's farms more profitable and more competitive in any market.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: BIG TOBACCO - INFLUENCE

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is through you to the Minister of Health and Wellness. The Minister of Health and Wellness told us yesterday in this House that he got cold feet about banning the flavoured tobacco: "We heard a lot at the Law Amendments Committee that asked us to take a look at some aspects of the bill." I'll table that.

I was at Law Amendments, and the issue people raised were about e-cigarettes, not flavoured tobacco. The minister even told the media on Tuesday that he anticipated any changes to the bill would only involve amendments to e-juice. I'll table that.

Through you, my question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, which of the two big tobacco reps at the Law Amendments Committee convinced him to reverse his decision on flavoured tobacco?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, it's pretty disingenuous for the former minister, under his watch, not to have moved the bar anywhere during his time in office. But that being said, I think most of the members of the House know where I stand in terms of Big Tobacco. As minister, I was able to sign off on a lawsuit that, down the road - whether it's six, seven, or eight years - I will take great joy in seeing them pay out millions to our province for the harm that they have done. In just a few short months, we will show Big Tobacco that there's no place for flavoured tobacco in the youth hands of our province.

MR. WILSON: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the minister - he's just wrong. He's just wrong. If the minister hadn't fired the Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness, he would've been educated on the work the previous government was doing with the federal government around this file, but the first thing he did was fire him. He's wrong, and he's wrong on this bill.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, when did he tell his colleagues and key stakeholders, like the Canadian Cancer Society, about his change of heart on flavoured tobacco?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, without question, so far in my time in office as the minister, I've had the opportunity to speak about changing to a culture of wellness in this province. I'm on course to make sure that, unlike the previous government, we will take action. We will keep flavoured tobacco out of the hands of Nova Scotians.

The bill has a few flaws. We'll correct those with consultation, and we will have strong legislation to protect the next generation of youth in Nova Scotia.

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

ERDT: VISITOR INFO CTRS. - EARLY CLOSURES

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. The tourism industry supports over 24,000 jobs across the province. It is a \$2 billion industry. Sadly, we have learned that four visitor information centres, including Pictou, Port Hastings, Digby, and Yarmouth, have closed earlier than expected - actually up to six weeks earlier. Can the minister please provide the reasoning for these early closures and the dollar amount saved by doing so?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the member for the question. As I'm sure all members of the House will know, most of our travellers that are coming to our province now - and people who travel throughout the world - are using new technology when it comes to travelling. Fewer are relying upon visitor information centres as part of their travelling experience.

We looked at the numbers and looked at the amount of visitation to our Visitor Information Centres in the period in question that the member has raised. It was found that there's a significant drop and as we work as a government in identifying savings wherever we can, this was one of the options, to end the season a bit earlier, which is similar to what we did with the *Nova Star* ferry as well, in light of some of the numbers. I can get the specific amount of savings to the member.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, the Nova Scotia Tourism Agency's mandate for 2014 and 2015 outlines a strategy to attract more visitors to our province. With the early

closures of four Visitor Information Centres that I understand were actually up in visitors, and the unfortunate Yarmouth ferry service ending three weeks earlier than scheduled, would the minister agree that possibly the strategy under this Liberal Government to attract more visitors is simply not working?

MR. SAMSON: I would say just the opposite, Mr. Speaker. In fact I would encourage the honourable member to go visit down the South Shore and through Yarmouth and speak with operators there and see exactly what the numbers are.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a dramatic turnaround to visitation in our province. The numbers from the New England States are higher than we have seen in many years, which is proof that the investments we have made in tourism promotion are working. The success we have seen with the *Nova Star* in restoring a service that was cut by the previous government is working. All Nova Scotians are telling us that they want to see that service continued.

I would ask the honourable member to maybe talk to her Leader and the member for Argyle-Barrington about asking them to support our efforts to maintain that service.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: COMMUN. HEALTH BDS. - COMMUN. INPUT

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. The Minister of Health and Wellness has defended his amalgamation of district health authorities by assuring Nova Scotians that local voices will still be heard. He said that community health boards, “know what their communities need.” He said that their role would be strengthened to improve community input and local outcomes. I’ll table those quotes.

My question, Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, is he still of the opinion that community health boards speak on behalf of local communities?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the new legislation we have brought in through Bill No. 1 makes sure that the 37 community health boards across Nova Scotia continue the great work, the grassroots work with health promotion, disease prevention, but also gives them the opportunity to engage in public consultation - that was not part of what the previous community health boards did - and then pass on to the provincial board what a need or concern of the community may be.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, community health boards, many of them, came to the Law Amendments Committee this week. One of the community health boards that came, actually, is from the minister’s backyard, the Kingston-Greenwood Community Health Board. The chairman of that board, in her written submission, talked about the fact

that she had brought concerns to the minister in May that we needed more protections with respect to flavoured tobacco. She said that smoke is smoke and tobacco is tobacco. There's no disguising it, it harms individuals and can cause death.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is this, if he believes that community health boards play such an important role in our health care system, why is he ignoring their advice now?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member is certainly playing politics here today. What I need to convey to her is that the message of the community health board on this issue has had a long impact on this House, will continue to have an impact on this minister and she'll be able to delight by the end of May, as the current bill indicates, will be proclaimed and we will have additional legislation that will give us the ability to close the loopholes around flavoured tobacco in our province.

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

ENERGY: ALTON GAS - COMMUN. CONSULTATION

MR. LARRY HARRISON: My question could be for any one of the ministers. I put them all in a hat and the Minister of Energy won. (Laughter)

Anyway, a number of projects that are in question in my constituency have communications as the major block. The projects may be good, and I feel the Alton Gas project is a good one, but information has not been forthcoming to the community as to what will happen to the water, what will happen to the fish, what will happen to the property values and so on.

My question is, should the government take the lead in making sure that proper consultation is given to the community?

HON. ANDREW YOUNGER: I appreciate the question. I think it's a very important question, in fact. I agree with him that the government has a role in getting that information out. It's unfortunate that when the original approvals were given in 2007, there was obviously some consultation at the time, but that consultation and updates didn't continue regularly in the community. I agree that that's a problem.

I am participating with Alton Gas and the First Nations on Monday in discussions, beginning the Mi'kmaq consultations, and we will be updating the community on those projects as we move forward.

MR. HARRISON: I really appreciate that answer, because many times, the communities only hear one side and they see the information as being biased. Again, I am

extremely happy that the Cabinet will consider meeting with the communities and setting out the proper information. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: VON CLIENTS - FREEZE

MS. LENORE ZANN: My question today is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. A family in Colchester County says that they feel like they're living in limbo due to the VON freeze on taking new clients or reinstating services for previous clients who have been hospitalized. Ethel Turner's mother was hospitalized on October 11th and although she has been ready to be discharged for two weeks, she's still taking up a needed hospital bed because continuing care is no longer able to schedule her home care visits. She has been advised by the care coordinator that this freeze on accepting new home care patients is expected to last two or three months.

My question for the minister is, how long will Ethel Turner's mother have to take up a hospital bed before she can just go home?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: That is a great question that the member opposite has brought forward. Even with putting an additional \$18 million into home care this year, we know that we're seeing that first major wave of the baby boom generation as 34 Nova Scotians become seniors every day. Meeting the capacity to provide enough home care workers in some cases and get everything scheduled is part of the work of the Continuing Care Strategy. We're moving to what will be a competitive model to provide home care, which we think will bring better results.

MS. ZANN: I thank the minister for that response. Our seniors have worked their whole lives to build this province, and they deserve our respect and our care. Ethel Turner and her family just want her mother to be able to go home instead of being moved from hospital bed to hospital bed, depending on what's available. Through you, Mr. Speaker, when will the Colchester County VON's freeze on taking new clients be lifted so that Ethel Turner's mother can return home safely?

MR. GLAVINE: I know that the department continues to monitor and work. We do have three pressure points in the province at the moment. We have six of the current districts that are handling the requirements very well, but when it comes to sometimes metro - not in a continuous manner - the Annapolis Valley and Pictou are three areas that - and Truro, yes - that district, now the larger district of Pictou, Cumberland, Colchester, that area is under more stress and what we're working to do is to make sure the beds in nursing homes turn over quicker and we get the scheduling for home care in a more timely fashion.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

EECD: TASK FORCE REPT. - INCLUSION

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians have spoken and are demanding a better future for every student. Numerous individuals who responded to the minister's questions prior to the task force report being released were clearly dissatisfied with the current system, saying it was simply not acceptable. The inclusive education model is one area that I believe should be given immediate attention.

My question to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is, will the minister make Theme 4 of the report "Ensure that inclusion is working - for everyone", is one of her first priorities allowing the appropriate supports to be available to educators for timely access to assessments and special programs for services?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for the question. As the member would know and as I've stated here, the report that I received was really the voice of 19,000 Nova Scotians who told us what they wanted us to consider what they saw as our strength in our system and as our weaknesses. The discussions we are having with the partners' advisory group will add some information and some suggestions and ideas to that.

I've stated very clearly the action plan that will be put together based on what we've heard will be available in January 2015. I fully expect, and I will share with all members here, that how we provide for through the inclusion policy and the model we use may well be a part of that plan.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, educators working with younger children are engaged with increasingly complex environments, including policy demands. Educators are also dealing with culturally diverse groups of children, changing measures of new technology, and public accountability. My question for the minister is, will the minister's action plan provide the necessary structures that are needed to support early learning educators through professional development opportunities?

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind all members of the House that whenever any changes are made in what we deliver and how we deliver, it's absolutely critical that the teachers who are delivering the new changes, the new curriculum, have the professional development, have the in-servicing, and really are part of the decision and part of the model, so that when we move forward, as I've said, we know that the teachers will be the ones who will implement the plan.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: HOSP. PATIENTS - HOME CARE LIST

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, Ethel Turner in her own words says: “I just want to take my mom home safely.” I have to wonder how many other families in Nova Scotia are currently in Ethel Turner’s situation with loved ones waiting for the day when they can return home with the help of continuing care. The family has been advised that dozens of other seniors in Colchester Regional Hospital are waiting for that home care, also to hopefully be discharged from the hospital.

Can the Minister of Health and Wellness tell the House today how many people are in hospital and are on wait-lists for home care?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I know that the number who are seniors in our hospitals, there is a group of course who are waiting for nursing homes and then there’s a group waiting to go home to be able to get the special care that our home care agencies provide. I don’t have that breakdown of how many are nursing home bound or how many will be going home, but I can get that for the member opposite.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that information. The government has now passed three pieces of legislation that take away the hard-earned rights of health care workers, including Bill No. 30 which declared home care workers to be an essential service. How can the Minister of Health and Wellness declare home care workers as essential services without providing the proper funding for Nova Scotians to receive home care in the first place?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the demand is very considerable even with adding \$18 million additionally; we’re getting up to \$200 million now toward home care. What I can assure the member opposite is that, with the efficiencies that we will gain through developing the one district for the province, we will be able to reallocate monies toward front-line and, in some cases, home care for Nova Scotians.

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

ENERGY: NSP - INTEREST CHARGES

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: My question is to the Deputy Premier. It turns out that our power rates are not going to be going down after all; in fact, they are going to go up, with interest. In a filing to the URB earlier this week, Nova Scotia Power indicates they want to charge Nova Scotians \$24 million in interest on top of their fuel bill. What’s shocking is that the Liberal Government apparently agrees with this. That’s a far cry from what Nova Scotians were promised. I’d like to ask the Deputy Premier, why is the government supporting Nova Scotia’s plan to charge Nova Scotians \$24 million in interest on top of their fuel bill?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Energy to answer that question.

HON. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, if the member had actually read all of the IRs and not just cherry-picked one, he would have seen that there was actually no stakeholder before the board that is suggesting picking up all of the fuel in one year, nor was that ever the intent in the rate stabilization program approved by the previous government, and this is an outcome of that. Moreover, the fact is that we believe - and this has already been proven this year - the fuel amounts can come down. With announcements in the coming months from this government, the fuel amounts will come down further, and we don't believe it's necessary to pick the pockets of ratepayers, unlike the other two Parties who apparently want to go to them for money.

MR. BAILLIE: I'll tell you a document that many Nova Scotians read, and that is the Liberal Party platform. Nowhere in there did it say, by the way, Liberals believe that Nova Scotia Power should be allowed to charge ratepayers \$24 million in interest on top of the power bill that they already have to pay. Perhaps it's in the fine print. Perhaps there's some magic asterisk that we all missed, but that bill is now coming home to roost, and unlike the NDP, this time under the Liberals, we have to pay more, plus interest.

So I'll ask the Deputy Premier, why not just be upfront with Nova Scotians and tell them the fact that someday they are going to have to pay more, plus interest, as Nova Scotia Power wants and that government supports?

MR. YOUNGER: The Leader of the Official Opposition should know better. He campaigned on being a chartered accountant so he should be able to read financial statements. The fact of the matter is that ratepayers on the other side of the ledger are not only making interest from Nova Scotia Power, they are also actually making a weighted average cost of capital, which more than offsets that amount of interest. Thank you very much.

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

DEP. PREM.: HFX. BRIDGE COMMN. - RATES

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Well, we'll just see about that. Apparently, the answer from the government on power is, no, we're not going to try to give consumers a break, so let's try to give consumers a break another way.

I have another question for the Deputy Premier, this time about the tolls on the Halifax-Dartmouth Bridges. The Premier committed the government to looking into it the other day. We now know that the toll users are going to pay \$200 million for upgrades that are only going to cost \$165 million. There's \$35 million there. Will the Deputy Premier commit the government to making sure that the commuters who pay those tolls get a break?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: I'm pleased to speak to this issue. The bridges are able to borrow up to \$200 million, through the Government of Nova Scotia, which will save them considerable money. That doesn't mean the project would be \$200 million. It gives them the capacity. The figure that the Leader of the Official Opposition is using was really quite speculative. Early on, \$160 million that it might cost - that figure is now getting more fine-tuned. It's not the final figure.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, there is potentially good news in that answer, because the \$200 million didn't include any further savings from having the Government of Nova Scotia stand behind that loan, which may mean that the savings are even greater. Fair enough, there may be savings down the road when the government gets around to finalizing them.

There is an opportunity. Here is a choice for the government: keep that money that they don't need or return it to commuters. I'll ask the Deputy Premier, which is it? Will commuters get their money back when the time comes or not?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Official Opposition is so off base on this. We've made available that amount of money should they need it. They will only borrow the amount of money that they require for this project, which I should point out is the largest project. It's one of the ones that is going to have a big, positive impact on our economy as well. It's the biggest project that the Harbour Bridges have undertaken since the building of the MacKay Bridge.

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

ERDT: CB RAIL - FIN. SUPPORT

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. We were very pleased to support announcements last week around C.B. rail and its future, but in the last few hours, we've been finding out that the deal was too rich for this government.

Why didn't the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism tell the assembled people last week that he was not going to financially support the Cape Breton railway?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, it has been a pleasure working with my good friend, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, on this file. I would ask him to provide more details to the honourable member's question.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much to my friend and colleague for passing me that question. In earnest, to the member opposite, it is an

important question. It's one that has been lively and important for the people of Nova Scotia.

The reality is that Genesee & Wyoming has committed to abandoning this rail line. They want to remove the tracks and use them elsewhere. The member knows very well the mechanism we put in place by way of legislation. The offer that they put on the table included that the people of Nova Scotia, the taxpayers, cover all liabilities, all operational costs, and all capital costs, in addition to the opportunity loss for moving our rail somewhere else.

It would be more than double what we have on the table in terms of the current subsidy, not to mention the massive liabilities that could be hundreds of millions of dollars. That's a poor deal for the people of Nova Scotia. We said no, and we'll keep working on this. (Applause)

MR. CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that's why we negotiate. They may put things on the table, but you negotiate.

We've seen multiple job losses in Cape Breton in the last few weeks, whether it's 130 jobs at the call centre, the grocery store, the Co-op closing - you know, it's tongue in cheek, but it's serious, a Tim Hortons closing. These are all jobs and I appreciate your wind-up.

We agree with the investment in Southwest Nova Scotia. Why won't the Minister of ERDT invest in Cape Breton, or is it a matter of - the last person off Cape Breton Island, turn the lights out?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, after the last wonderful answer, I'm going to refer that again to my good friend, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

MR. MACLELLAN: Such a festive mood here, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad we're all getting along.

The reality on this file is that we've identified a very specific process for how we would proceed with the Cape Breton rail line. We've taken away discontinuance from an abandonment. We've put the power to decide on abandonment back to the people of Nova Scotia vis-à-vis their government.

It's a good decision that we made. We don't want any increased erosion in economic prosperity for Cape Breton; we want the opposite. This procedure, this bill that the member is supporting, will give us time to look at all those options. If there's a viable operation, a business plan for this rail, we'll support that operation.

But like the Premier says, like our government says, we need a good, solid, private sector investor to make this happen. That's what we're working towards, and by October 2015 we'll have those answers. But we're standing up for the assets and for the people of Nova Scotia who have invested in the Cape Breton rail line. Thank you very much.

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

ERDT - NOVA STAR: GOV'T. FUNDING - LEASE PMT.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is also for the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

In October the government provided the *Nova Star* ferry with an additional \$5 million just prior to the completion of the cruise line's first season, and we know that there may be a long road in front of us for this ferry - to mix metaphors, I guess. My question for the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism is, of the \$5 million provided to *Nova Star* in October, how much was used by the operator to pay for the lease of the ship?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy that the Acting Leader of the NDP has asked a question about the *Nova Star* because I was just recently reviewing the timeline that took place by the previous government in choosing who would be the operator for this new ferry. Keep in mind, this was the government that cancelled the ferry, but there may even be some people here in the House today who can speak to this, outside of this floor.

What we've now learned is that when the decision was made to go with STM as the operator, staff were given three weeks to negotiate a \$21 million offer before it was approved by the previous government. Maybe during those three weeks the honourable Acting Leader of the NDP could tell us exactly what provisions they made in case there wasn't any winter work for that vessel.

MS. MACDONALD: Well, Mr. Speaker, this government talks about how transparent they want to be and how accountable they want to be with respect to investing public money in private enterprise, but the minister had the opportunity to answer a very simple question and he blew it; he didn't use his time well.

So my question here is, could the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism perhaps tell us, what is the monthly cost of the *Nova Star* lease with ST Marine?

MR. SAMSON: Well, Mr. Speaker, for someone who sat at the Cabinet Table, who within three weeks of choosing an operator decided on a \$21 million, seven-year deal which had no hope of ever being able to be achieved, which was clearly a political

decision, knowing that it's that government that negotiated that and now for her to stand in the House and ask me for details of an agreement that she negotiated, I would suggest that when it comes to transparency she may want to ask herself who is not being transparent here by asking questions of a deal they negotiated.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**FISH. & AQUACULTURE: REGULATORY REVIEW PANEL
- REPT. TIMELINE**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

The draft of Nova Scotia's Independent Aquaculture Regulatory Review Panel was released July 4th for public review and feedback. At the time, the department press release indicated, "The panel's final report will be submitted to Fisheries and Aquaculture Minister Keith Colwell in September." I will table that.

We are now into November and this report has not been submitted to the minister, and as of October 28th, the review panel's website gave no indication of when it would be submitted, only that it's being formatted - and I tabled that too, just now. My question for the minister is, can the minister inform the House when he expects to receive this already delayed report?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, indeed, we don't control when the report will come to us. It's a totally independent board studying this issue. We are very anxious to get the final report from them. The latest estimate we've had from them is another two weeks. Hopefully that will be met, but again, it's a totally independent board so we're at the mercy of when they're going to supply it to us. We want to make sure they do a complete, thorough job before they do provide it to us.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, through you I'd like to thank the minister for that answer.

It is the expectation that the recommendations of this report will form the restructuring of aquaculture regulations in the province. Any impending changes are of great importance to aquaculture farmers as they try to produce business plans and plan for the future. The industry wants to know that the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture will be able to provide a clear time line of when the new regulatory framework will be in place and enforced.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is, will he commit to a concrete time line for the introduction of the new regulatory framework when he releases the report of the regulatory review panel?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, it is a very important question and indeed we are working and will be working with the report once we receive the final report. We have already taken steps from the interim report we received to move this file forward. There is a great deal of economic opportunity potential in aquaculture but it has to be done properly, it has to be done with consultations with the communities, and we have to do it properly with enforcement.

We're are looking at all those issues now and as soon as we get the final report we will be reviewing that in detail and see how we can implement this as quickly as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

FISH. & AQUACULTURE: OYSTER FARMING LEASES - APPLICANTS MEET

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. Last month, five of eight applications for new oyster farming leases in Little Harbour-Merigomish area were withdrawn by the applicants. At the request of the department and working in good faith, these applicants withdrew their request.

Now these applicants want to play by the rules, Mr. Speaker, but they also deserve to see leadership and transparency from the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture. So my question today for the minister is, has he met with these applicants and communicated to them how long these applications will be on hold?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: This again is a very important question and shellfish aquaculture in the province is a significant contributor to our economy. Unfortunately at the time that those applications were before the public hearing, there wasn't complete information and indeed the applicants did not properly consult with the community before it started.

So before we would consider moving forward on any of these and reviewing these again, they are going to have to do the proper consultation, and I believe my staff has already been talking to them and instructing them on what they have to do.

MR. HOUSTON: We know sometimes in this House we like to dwell on what happened yesterday but these people want to know what's going to happen tomorrow. When can they expect to hear from the department? When can these applications start to go forward? Hopefully we are not going to hear anything about an oyster marketing board that might come in and shut down all these small fishers because we have tremendous opportunities to expand shellfish farming in this province and helping local shellfish famers capitalize on new opportunities will create new employment and benefit rural Nova Scotian.

So while applicants have accepted withdrawing their bids for the time being, oysters and other fish are being harvested on an ad hoc basis in an unregulated manner in these areas. So my question today for the minister is, these applicants want to create new opportunities; they want to contribute to their communities but they can't wait forever, so will the minister provide an action plan and time line to the applicants so they know what to expect and when, and they can be prepared to respond to the department?

MR. COLWELL: Again, our department and our government definitely wants to move aquaculture forward in this province on the basis of shellfish. Shellfish have a great opportunity of cleaning up the water, especially oysters in the field, and there is a tremendous market for them but the applications have to be completed properly. We will work with anyone and everyone who brings an application forward to make sure that it's done.

A lot of this also has to go to other regulatory bodies such as the Coast Guard, DFO, and other provincial and federal departments in order to make this work properly. We're working in that regard and we're very anxious to work with these people and indeed, hopefully get them in a situation so they can have a proper plan in place, the proper consultation, so we can move these forward.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: My question is for the Minister of Service Nova Scotia. The recent Provincial Municipal Fiscal Review Recommendation 14 suggested that the 22 villages in Nova Scotia should be abolished. Those villages weren't able to be part of that consultation. Does the minister think it's fair that the group that was omitted from recommendations would be the ones mostly affected by it?

HON. MARK FUREY: I thank my colleague for the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for Oral Question Period has elapsed.

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 Third Reading.

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 38.

Bill No. 38 - Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on Bill No. 38. I now move that Bill No. 38 be read for a third time. We've had a little bit of discussion, some spirited discussion on this. I wanted to reiterate the reasons why we believe this is the best thing we can do at this point in time to add another mechanism, another tool, available to Nova Scotians to save for their retirement.

It's important for all of us to remember that many people have no pensions whatsoever. Only 40 per cent of Nova Scotians have any workplace pension, and of that 40 per cent, an ever-declining number have defined benefit pensions. More and more are relying on defined contribution pensions, and that doesn't provide the same security as a defined benefit plan does.

In addition to that, we know for many years we've had access to RRSPs as another means for savings, but in 2012 - the last year that we have the figures for - only 20 per cent of Nova Scotians had put any money at all into their RRSP. Unless it's a locked-in RRSP, that money can be withdrawn, and people do need to draw on it at different times because of financial needs over time, whether they're buying a house or having a new baby or things that happen. So the RRSP doesn't provide as much security, either, in preparing for their retirement.

We have 50,000 Nova Scotians who are self-employed, and that group of self-employed individuals hasn't had the opportunity to make themselves available to something like a pooled registered pension plan. You can see that there's a tremendous need for action on the part of helping Nova Scotians save and prepare for retirement. It's in all of our best interests to see people that are prepared, that understand the need for savings, and that move forward with it. This is just one more tool.

I've heard the criticism from the Opposition that they don't think it's all that great or that it's not the end of the world or the biggest thing, but people are crying out for the need to have more means to save. This offers a number of tremendous advantages, so I'm going to go through a few of them. I know some of the members have been listening and understand why we need it.

This is better for employers. There are so many employers that would like to offer a pension plan to their employees - they care about the people who work for them, and they want to help them - but they can't afford the high administrative costs of setting up a program that would allow them to have a pension plan.

In that regard, we've had tremendous encouragement from the CFIB to go forward with this for those companies that want to avail themselves of it. With very little effort, with tremendous ease, they can now say, we want to offer this. They can sign up with a provider that will provide the pooled plan, and they can make available a pension plan savings mechanism for all of their employees. That's the first: they can do it with scarcely any effort, time, or money for the employer.

It's also worth noting that there's no cost to the provincial government to run this, either. It's a change. We've put it in place, and we have made a significant and positive change for Nova Scotians by doing so. It is not a cost to our bottom line. That's important to me too. We don't set up the administration internally, is really what that means. We don't add to our administrative costs by doing so.

A very key element of this is that it's voluntary. We did have a debate about whether it should be mandatory or voluntary, but we believe that when people are better armed with information, when there's good education, when people are gaining financial literacy, they understand the need to save. We want to see how this works on a voluntary basis. To begin with, we heard from the CFIB that about, I think, 35 per cent of businesses, without even knowing too much about it, said we're interested, we want to sign on.

If that's the case right off the bat, there will be more as they begin to see the benefits they can offer to their employees. You might ask, why is it better than just asking people to save themselves? One reason is that this will be tied into payroll. The amount that the individual chooses to contribute will come right off their paycheque, so they won't see it first. You know, it's much easier to make a commitment like that, to put money away, that doesn't actually require you to get it in your hands and then go to the bank and make that contribution to the RRSP or to tuck it away for a rainy day.

Mr. Speaker, because these are pension plans, the money that the individuals contribute will be locked-in and secure. It won't be available for just the next trip down south or some other reason that might look tempting at the time. It will be there to help people in the long run, when they are aging and need to have some replacement income as they hit retirement. That's very important.

Now we know there are provisions for locked-in RRSPs and other pension plans in the event of hardship and that will still remain open, just the same way as it does for the discussions we've all had here in the last few months around hardship and the provisions that would allow you to unlock an RRSP. But it's important, and I know we've recently discussed that here at Public Accounts Committee, about helping people set aside money that is kept separate for their retirement.

The voluntary aspect is very important. An individual can choose perhaps at one stage of their career to contribute whatever percentage they choose - they set the percentage. That would be done with the providing company. But later on, if the next year

perhaps they've had a baby or they're taking maternity leave or perhaps there's been an illness in the family and they're taking a leave of absence, they can change their contribution based on any of those factors, so they can go up and down over their years of work.

Another big part of this is in the title. It's pooled, which means they have the benefit of lower fees than any of the self-administered RRSPs or company plans that companies set up, much lower overhead and fees, and they get the benefit of the large pool of money. At the same time, the funds are portable. We don't have that with the other company pension plans. This way, you can take the plans with you and go from place to place.

You can tell I have a great deal of enthusiasm for the benefits. I have a lot of enthusiasm for the benefits of this bill and I hope that other members of the House will agree with the Liberal Party that this is the right way to go forward for Nova Scotians. Thank you.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I am aware that we had a relatively spirited debate on this in Committee of the Whole and even on second reading, so I don't intend to belabour the issue. I do want to just make a few points for the record.

First of all, I have no doubt that the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board sincerely believes in what she is doing. I just want to recognize that this is coming from a good place and I appreciate that. Our position, which we have articulated previously, is it's not great. It is better than nothing, but it is not the trumped-up pension nirvana that the minister has just presented to us and I think it's important for Nova Scotians to know that.

Voluntary or not, the average family income in Nova Scotia is \$46,000 a year according to Statistics Canada. Out of that, Nova Scotians have to pay their rent or their mortgage, they have to pay their gas bill and their car payment and they have to pay for the groceries and many other items that are part of daily life today. They are also paying the highest taxes in the country, the highest HST, among the highest personal income taxes and, depending on where they live, maybe the highest property taxes and the highest power rates.

This government wants Nova Scotians to save, but they continue to defend the very expensive cost of living in Nova Scotia, basically holding a gun to Nova Scotians' heads and telling them that if they want health care and if they want education, then they have to pay the highest tax in the country to get it, which is really a shame, because that is a false choice.

My point is this: after all those expensive costs of living in Nova Scotia today are covered, for the average family on \$46,000, you can tell them that we have a new voluntary

plan for them to save, or you can tell them it's mandatory or you can tell them whatever you want, but if there's no money there after all the bills are paid, it really doesn't matter. Even if you do have a few extra dollars, if you are fortunate enough to have a few extra dollars today, there is the Canada Pension Plan, which you pay into, which is matched by your employer; you have RRSPs on top of that, if you happen to have a few dollars even then; and the minister points out quite correctly that only 20 per cent of Nova Scotians are able to put money into their RRSP.

The big banks of our country, the insurance companies, the life companies, the investment houses, spend billions of dollars a year inundating Canadians with ads educating them about the importance of saving for their retirement and the benefits of an RRSP. Despite all that effort, only 20 per cent are able to do so.

Mr. Speaker, it's not just that Nova Scotians don't understand, many of them do understand, it's that after all those bills are paid, and after the Canada Pension Plan comes off their cheque, there's not a lot of money for an RRSP, but that's where some of the extra savings, if there are any, can go.

Beyond that, there are tax-free savings accounts, up to \$10,000. I don't know how many Nova Scotians use them. I'm going to guess it's a pretty low number because we're already now down in a third way of saving. And then, for those who have children and want them to go on to higher education, there are RESPs. I don't know how many Nova Scotians take advantage of those - we could look this up, I know, and I hope we do - but it's probably not very many. That's a fourth way that Nova Scotians have to save for their retirement.

Then, if you're lucky enough to be a member of a private pension plan, whether it's in government or through your employer, there's another way, Mr. Speaker. So the problem isn't that there are not enough ways for Nova Scotians to save for their retirement. There are many ways. The problem is that the average income is not sufficient to take advantage of all these things as it is, voluntary or not.

So number one - and there's no quick fix to this - but number one, let's not ban ways of creating new jobs in our province that pay well, that can allow Nova Scotians to earn a decent living. Let's actually get to work on doing all we can to create opportunities for Nova Scotians to make a good wage here at home in their own province. I know that's not exactly the bill on the floor today at this moment, Mr. Speaker, but it seems to me that if you really want Nova Scotians to be able to have a dignified retirement, as I know we all do, then we ought to be finding ways to allow them to earn a decent living as they are in the middle of their career, and not ban those things.

Beyond that, I do want to point out, again, that the best way to allow people to live in a dignified retirement is to enhance - voluntary or otherwise - the Canada Pension Plan. It is a low-cost, high-return, globally-diversified plan. The infrastructure is already there.

The administration is already there. Everyone is already a member if they're working. The ability to make deductions off their paycheque, in fact, the requirement to do so, matched by their employer, is already in place.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure everyone in this House knows someone in their own neighbourhood or their own constituency who is retired today, who is living basically on the benefits of the Canada Pension Plan and probably the income supplement. And that is a very, very modest amount of money. It is not sufficient to cover the costs of living in a dignified way for our seniors. And we all know that.

So for them, we should all be working together as Canadians, federally and provincially, to take a great success story in our country, which is the Canada Pension Plan, and update it to the realities of life of 2014, and make it better. I know that's not in the power of the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board to do all on her own. That requires the federal government and I know their position on this, which is, no, we should have registered pension plans. Well, I don't agree with the Government of Canada on this. I think that they are missing an opportunity to actually make life easier for retired Canadians, and to make it easier for working Canadians to get to a dignified retirement when their turn comes.

So we should redouble our efforts to make that happen. At the end of the day, if we don't do that, it may be that several provinces, maybe all provinces, will create these pooled plans like Ottawa is suggesting. Ontario is already doing that, or looking at it; British Columbia is two examples, plus Nova Scotia. But do we really want a country where we have 10 little plans and one big one in Ottawa when we could all benefit from having one that works for everybody? So I hope - and I just say this on third reading - that the government will consider how this might get rolled into an enhanced Canada Pension Plan at some point in the future if we get there.

I know the minister described this registered idea as low-cost, but I just want to point out again, low-cost compared to what? It's not low-cost compared to the Canada Pension Plan, which is one of the lowest-cost plans in the world. It may not cost the Government of Nova Scotia a lot of money, as she was pointing out, but the fees and expenses and management fees and so on that Nova Scotians will pay under this plan are very high compared to the options, and that's the point.

A recent study showed that for Nova Scotians who are setting aside money for retirement, up to a third of their savings get chewed up in investment fees. That's among the highest ratios in the world. It is not fair to tell a young Nova Scotian, a young Nova Scotian family or a young single Nova Scotian that as they save, only two cents of every three will actually be there for them in retirement because the other one gets clawed away. That's not true of the Canada Pension Plan, but it is true of the kinds of arrangements that the minister is talking about here.

I'll just end where I began. We're not excited about this for the very reason that it is, although better than nothing, not going to have a great take-up among Nova Scotians at the average income level or below, or maybe even above; that it will result in their savings, as modest as they are, a lot of them being chewed up in fees, which is not fair. I call on the government to stay true to the resolution that was passed unanimously by this House two years ago that we should all get to work on improving the best way to provide a dignified retirement, which is the Canada Pension Plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll say a few words on Bill No. 38. Again, I'm not going to plow over much of the ground that the Leader of the Official Opposition just did, but I'd like to echo that we come from the same place on this. It's a very small measure and we wish there was more.

The reality is there's no talk in this government of pension portability when people move from job to job and their ability to take a pension with them and to go forward with that. We would like to see some discussion around that.

The reality is that this whole debate centres around the Canada Pension Plan. The Canada Pension Plan is a very solvent plan. It works well for Canadians and it's the way to go. I know there's a component there that the federal government, as it's constituted now, does not support anything to make the Canada Pension Plan any more robust. But I believe that many of the provinces are on-side with this, that it's the way to go.

Pooled pensions will help some people. I would hope that it won't harm anybody, but once you think this through and there is a third party that is handling those fees - there's the employer and the employee who are going into it, and then we have a third party looking after and hopefully investing that money. But you know, the issues of Ponzi schemes and such aren't new ideas nor are they ideas that haven't happened many times, and particularly in the very recent past. So that worries you.

This idea of having people contribute a small amount and both parties coming up with whatever they would find to be amenable to each party is in a small way good, but does it really help Nova Scotians in a meaningful way, in a large way? I would say that this bill may have an inadvertent consequence, that if people were to get a small pension out of this, it would actually disenfranchise them from being able to receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement if it moves their modest income to a certain amount.

Where that will be at that time - as we know, from time to time, GIS moves. But, nonetheless, let's just say the threshold is - let's for a number just use \$35,000 - and then a couple could get GIS and, if you receive GIS, your ability to enter into other government funded programs is there. That's usually a prerequisite for you to be allowed to enter programs for housing and so on, repairs, and tax rebates. So, if you have this modest, very

modest pension plan, there are some people I know who are having trouble with their pension plans right now as we speak. This is a speech maybe directly to them.

But, Mr. Speaker, I digress. The reality is, if those folks are denied this because they are put over by a couple of hundred dollars, we all know that these programs are income-tested and it's not a sliding scale and it's basically a penny you're in or a penny you're out. It's as simple as that. What will this do to that? They'll come and say well, no you're not a recipient of GIS so you can't partake in some of the housing grants, you can't partake in heating grants, all these other issues - maybe your municipal taxes would be affected.

These are the unintended consequences of this bill maybe. I say this in - you know the minister is listening and I hope in discussions with her federal counterparts that if this becomes a reality, which it will through the majority, these will be considered. These pooled pensions, one would think, are not going to be of the high end.

The other issue in this - as my learned friend, the Leader of the Official Opposition, talked about - is fees. They're the real kind of ghost behind the curtain here. They're hard to find out and, when you find out about them, it's usually too late. Most people during their earning years, their real intention, as far as their income goes for the most part, is focused on issues such as home ownership, raising a family and so on and, regretfully, pensions seem to fall to a lower level, but that's just the reality of people getting by from day to day. You just can't do all these things. You hurry up, you're trying to better yourself at work, you're trying to get a salary increase, you're moving these things forward and one of the last things that you're really talking about is where you're going to go with your pension plan.

Some people are becoming more financially literate, and that's a good thing. But also, I wanted to talk about, will these pooled pensions be used as a carrot on a stick? Say, look, I won't give you a raise this year but we'll work something out about your pooled pension. So you flatlined your salary, but you made a small increment in your pension - which is good for the future, but for the present, it's not all that good.

There always has to be a balance, because I would think that a lot of people we're talking about in this bill who would be able to take advantage of it, from my perspective, are people below the median average, below the average industrial wage of this province, which is in the low to mid-\$30,000s now.

These are issues that have to be thought through. My hope would be that when this bill passes - and it will pass - that the minister looks at these things, that there's no unintended consequences to people, that the benefits put into these plans are not held as a reason not to give someone an increase in their salary, that these will not become an issue as it relates to the - especially if it's a small plan - that will hurt them in their ability to receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement in the future.

It's a small measure. Again, we would have liked to see more, but with that said, I will take my place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, with that, I wanted to thank the members opposite for their comments. Certainly, we'll all be watching how this unfolds. I hope that it will be a big success for the entire province and help more people, the self-employed and people who are young and can carry their pension with them from different employers over their career. I think we will have seen the start of something that will be helpful to people in Nova Scotia.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to close debate on Bill No. 38.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 38. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

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: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 50, the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, be read a third time and do pass.

This legislation supports a request from the municipality and provides HRM council with more flexibility to recover infrastructure costs from new development from within the municipality. This change will help HRM cover costs associated with fire services, libraries and recreational facilities associated with new development.

It will be up to the municipality to determine if or when new charges will be levied for capital costs. Council will be required to amend or adopt a bylaw to implement recovery of these growth-related capital costs from new development.

The municipality will be consulting with the development industry and the public prior to approval of such a bylaw change. We're making this change to ensure that those who benefit most from new growth contribute directly to the cost of that development. With those comments, I close my comments, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had a chance to speak on this matter in second reading and also had a chance to appreciate the comments of the member for Timberlea-Prospect and the member for Kings South who had some good points to raise on this matter, points that have helped me to see the bill in - not in a different light I guess, but I have a better understanding of the bill than when I first looked at it.

I know that - and I think it's a good idea for Halifax as a city to be able to decide about the way it grows and the way the shape of the city takes its form. That's important and that is a good thing to be in the hands of councillors of HRM. That point that was raised by the member for Timberlea-Prospect is well taken.

The member for Kings South had made another excellent point. As I was looking at this bill the first time around, I just immediately started connecting the dots and seeing that maybe there would be a concern for developers. As the member for Kings South said, developers would presumably be paying less for Greenfield land going forward, as there would be a greater cost to develop it. My original concern was that it would cost more in those areas to be developed, but now, as I understand it, that may even out any of the cost increases, the fact that developers are probably going to be paying less for the land on the perimeter of the city.

I just wanted to mention those two points: that I'd like to think I have an open mind in this Legislature, and I think it's important for members on the government side to hear that. (Interruption) Somebody said I'm only giving my own opinion. It's probably not worth much. But I do like recognizing when we hear members stand up and make relevant points. I think it's important to recognize them for that. With that knowledge gained and with a better understanding of the bill, I will be supporting it, as I believe are my colleagues. We look forward to its passing here in the House. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague opposite for his comments. I rise to close debate on Bill No. 50.

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

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 52.

Bill No. 52 - Consumer Protection Act and Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I would move third reading of Bill No. 52.

This amendment will see two main changes. It will allow government to repeal the current provincial cellphone legislation and amend the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act to preserve protections against cyberbullying. It's important to note that Nova Scotians will continue to be protected under provincial cellphone rules until the federal wireless code applies to all Nova Scotia cellphone contracts in June. The changes proposed under this legislation will give consumers strong protections, and streamlined regulations will make it easier for businesses to operate in Nova Scotia.

With that, I move to close the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 52. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 58.

Bill No. 58 - Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 58 be now read a third time and do pass.

We know that apprenticeship is incredibly important to the growth of our industries, our economy, and our province. Our success depends on ability to provide apprentices with the proper training, training that will allow them to get their certification so they can take full advantage of skilled jobs here at home.

Mr. Speaker, is this exactly what Nova Scotia's new apprenticeship agency has set out to do. Led by industry, the agency is working to ensure that our system is responsive to our trades and our workforce and that our apprentices get the training they need. This includes removing some of the barriers our apprentices face.

Changes to the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act will help more apprentices complete their training more quickly and at less cost. Nova Scotia apprentices can remain registered in the province. This was something this government committed to do. This change will make Nova Scotia a home base for our apprentices tracking and logging their training and workplace experience.

Mr. Speaker, these changes will also ensure our apprentices are getting quality training and that their classroom, on the job, and trades training are recognized from province to province where agreements are in place.

We need to do a better job of supporting our apprentices and that means making it easier and quicker for them to get the training they need. These changes will help us to keep our young Nova Scotians here where they can get good jobs, put down roots, and build a life.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that that is what our youth want. In fact I spoke with some young people when the changes were first introduced and they all plan on building their future here. They see opportunities here and they want to be part of them and these changes will allow them to do just that.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and just a few words on Bill No. 58, Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act. Again, I agree with the minister that anything that will keep our youth here in Nova Scotia is certainly a good thing and the more youth we can keep in Nova Scotia, it will not only help this province but improve the economy as a whole.

Again, Mr. Speaker, this bill is not a bad bill. It probably could be better if we could tie it in with a plan to create jobs. According to the government this legislation will allow apprentices to get more training more quickly and at less cost, and that's certainly a good thing. However enabling this mobility will also make it easier for Nova Scotia trades people to move elsewhere and in some cases out West.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will also make it easier for Nova Scotians to return to comparable jobs and comparable wages that we find in Nova Scotia. Unless Nova Scotians see significant job creation in the near future, this policy will likely not provide a good return on investment for the Nova Scotia economy. This comes back to a fundamental challenge for apprenticeship in this province. There is not enough economic activity in the trades to provide sufficient apprenticeship opportunities to all Nova Scotians.

Again, as I mentioned, anything that will keep our youth here is a good thing in this province. Mr. Speaker, it's worthwhile to make things easier for our apprentices, especially making training and certification easier and less costly. In conclusion we would hope to see it easier for apprentices to be educated, trained, and have opportunities right here at home. Thank you.

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

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for bringing this bill forward. I will be supporting it, but I can't answer the other question that is probably out there in the government benches. I don't know why we didn't do it in the last four years. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I move third reading of Bill No. 58.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 58. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 59.

Bill No. 59 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. MARK FUREY: I move that Bill No. 59 be read a third time and do pass.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides authority to HRM Council to enter into a property tax agreement with the owners of heavy industrial properties. This amendment will allow the municipality to recognize the uniqueness of heavy industrial businesses and the use of their property by reaching a mutual agreement on property taxes. Through the Department of Municipal Affairs, the provincial government will identify the definition of heavy industrial properties so it is clear what the circumstances are under which HRM can enter into these tax agreements. The provincial government recognizes there are situations where it may be difficult to assess the value of a heavy industrial property. This can lead to time-consuming and expensive property appeals.

Mr. Speaker, the municipality is in the best position to determine the circumstances where eligible heavy industrial property owners will pay the taxes identified in an agreement. By making this change to the legislation, HRM will be able to react in a more efficient and timely manner. With those words, I close my comments.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 59. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 62.

Bill No. 62 - Shared Services Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Internal Services.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 62 be now read a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 62. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 24.

Bill No. 24 - Civil Service Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: I'm pleased to rise this afternoon and move that Bill No. 24 be read for a third time.

I want to just take a moment on this bill to thank members of the government for calling the bill and obviously supporting this bill, a very important bill as far as we're concerned. Any way that we can continue to support the efforts of our men and women in the military, those retired from the military, as this is more specific about - it defines what veteran means going forward. We've talked about how some get out or retire from the military service at a young age and still wish to work actively in the province, and we'd certainly like to keep them in Nova Scotia - and part of this was realizing that some of these men and women come from a variety of areas throughout the country, and this is yet another opportunity to offer something to maybe keep them here and to continue to raise their families in Nova Scotia.

This is a great bill and, again, I want to thank the government for calling it. With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I would move third reading of Bill No. 24.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 24. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please revert to the order of business, Public Bills for Third Reading.

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 66.

Bill No. 66 - House of Assembly Act and House of Assembly Management Commission Act and Members' Retiring Allowances Act.

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

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 66 be now read a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 66. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR THIRD READING

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

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please 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 third reading of Bill No. 44.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third 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 do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 45.

Bill No. 45 - Black Cultural Society Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the honourable Minister of Agriculture, I move third reading of Bill No. 45.

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

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, the Black Cultural Centre is an important resource for Nova Scotia because it preserves, promotes, and protects the story of African Nova Scotians and their contributions to our province and country.

On April 24, 1982, the sod was turned for a centre to mark the history and significant achievements of the Black communities of Nova Scotia. Seventeen months later, on September 17, 1983, the centre celebrated its official opening. In some ways it was the end of a journey and in others a new beginning.

The proposal for the centre was put forth by Reverend Dr. William Pearly Oliver in 1972. He envisioned a cultural education centre to meet the needs and aspirations of Nova Scotia's Black communities. The Society for the Protection and Preservation of Black Culture in Nova Scotia, better known as the Black Cultural Society, was incorporated as a charitable organization in 1977.

The Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia welcomes visitors to experience the story of why thousands of people of African heritage came to be Nova Scotians and also Canadians, almost 100 years after Confederation, when at the same time, African men, women and children continued to be violently captured and chained and forced into servitude, thousands of free Black settlers arrived in Nova Scotia from the U.S. and also the Caribbean. Following the American War of Independence and the War of 1812, thousands of Blacks voluntarily migrated to Canada.

The centre explores the history of settlement through artifacts, charts and images, including some that explain how more than 20 remote villages were organized so that their population could work together with people beyond their own local communities.

Communities, Culture and Heritage supports the decision of the Black Cultural Society's board of directors to revise the legislative Act, which governs the society that manages the centre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 45. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 61.

Bill No. 61 - Onslow Cemetery Company Trustees Incorporation Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Education.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 61, an Act to Amend Chapter 197 of the Acts of 1901, an Act to Incorporate the Trustees of the Onslow Cemetery Company. I move that this now be read for a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 61. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please revert to the order of business, Public Bills for Third Reading.

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 65.

Bill No. 65 - Railways Act.

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

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I rise to move that Bill No. 65, an Act to Amend Chapter 11 of the Acts of 1993, the Railways Act, be now read a third time.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a few minutes to speak about the Railways Act. As you know Genesee & Wyoming have applied for abandonment of the rail line between St. Peter's and Sydney. We figure that rail line is essential to jobs that are available on Cape Breton Island already. There are four or five businesses that rely heavily on the rail line to bring in their raw materials so they can produce goods and services to send throughout the province and all over the world.

If this rail line was to be abandoned, that's one thing, but if it's to be taken up, it's completely another thing. If that rail line was to leave, development of Cape Breton Island as well as the jobs that are available already would have to disappear. Those businesses probably couldn't afford to bring their raw materials in by truck. We're told that the cost to the environment, the cost to our road infrastructure, the cost to having these materials shipped through our communities, is enormous.

This bill allows the government - it allows Genesee & Wyoming to apply for abandonment, that it can't tear up the line without consultation with the government - full consultation, so that we know the effects on the environment, we know the effects of the cleanup. They can't take those rails right away and use them somewhere else or sell them for scrap, which would cripple future development of the port, future development of places like Donkin mine.

Most importantly, right now there are over 300 jobs reliant on that railway. Those jobs are essential to the people of Cape Breton Island. I will say not just Cape Breton Island, but if we talk about Nova Scotia in general, if those jobs disappear from Cape Breton Island, it has a huge effect on the rest of the province.

I'm glad to stand here in my place today to put my support behind this bill to try to maintain the railway so that we can maintain the jobs we have already, because one job lost in Cape Breton right now is going to be terrible. We've had a ton of losses in the last little while, and as my honoured member for Cape Breton Centre has said earlier, it will be a matter of - the last person off the island, turn out the lights.

We're losing people now to the oil fields out West. We've had an opportunity to develop shale gas here in the province that we hear is being banned. We can't take a lot

more job losses - not only the loss of the jobs - but the ability to cripple future development in Cape Breton Island.

I'd like to congratulate the government for bringing this bill forward. I know that personally I will be supporting this bill, and I know the people in Cape Breton Island are happy that this bill is there to allow us time to try and put something on that line to make it profitable again.

I know by the work of all Parties involved that this is really not a partisan thing on behalf of the MLAs from Cape Breton Island. We can bring this line back up, hopefully, and make Cape Breton strong again and put some future development back in the hands of Cape Breton.

With that, I'll take my seat.

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

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, this bill is interesting. I mentioned this last Friday when the minister introduced this bill for second reading. What was interesting was the way the media grilled the minister. The minister, to his credit, handled it very well, so he doesn't need me to pick up for him, and I'm really not doing that.

It's the consternation of how this whole thing developed with the media. I'm not using the media as a piñata here, but the fact of the matter is, every member of this House agreed with this bill. Every member of this House realizes that a harm economically to one end of the province is a harm to all of the province.

We had differences in Question Period today, but there are times when even we 51 can come to our senses and come to an agreement on something as obvious as this. I'm proud that I support it, and more importantly, our caucus supports it. As the previous speaker said, their caucus supports it.

We're facing a type of out-migration that hasn't been seen before. People leaving our Island, that's not something that happened with this government, or our government, or the previous government, but the reality is, we're seeing a form of out-migration that has not been seen in years. We're seeing people of my vintage leaving, and this is because their children have left the Island for good. They've now made their lives in Alberta and they're having children, and as grandparents, we're saying, I'm ready to be pensioned and they're not here and they're not coming back. They've given up.

So what we see is, many of my peers have said, I'm selling my home and I'm moving out West and I'm going to take my pension from Sysco or Devco, wherever they had worked, and maybe pick up some kind of small part-time job out there, but I'll be with my family and my grandkids.

I say that in the context of this bill, because some people, regretfully, have given up. I would hope this bill in its own way will stop the ones that were maybe thinking of doing that, that those folks will say, our politicians are fighting for us, our politicians - no matter what stripe they are, no matter what level of government they are, that they will do this. I would ask - and the federal Minister of Transport, who is facing some health issues, I wish her well, who is a Cape Bretoner, I hope she would see this as a positive, that everybody not only on every side of the House here but from every corner of Nova Scotia agrees with this, agrees that once that infrastructure is gone, it's gone.

I've been known from time to time in this House to make flippant comments, but this one here is very sincere. I mean it. I'm not a glass half empty type person. To be a New Democrat as long as I have (Interruption) - and not necessarily with water - being a New Democrat for as long as I have, I have suffered more losses than victories. I am used to picking myself up and dusting myself off and fighting another day. I think an intrinsic thing not so much being a New Democrat but maybe being a Cape Bretoner, or maybe being a New Waterford.

This is really a very important bill. In some ways, some could say, it's small in nature. It doesn't stop the operator, Genesee & Wyoming from doing this. To them I would say, yeah, you're right. But what it does say, it signals to anybody that is coming behind this group that want to do a short-haul railway that the people are committed to this. The government from all levels and business are speaking the same language on this one - that this is needed, that we need to go forward with this. This is a vital piece of infrastructure in the economy of Nova Scotia.

We have heard talks to the point of direct employment, if you will, about exporters and whether it is preform or a rope company - all these different employers. I don't know where they are going to go with their product for shipping and what it would mean. Would it make it less competitive? I'm assuming it will. If it becomes less competitive, although it is still of great quality, the reality is you can only spend so much money. If you only spend so much money, you're only buying so much product, you're only then producing so much product, then the inevitable realization of what size workforce you should have.

Those are the domino effects here. With those few words, we support third reading of this bill. We wish the Minister of ERDT well in trying to transform the ownership of that railway and hope the next time that we're in this House, we're talking about an abundance of users and that we're moving forward as fast as any freight train. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, government is amending the Railways Act to protect the rail link and future economic opportunities in Cape Breton and for the province. In October Genesee & Wyoming, GW, applied to the URB to discontinue and abandon the

rail line between Sydney and St. Peter's. Abandoning the rail line means pulling up the tracks, a move that would virtually end any hope of re-establishing the rail line in the future.

These amendments we have introduced mean that Genesee & Wyoming, and any short-line operator, would have to follow a more rigorous process before abandoning the rail. These amendments will ensure that full implications of pulling up rail lines are well understood before drastic action is taken. Since 2003, Nova Scotians have invested \$23 million in subsidies to help keep the Cape Breton rail line running.

Regulations to guide the new process will be developed in consultation. The towns and municipalities where the rail lines are located, the companies that depend on the rail, the railway and others will have an interest and will be involved. The regulations will address safety, access, ownership, and the environment, including plans for remediation if the rails are removed.

Rail crossing fees to land owners are still an outstanding issue. Issues like these will have an opportunity to be addressed as well. To quote the minister, "This legislation is not just about the number of rail cars on the line today. If we let the tracks go, Nova Scotia's \$23-million investment is gone, and some future opportunities go with it." It would be irresponsible to let this vital transportation link go without a fight." Thank you.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words on this bill. I thank the minister for bringing it forward and to support my friends and colleagues from Cape Breton, mostly because in southwestern Nova Scotia, we no longer have a rail system at all.

There were two historic train rails that travelled from Halifax to Yarmouth: one on the South Shore, one through the Valley on the other shore. I remember as a child, probably in the late 1970s or early 1980s, when the abandonment happened of the South Shore rail - completely ripped up at that time, sold off to, I believe, somewhere in Ohio or somewhere in the Midwest of the U.S., and saw that line sit there for many years afterwards as a corridor for four-wheelers or other vehicles.

We've seen the Valley run, the DAR run, get shut down in the early 1990s. There was a dayliner - as a matter of fact, you could take the dayliner from Halifax to Yarmouth and Yarmouth to Halifax. I remember taking it a number of times as a student at Saint Mary's, a couple of times taking it down from Halifax to Church Point to see my girlfriend, who is now my wife; she used it on a couple of occasions too. What a tremendous way to travel the province, by rail. Of course, the opportunity was always there for the transportation of cargo through our communities, whether it was wood products, whether it was fish products, whatever it was - it was used to a certain point.

In the history of the Valley-Yarmouth run, the DAR run, is that cargo was pulled off that a number of years before the VIA Rail run was taken off, but alas, I think it was in 1992, if not 1991 - somewhere in that range - that the full rail was abandoned basically from Windsor going to Yarmouth. Subsequently we saw that rail torn up, removed and sold somewhere else in North America.

Thankfully, we see a new rebirth in those properties, under a new life as Rails to Trails. But if you look at what they provide us economically, it's not the same kind of economics. It's tourism economics, it's healthy lifestyle, those kinds of things that it does give us. Yet being able to transport goods is an important point to our businesses, being able to get large products to market, which is what the Cape Breton railway is doing - to be able to take those things from Sydney and Cape Breton and move them into a larger market, whether it's in the Midwest, whether it's down the eastern seaboard or into Upper or Lower Canada.

If it wasn't for the move of this government, we know full well that the proponents would be abandoning that section between Sydney and St. Peter's. They would be tearing it up and it might have made a nice Rails to Trails at some point. But I would say it should remain as the economic driver that it really is for Cape Breton, for the opportunity that the Port of Sydney will possibly create, for what the Donkin mine might be able to do for the economy and transport coal. There are so many possible opportunities for that that I think it would be upsetting to see that completely shut down and torn up.

With those few short words, it's just simply - living in an area that had a rail service, to see how it was torn up and how it will never, ever be put back, I think it's important for us to support this move to make sure that the rail stays in Cape Breton. So with those few short words, I thank the minister for bringing it forward and know that it does have my support.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to just to say a few words on this particular bill. I want to thank the minister for putting forth this particular bill, the Railways Act. Again, the member for Cape Breton Centre mentioned about the out-migration of people from Cape Breton Island and that is critical to this island. When we look at the infrastructure that we have across the Province of Nova Scotia, we're certainly in a decline. When we look at the line from Port Hawkesbury to Sydney, it's critical that we do everything in our power to maintain that, to give us more time to have a look to see if we can make it even more feasible than it is at the present time. Again I agree with the minister's decision to bring this bill forth in the House.

It will just give the province more time to look at all the possibilities that are out there to make this line a more viable line. The member for Northside-Westmount mentioned about the companies that are in Cape Breton now that rely on this particular

line, that they need it and it's going to have more cost pressures for them if this line is closed and ripped up and sold, or whatever they may do with it.

Again, for the potential to open up other places like what was mentioned, the Donkin mine and so on, it has great potential to assist other companies in the future, and again, if it's not there, it can't support any companies in the near future.

One thing is for sure: once this rail line is gone, it's gone forever. Whatever we can do in the interim to stall this, to promote it, to look at all the alternatives, I think it's very, very important that we do that. I think it's probably the most responsible thing to do for all members in the Legislature, to look at this particular part of infrastructure and to determine if it can be more feasible.

Again, I certainly support the third reading and I thank the minister for bringing this forth. Thank you.

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I want to take an opportunity, like my other colleagues, to say a few words about the Railways Act. I want to start off by saying that last Friday, I watched as the minister introduced this bill to the House of Assembly. I watched it on Legislative TV.

I have to say that there was a certain amount of pride that swelled up within me knowing that there was a made solution within this House, a solution that had been worked on by members from all sides of the House. I think for the new members of the House, there is a lesson to be learned here. What we saw happening last week is really what good government is all about. It's about people working together for all Nova Scotians for what's good for Nova Scotians. (Applause)

I want to congratulate the minister for coming forward with that idea and helping to make it happen within his government. I've said for a long time when this took place and we heard word that the railroad was going to disappear that we were lucky to have two very capable Cape Bretoners in the Cabinet of the Province of Nova Scotia. I stand by that to this day. (Applause)

Now that doesn't mean that we're always going to get along and we're always going to agree, but what it does mean is when the time is right, the right thing is done. Now there has been a lot more activity by the Minister of TIR, but seriously, when we look at what's going on, we hear across this province it's important to have a strong core and we do have a strong core in the City of Halifax and surrounding areas. But at the same time, in order for that strong core to remain, the outlying areas need to be strong. If they start to deteriorate, then indeed it's going to have an effect everywhere.

My colleague from Cape Breton Centre had mentioned about the out-migration. It is a true problem in Cape Breton Island. It is a huge problem. But it's not just Cape Breton Island. When you look around this province and you look around the rural areas of this province, people are leaving. They're going away for different reasons.

The toll that would be taken on our infrastructure if we lose this railroad, they claim that one rail car is the equivalent to four and one-half tractor-trailers on the road. Our infrastructure is at best being tested most times. I think maybe we should look at putting a big sign at the border of New Brunswick saying, any freight going to Newfoundland and Labrador, we are going to make you pay extra to go across our roads. Put it on the train and send it to Cape Breton and then move it on the ferries.

We've got to start thinking outside the box. We have to start listening to what Ray Ivany and company have told us in the Ivany report, that indeed we have to do things differently. What we've done - and we've seen three different governments attack this problem - we stayed inside the box and it is not working. We have to get together and be strong and be different if we are going to make a difference.

I've had the opportunity to be in this House for a number of years now, but working together is something that makes me very proud of this day in this Legislature, being able to say that we have seen a path and we're working together to make it happen. Some people will say, you know it's a silly idea and I say to them, it's not silly. One of the things that I believe that I have to do as a legislator is make sure I do everything I can to give hope to my constituents, to give them a reason to believe that there is going to be something out there.

I firmly believe that there is going to be a lot of prosperity in Nova Scotia; there is going to be prosperity on the Island of Cape Breton and yes, I believe, contrary to what the *Cape Breton Post* would like to say, that there is going to be a Donkin mine and it is going to add to the future of this province. Remember - and all of us remember - that when we do well in that part of the province, the rest of the province will do well also. For a long time on Cape Breton Island we have been a major contributor to the economy of Nova Scotia, with the steel plant, with the mines. When other things weren't going that well in this province, we were there providing employment for people right across this province.

Now we have a new opportunity and that opportunity has become greater because of this bill that has been passed. Will it make a difference? I believe it will but it won't just happen. There is still a lot of work ahead for the minister, for the government, and for his committee. I remember being at a meeting in Sydney when this first started and we had members from the federal level, the provincial level and the municipal level, and the one thing we all had in common is that we wanted to make a difference and we wanted to be part of a solution, not create another problem.

I am very happy to see that the minister's panel is working, to see this idea that has come ahead. When we go to vote on this a little later today, I'm going to be very happy to

lend my support but I also want the minister to know that I'm willing and will be there, as we move on, to do whatever I can to make this a successful venture, to make sure that the railroad stays, that the jobs that are there, the 300 jobs we've talked about time and time again, stay and we add more jobs.

The development of the Port of Sydney, the development of the Donkin mine, a gas pipeline to Point Tupper, and who knows what else, it's all possible; it's all within reach. What we have to do is make sure we work together to make those types of things happen.

With those few words, I'll take my seat but I will be very proud to support this bill.

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

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, if you don't mind could I ask for your indulgence for an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. MACLELLAN: I would like to draw the member's attention to the east gallery. Very fitting, we have two important guests today, two councillors from the CBRM. I'm going to ask them to rise and receive the warm applause from the House when I mention them. First we have George MacDonald, CBRM Councillor from Glace Bay, also the deputy mayor. George has been a tremendous asset for me, also my guidance counsellor at Glace Bay High, so you can blame him for the mess I'm in today.

We also have Lowell Cormier from New Waterford. We're happy to have Lowell here, as well. Lowell has been a relatively recent addition to the CBRM council, but a very effective member. He has done tremendous work in his community of New Waterford on volunteer events. He has been a long-time coach and a great ambassador for New Waterford, so we appreciate having both councillors here today. I did that on behalf of myself and the member for Cape Breton Centre.

First and foremost, I want to thank all the members of the House who have spoken today and who have indicated their support for Bill No. 65. You know, very fitting remarks from the member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisburg. It's funny, as he was speaking, saying all those very nice things about me, I reached into the garbage can and pulled out the New Boston Road proposal for the paving. (Applause) I'll put it back in the garbage; that was just a gesture. (Interruptions)

I just want to say - I know that we're going to close this bill and basically everything has been said about the intent. I just want to add for final comment a few things. This is a good bill. What it does ultimately, at the end of the day, it establishes a process

that we don't have. It is very specific to the Cape Breton Railway and the Sydney subdivision at this point, but the reality is that we have a process under the URB that did not separate discontinuance from abandonment.

As an operator and a private sector player, Genesee & Wyoming or any operator in this province on a short line has the ability to discontinue and they have the ability to abandon a line that they deem to be not profitable. From our perspective, though, this is about an investment on behalf of the taxpayers of Nova Scotia, who have put \$23 million into this rail line since 2003. It's about the opportunities that exist - and the member so aptly explained them, about what's going to happen in Donkin, what's going to happen in the Port of Sydney. This is a rail line that we built and we invested in. We want to keep it whole.

To be very clear on a couple of matters, there has been much media reporting. Genesee & Wyoming has come out with a statement suggesting that they put an offer on the table to the government. What I want to say about that is, this offer was one that just couldn't be absorbed by taxpayers. It was a tremendous amount of money, tremendous amount of liability and tremendous amount of risk. That isn't something that a government should take on.

What we've looked for - and to be very clear, we have a very specific timeline. October 1, 2015, is when we want to establish all the information that we need - what the traffic will look like, what the liabilities will look like, what the overall impact of the rail line is on the intermodal transportation that exists vis-à-vis the Cape Breton economy.

These are very important questions to ask. This is not about the private sector. This is not about interference in any way. What this does is it establishes a clear process for us to consider all the impacts of losing this rail line and the abandonment process. That's what this is about. The Genesee & Wyoming operators can still follow this process. This just lays it out so that the taxpayers are protected.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we need time - the CBRM, mayor and council, ourselves as a provincial government. We're still hoping for some support and influence and a role to play from the federal government here on the Sydney subdivision. But at the end of the day, this is about making good decisions. This is about considering all the information and the impact that we would have on our economy if we allowed these tracks to be abandoned.

So again, I think in the spirit of the unity of the co-operation here, there are partisan issues; there are things that we disagree on. At the end of the day, we all want Nova Scotians to be working. We all want a vibrant economy. We all want growth in our GDP so we can manage the debt and deficit. Supporting the Sydney subdivision, supporting the Cape Breton economy is important.

We have the work now, Mr. Speaker. The onus is on us, the representatives of the people of Cape Breton, to make this happen and to show that this line is viable. This bill gives us that opportunity to do just that. We're certainly proud as a government, and as we can tell, this is a very united bill. We've got the entire support of the 51 members of the Nova Scotia Legislature.

With that, I want to thank the Opposition, thank the CBRM, and we'll get this done. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 65. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

[4:15 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Ms. Margaret Miller in the Chair.]

[4:36 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Ms. Margaret Miller in the Chair.]

MADAM SPEAKER: The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on Bills reports:

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

Bill No. 51 - Motor Vehicle Act.

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

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, could you seek the unanimous consent of the House to have Bill No. 51 now read a third time?

MADAM SPEAKER: There is a request that Bill No. 51 be now read for a third time.

Is it agreed?

I hear a No.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 6.

Bill No. 6 - Petroleum Resources Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Madam Speaker, I will not be speaking long on this bill. It's a strange bill, because while at the end of the day we will be voting for this bill, it's a bill that absolutely nobody is running up to the gate to say, boy, what a great piece of legislation this is. (Interruption) Well, maybe the minister is.

It's a bill that both sides - if you want to pick sides in this - came before Law Amendments. The groups that were pro-fracking, if you will, weren't happy. Those who did not like fracking, by and large, were not happy, but would say, we'll kind of hold our nose and see what the future brings us. We don't know what the future is going to bring on this bill.

I somewhat agree with the government when it comes to that. There is no large-scale hydraulic fracking going on in the province as we stand here today. That's a good thing. The reality is, what we really want to know is, how is this going to roll out? We would hope that by the time that type of industry comes to fruition in this province, there are proper guidelines set up.

If anybody thinks that this an outright prohibition on fracking, I believe they're wrong. We've already gone down the road. There is fracking allowed for coalbed methane, and so it will be there.

The high-volume fracking, we looked for a definition. We really were not successful in attaining that. The folks that came to Law Amendments talked about more community involvement in the say of fracking. Really, there's no or little comfort for them. This is a bill that will go a little way of drawing a structure. If you think of it - what you need, what you're looking for is to build a home, a house, for protection against the elements. The best way to describe this bill is someone put a lean-to up.

AN HON. MEMBER: The footings in.

MR. CORBETT: No, they didn't even put the footings in. It's a lean-to and with the bad weather conditions, it could blow over fairly easily. But as we sit here today in absence of Bill No. 6, there are no regulations; there is nothing out there to protect anybody. Now is this a bill that's in agreement with the Wheeler report? It's off base in a few areas, Madam Speaker.

Someone said the other day the government had this bill in their hands for three days and I said that study lasted about as long as a Kardashian marriage, Madam Speaker. (Interruptions) I have children. I'm blushing, give me a second to compose myself. I'm feeling all verklempt.

Madam Speaker, there was a real rush to have this put forward and before I get too far into this, let me thank Wheeler and the people who were on his commission because they did some very hard and very good work on this report and Dr. Wheeler is to be congratulated, as is the rest of his commission because this is not easy.

Now we can debate the fact of who did or didn't show up at their meetings. We can sit here and debate about who did and didn't show up on Election Day. Everybody had the right to go to these meetings and if you opted not to go, you did so on your volition, and maybe some would say your own peril.

What we have is a report and now we have a bill that is less than perfect but it will start building a framework around the industry and I believe the industry itself, as any industry whether it's the oil and gas industry, whether it's the lumber industry, the fishing industry, everyone needs a framework in which to work from.

I come from a part of the province where coal mining and exploration for that resource was done in a time - it was very much the Wild West and how they explored for that resource. Hopefully, if we have that resource, it's done in the safest way possible. But, Madam Speaker, what we really have to start asking ourselves is when are we going to take

serious steps towards the elimination of the use of carbons? Really, the crux of the matter here is how do we get ourselves off of carbon-based fuels? That's really what it is.

I'm not advocating for fracking, Madam Speaker, but we would hope that if it is to happen, it is done in the safest way possible. I would think if you polled Nova Scotians today and you said, we can do fracking in the most secure, safest way possible or we could explore uses of pulling ourselves back from carbon and give ourselves a target to get off carbon based energy, I would think without fear of contradiction, that they would go for getting rid of carbon. Now I noticed just a week or so ago, I think it was from a learned group of doctors, and it might have been through the UN, they talked about the issues of carbon and carbon-based fuels and what it is doing to our environment.

Now I am not one who could be put in that category as a person who lives in the woods and lives off the earth and so on. Carbon-based fuels fed our family for many years, Madam Speaker. (Interruptions) I'll try not to follow some rabbit tracks that are being laid.

I just didn't want to be pejorative because sometimes people refer to those people by a name and I don't think it is appreciated, but the idea that they have a view of the world and they see a world that should be sustained without carbon.

Now are we going to turn that industry around and see us, in less than a generation, be off carbon? In a perfect world that would be lovely, but it's not going to happen. What I would really love to do is what I would call the front end of this bill, for us to work with industry and make sure it's the safest possible way. But the real task of any government, whether it is in this province, in this country, in this hemisphere, in this world, is to help us get off carbon-based fuels. If we can do that, everyone will be better.

This is not anti-employment, it's not anti-job, it's not anti-anything. What it is is pro-people, being able to live a good life, in a good environment and, hopefully, that will aid and abet our economy. Madam Speaker, with those few words, I take my place.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Madam Speaker, I know, rising here to speak tonight to Bill No. 6, the amendments to the Petroleum Resources Act, we spent a lot of time debating this bill in the Legislature so far, and we've heard from all different sides on if it's good, if it's bad, if it's safe, and if it's unsafe.

I feel that the outright banning of this way of creating jobs in our province is wrong. We've heard time after time in Question Period, and in some of the debates that go on, we've lost over 9,000 jobs in the last year. And this is one of the new ways that we have of creating jobs in industry here in our province. You know, to create 1,500 of those jobs would probably lead to another 3,000 jobs in new development of business, people spending more money in the grocery stores, people spending more money in our car

dealerships, our furniture stores, you name it. It would keep those people working, maybe add some more, and it would keep those people employed to spend their money here in our province, and it would put 1,500 more people back to work here in our province that would either come back from out West or people who would be new to the industry.

Madam Speaker, I think, as we have said so far, that an outright ban is wrong. I'm going to quickly - maybe not so quickly - go over why the Progressive Conservative caucus opposes this bill. Number one, Nova Scotians need jobs. And, contrary to maybe what some people in western Canada or in the big cities in Ontario believe, Nova Scotians want jobs. I know we get transfer payments from other parts of the country and some of them are saying, they are happy to take our transfer payments but they're not happy to try to develop their industry.

As we said, Madam Speaker, last year alone there were over 9,000 jobs that disappeared in our province. That means thousands of hard-working people have to weigh their options, to decide whether to stay here at home with no job or move away for meaningful employment.

I have a letter here from a Mr. Bruce Strum, who is the owner of Strum Consulting in Bedford. He employs 45 professional engineers, hydrologists and environmental scientists along with technical staff on a wide range of commercial and industrial projects across Nova Scotia. Their clients include land developers, manufacturers, builders, mining entities, waste handlers and industrial processors, just to name a few. He says that this proposed bill on hydraulic fracturing will result in the loss of local business opportunities as well as discourage outside investors from coming here to explore and develop clean energy resources.

A couple of points in that letter. One point says that this bill sends the message that we don't want onshore energy investment in our province. The potential for production of shale gas in Nova Scotia is largely unexplored. Exploration is needed to ultimately determine whether commercially viable resources exist here. Bill No. 6 sends the wrong message to Nova Scotia's political arena and discourages exploration companies from coming here to Nova Scotia. The loss of exploration activity in and of itself likely to be caused by Bill No. 6 will result in the loss of millions of dollars to local service providers such as Strum, and other additional taxes and employment will be lost and production sales.

It also suggests that we haven't done our homework. Around the globe, development of shale gas resources has been very successfully implemented through industry-driven protocols and best management practices. The role of resource development rests with that of industry through the development of safe and environmentally sustainable industry.

The best use of legislation should be placed on the mantel that the responsibility on a willing and safely driven development industry, not to stand in its way by closing the doors to the arrival of that investment. Without the support of a government that encourages safe development practices, sustainable investment, rural employment and resulting benefits we see enjoyed throughout existing places and industry best management practices, Nova Scotia sends the message that we have ignored scientific and fact-based decision-making processes.

He goes on to say that Bill No. 6 will undermine investment confidence in energy projects in Nova Scotia. In discussions with oil industry developers, it was indicated that offshore oil and gas producers also feel threatened. Offshore benefits totalling in the billions have flowed to Nova Scotia coffers for years through safe, sustainable offshore industry. If onshore development is strongly discouraged, such as by legislation like Bill No. 6, confidence in offshore producers will suffer as well. No company wants to make investments in millions and millions of dollars in infrastructure, building the local economy and supporting Nova Scotia employment, if they think the local government is closed for business as is suggested here by Bill No. 6.

Bill No. 6 ignores the sustainable development recommendations from the Wheeler report. The report is a lengthy and complex document, but clearly stated shale gas development can be undertaken in a clean, safe, sustainable and economically rewarding fashion. In Alberta, tens of thousands of wells drilled and fractured; few, if any, cases where damage has been shown to have occurred. The responsible exploration and development of well construction practices, the people of Alberta and Saskatchewan have benefited greatly.

Those wells have been since connected to pipelines, ensuring safe and sustainable delivery to markets throughout the country. The placement of that infrastructure has benefited the people of western Canada tremendously and we here in Nova Scotia have the opportunity to share in that prosperity, but developing initiatives that ensure responsible and sustainable practices must be implemented. Those benefits will take place in rural Nova Scotia, where drill sites might exist, where pipelines might transport gas safely, and where our sons and daughters - the pipefitters, truckers, welders, and government inspectors - currently can only dream about being able to live near their parents and where they grew up.

Madam Speaker, this bill flies in the face of the Ivany report. Even the Ivany report challenged Nova Scotians to action. Mr. Ivany tells us to stand up and look for opportunities, develop them sustainably, and challenges his government to assist even if not lead in these initiatives, not stand in the way and act as an impediment.

Here lies a tremendous opportunity to develop the best industry practices that will ensure safe, sustainable, clean energy developments, not curtail them. Madam Speaker, I say we can't afford to lose these opportunities. We don't need legislation that discourages

and acts as a disincentive to energy developers but rather a committed effort by our political leaders to take these steps that support economic development in a clean, sustainable manner that will make us all proud to be Nova Scotians. Madam Speaker, I'll table that letter.

Madam Speaker, this ban does nothing for Nova Scotia. We have too many Nova Scotia families that are divided because they made the difficult decision to send one or more of their family members out West to work in the same oil fields that we can develop here, and the rest of the family lives here in the Province of Nova Scotia.

As we said, a ban on shale gas development is not what the Wheeler report recommended. Page 5 of the report said explicitly that the commission did not support an outright ban. It says, "... we are not proposing a moratorium or any other political device ...". In *The Chronicle Herald* the Wheeler report panel member, Ray Ritcey said, "The decision taken by government to ban 'high volume' hydraulic fracturing on Sept. 3 is not what the panel recommended nor what I personally believe to be in the best interests of Nova Scotians." Another panel member said that the minister's comments "... and his quick move to ban the practice show that he doesn't understand the report or the subject." A third panel member said he was disappointed with the government's ban "... with such short reaction time. It just doesn't seem like it was given a thorough consideration."

Madam Speaker, through this sitting of the Legislature we had some very lengthy Law Amendments Committee meetings. We had very lengthy debate here in the Legislature, and the government takes a report and within three days has acted on that report and put an outright ban on hydraulic fracturing here in the province.

When questions were asked what it was, if there was going to be a ban on low volume or medium volume, I don't think that those questions were answered and I don't think that those questions have been answered to the satisfaction of the people on this side of the House.

Now, Madam Speaker, no one is suggesting that our province rush into shale gas development without doing the proper homework, without education, and careful regulations.

HON. ANDREW YOUNGER: Yes, you are.

MR. ORRELL: I hear the Minister of Energy over there saying that we are, Madam Speaker. That's not what we're proposing. An outright ban would scare investors away. It would scare people away from trying to develop where the gas fields are in the province. We hear that maybe there's not but how are we going to know that if we put an outright ban on it and companies don't come here and spend their investment dollars, spend their dollars trying to develop an industry and then we'll know if it's here or not? The Wheeler report

said as we say, go but go slow. We want to try to develop this industry so that we put our people back to work in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner.

Madam Speaker, in a letter from the Atlantic chamber, it goes on to say that as we are aware there is a history of safe and responsible resource development including hydraulic fracturing in Canada. So if it's done in other parts of the country, why can't we try to do it here? Why can't we take the practices that they have in other areas of the country and other areas of the world and use them here and tighten them up a little bit? Try to make them stronger so that we don't have any fear of mistakes that might've happened in other areas before? We're hearing that of the 175,000 wells drilled in Canada already in Alberta, B.C., and Saskatchewan, they're not having any environmental effects.

The ban is a very easy way to approach a difficult subject. There was opportunity for this government to take a slow approach. They could've launched studies and done public information campaigns. Instead they chose to close the door, and keep our people going to other parts of the country for work.

At a time when we should be focused on bringing families back together by creating good jobs, it seems like the government has slammed the door and put up the "closed for business" sign. We want to try to keep and create good-paying jobs here in our province. We know that natural gas has proven itself to be clean and a reliable fuel source that will meet the energy needs of our province.

I was in Philadelphia this summer, and I spoke with a gentleman from Pittsburgh. As people know, Pittsburgh did a lot of mining in coal, and with the prices of coal low, they started to develop shale gas. I asked this gentleman, what had the effects of shale gas development been in their state? He told me that it saved their state. They were able to export natural gas, they were able to use natural gas in their own energy production, and it put them back in the market and put their own people back to work. It kept people home. He said in his area they were able to see new businesses develop, and their tourism industry improved. If we could do that in some areas of this province, just think what that could do for our economy.

We have other bills and we have other industries here. There's talk of a pipeline running to Saint John, New Brunswick, and hopefully coming here. We have containerized natural gas. We have coal methane production. We're talking about Muskrat Falls, that we had a big discussion on before as another energy source. So why not put this in our tool bag?

We're not saying do it an irresponsible manner, but have it as another source so that we can choose to use the cheapest method possible for our energy production. We have seen other industries go here thanks to affordable natural gas. It makes our Nova Scotia industries more competitive, and more industries would like to come here and set up if they knew that that would happen.

We have talked about developing natural resources here in the province and using some of those royalties to go back to the area where those natural resources are being developed. For example, in Cape Breton, if we were to develop the Donkin coal mine and royalties were to come back in the millions of dollars, to use some of that money: (1) for economic development in Cape Breton, (2) for infrastructure upgrades, and (3) to put into some of our health care and education systems. Think about what we could do with that money in employing Cape Bretoners.

So if we did that throughout the province, think about what we could do to employ Nova Scotians. Our money stays here. It doesn't take off out West. Our families are together, and when our families are together we have our volunteers, we have our Cub leaders, we have our Scout leaders, we have our Girl Guide leaders, we have our hockey coaches, our baseball coaches. When they leave, it leaves a hole in our province. It leaves a hole in family life.

We're not saying to develop in an irresponsible manner. An outright ban is going to slow this process down. And yes, if we discover in 10 years' time that the ban wasn't right and we reverse it, then we have to develop it further. By that time it will be too late for some families to enjoy the royalties and what comes with a job here in the province.

We talked about compressed natural gas and satellite distribution networks around the province providing access to inexpensive natural gas in areas away from the main lines, but if we had that development in our own communities, Madam Speaker, in areas that wanted to have that development, it wouldn't be necessary to have that expensive form of transportation.

Access to our natural gas contributes to the economic case of why companies should invest here in Nova Scotia. If we can maintain a stable supply of natural gas in the production of energy and heating our companies and our businesses and our homes - you know, Madam Speaker, if you travel around the province a lot of the rinks use natural gas in their ice surfacing machines. Imagine what they could do for recreation in the area if they could do that cheaper and offer recreation facilities cheaper to the children and the adults in our province.

We do have two offshore projects producing now, the Sable project and the Deep Panuke project. The Sable project is expected to be decommissioned over the next several years, and that's going to result in a significant drop in the natural gas we do produce and burn here in the province already, and as Deep Panuke declines, that number will drop even further. So what better way to put natural gas back into our economy and into our province than to develop it onshore? We know it's not safe, we had problems and concerns with our offshore development but we've done that in a responsible manner and we haven't had any major environmental concerns, so why can't we use those same theories onshore?

Madam Speaker, we're spending, I believe - I could be wrong and I'll be corrected if I am - about \$7.5 billion to put an undersea cable from Newfoundland and Labrador to Cape Breton as a way of securing some of the energy that we need here in the province. We know that security of energy is important. That's why developing onshore natural gas is essential as, again, another tool in our toolbox and another way that we can produce energy cheaply and keep our businesses competitive and keep our energy and heating costs down so people and families could use that money on other things that are important - recreation, medication, and groceries.

Madam Speaker, it would take a big strain off our government to be burning this natural gas in some of our government institutions. We're talking about some of the hospitals now that are going to use the containerized or compressed natural gas, to be trucked from areas in the province to where they need it. Wouldn't it be nice to have that connected right to the area from an area?

The supply chain to the energy industry in Nova Scotia has a long history of successful developments both off the coast and hopefully we could do that and turn it on onshore development. These companies have impeccable records offshore, and we'd like to say they are able to provide similar services onshore.

Madam Speaker, we really don't know if the government recognizes this because by introducing this bill it seems to us that that's not the case. Instead, as we've heard before, the closed-for-business sign is up on our door. Businesses in Nova Scotia put our Nova Scotians to work with good-paying jobs and it keeps their families together. So we'd like to see that happen and by using natural gas and developing the industry to where they can go to work in this industry, they can do that, they can stay here in the province.

You know, despite the fact that fracturing has occurred and has been conducted across Canada, even as of today many in the Chamber would likely know individuals who are out West. They are out West working in those same shale gas developments as we're talking here. Madam Speaker, as I said before in this Chamber, all you have to do is go to the Sydney Airport any day or evening of the week and look at the planes. They are full of people who are either going out to the oil fields or coming back from the oil fields. We haven't seen that in years from the Sydney Airport, where you could go over and get a flight pretty near as you needed. That's not the case - if you don't book that flight in advance, chances are someone going to the oil fields or coming back is in those seats.

My own neighbour goes out and, when he does, he's not fortunate enough to be the two weeks on, the two weeks off, or the 20 days on and seven days off as some people are. When he goes he has to work for three or four months at a time. Madam Speaker, he has a young family and their son plays hockey, the daughter now is in university so he misses and has missed a lot of their activities over the years: school concerts, hockey games, being there at Christmas time and Halloween. Fortunately he hasn't missed a lot of Christmases;

he's been home, but there have been a couple of times where he missed Christmas and he came home in the New Year.

Madam Speaker, he doesn't want to do that. I'm sure he would go to work here for a reasonable amount of money. It doesn't have to be Alberta money or Saskatchewan money, but it has to be enough for him to be able to survive, to provide for his family, to heat his home, to make sure that they have what they need recreationally. Without that job here in the province, he has to do that; he has to go.

Madam Speaker, I've said it here before, my own son, who has heard that the natural gas and oil development here in the province was going to be ramping up, took a Process Operations Power Engineering course to be able to work in the oil and gas industry. He is now looking at what is going to be here for him if he decides to work in that field. Are jobs going to be here for him? If not he is going to have to go out West and my fear is if he goes out West, once he leaves he's gone.

This means, Madam Speaker, if he decides to get married and have grandkids and if he's working out there in the oil and gas industry - he only gets so much vacation time and he doesn't get to get home. If my wife and I were fortunate enough to get to retirement age and retire, to see our grandchildren and our children we would have to go there. If that is where they are, that's where most of the families want to be. Unfortunately when that happens and people go, they're usually gone. They don't come back.

As I stated earlier, the Saskatchewan Government said there was no contamination of groundwater in their province due to the result of shale gas development. When asked, Premier Wall stated that the only thing that he could see was that it brought his kids back home; it has brought people back to the Province to Saskatchewan; it has developed further business there.

The British Columbia Government has said the same thing, that there has never been a confirmed case of groundwater contamination in B.C. as a result of this. Even the federal Finance Minister, Mr. Joe Oliver, criticized the government's ban on hydraulic fracturing noting that there have been 175,000 wells drilled using fracking without a single groundwater contamination, but just like any type of project, you can use the proper regulations, put them in place, and you can enable successful development.

Madam Speaker, nobody in this beautiful province of ours wants to see that contaminated, nobody wants to see that ruined in any way. We are saying, do this but put the regulations in place so that the industry can develop in a safe manner and our people can stay here. We know the regulations are there. They are using them in other provinces in the country so why can't we use the same regulations here and make them stronger?

Dr. Wheeler outlined how Nova Scotia can enable a responsible development of shale gas in our province. He didn't say to ban it; he said to go but go slow. But, Madam Speaker, in no means do we want to see that done in an unsafe manner.

The government got this report and in three days they put this bill in place, a government that we hear wants to do consultation. We just saw a bill through the Legislature. It came in one way and now it's going to be taken and put in another way because they want to do consultation. Well do the consultation on hydraulic fracturing with the people here in the province.

Rather than put the hard work into developing updated regulations to enable development, the government has said no. Out of my constituency I've heard the saying that it's funny how the ban on hydraulic fracturing came into place when they were in the middle of a provincial election in New Brunswick. I've had it said to me that I wonder if this was put in place to try and help the Liberal Government get elected in New Brunswick.

Now Madam Speaker, that could be a far stretch but if you notice when that happened, the polls in New Brunswick - the Progressive Conservatives at that time were way low in the polls and when the election took place, because the Progressive Conservatives said they were going to explore hydraulic fracturing, the polls were basically even.

Now I don't know if there's a direct correlation to that, Madam Speaker, but now we hear the newly-elected Premier thinking that they are now going to start looking into developing shale gas. I don't know, but to me, it just sounds like that's what the people are asking for in New Brunswick so they are looking at going over to the other side, or even as some will say, flip-flopping.

You know, Madam Speaker, Nova Scotians are going to leave the province searching for work. We know that already, we've seen 9,000 jobs lost in the province over the last year. They go out West, they go to the States. We've heard stories of different people in different constituencies, some in Dakota, some in Alberta, some in B.C. That's just the people who are fortunate enough to be able to leave and go there. Thank God we have them because what would our province be without that money coming back?

We have a chance to develop that industry here, keep that money here, use that money in our own government pockets. Use it for education, use it for roads, use it for health care. We know health care is expensive, Madam Speaker, and we're trying to do different things to try and save money so that we can keep our health care system the way it is.

Madam Speaker, being from Cape Breton and being from North Sydney, the ER at the Northside General Hospital has been closed overnight since May. The people in North Sydney don't know when they get sick if they should try and go to the Northside General

Hospital in the hope that it will be open, or make the trek to Sydney, which is probably about only 15 or 20 minutes away but you try telling a loved one who is sick or having an urgent medical condition that those 15 minutes don't make a difference. That money could be wisely spent here to keep our people here, keep our people working.

You know this lack of leadership is going to let a generation of Nova Scotians down. As I spoke for earlier, my own son could be one of them. It will be a sad day if the government refuses to look at how this bill is going to enable or disable economic opportunities here in Nova Scotia. We think that safe, normal regulation and development here in our province could go a long way in employing our people, keeping our money here, using that money in our pockets to develop and maintain our own education system, our own health care system.

Madam Speaker, we heard in here in the last couple of days about some money put in by the Department of Community Services to enable safe, affordable housing. Now we all deserve safe, affordable housing but for those who can't afford it, wouldn't it be nice to have that extra money, those finances to put into it so everybody gets a safe, affordable house in a nice neighbourhood.

You know, Madam Speaker, there are some people who unfortunately - not by their own hand - are in that situation where they don't actually have that. When we have an opportunity like this in front of us to look at areas in our province where natural gas may be available - we've heard in one area of the province and I could be wrong on the number, but trillions of cubic feet of gas that's there.

AN. HON. MEMBER: Hundreds of trillions of cubic feet of gas.

MR. ORRELL: Hundreds of trillions of cubic feet of gas. So that gas, why not have access to it? It's clean burning, it's more efficient. We have a mine in Donkin that could be developed. We're going to need coal over the next little while, but wouldn't it be nice to have that mine working with our natural gas industry and have that done here in our own province, produced here in our own province, spend our money here in the province, put our Nova Scotians to work?

You know what? By some stretch of the imagination, we may even get people from other provinces coming here to work. Wouldn't that be different? We may have companies coming here and wanting to set up because now we have money here that people can spend. We wouldn't have the companies closing down. We heard something in this Legislature this week, as early as today, something I've never heard of: a Tim Hortons closing. A Tim Hortons in rural Nova Scotia closing. A co-op grocery store in Sydney closing.

Wouldn't it be nice for the government to stand up and say, there's enough people working here that you guys don't have to close your business? You don't have to worry about your employees leaving and going out West. You don't have to worry about your

father or mother, sister, brother, son, or daughter leaving home if they don't want to. Stay here, stay close to your aging relatives, provide the support to keep them at home when they need health care.

An outright ban on a business or an industry that could put 1,500 people to work - as an estimate that might be low - would be huge for us here in the province. To use that resource to develop for energy consumption, to produce electricity - I think we should have a second look at this, that we should take our time. By putting an outright ban on fracking, we're saying to business and industry that this is not the place to come do your exploration, to do your drilling.

With that, I hope I urged the government to look at this bill again, to try to reverse it if we can, encourage development of natural gas and shale gas here in the province, put our people back to work, and keep our sons and daughters home. With those few words, I will take my seat.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today and say a few words about Bill No. 6. There has been a lot of talk about Bill No. 6 in this Chamber. I was thinking of my colleague (Interruption) I've done my fair share, yes, I have. This is a serious issue to me, and I think it's worth talking about, so I'm happy to rise this afternoon and talk a little bit more about Bill No. 6 and why I'm so worried about what I see Bill No. 6 doing to this province.

I know my colleague said, wouldn't it be nice if we had the economy here in Nova Scotia, a thriving economy where people were coming here to work, where people were moving here because we had jobs here for them? That would indeed be nice, if we had that type of a thriving economy, that we could say to the federal Government of Canada, we're not going to accept transfer payments anymore, we're going to send them to you to distribute to those that need them, because we don't need them. We're a long way from that.

We're a long way from that, with one-third of our budget financed by transfer payments. Yet here we are saying we're okay with that, we're okay with being a have-not province, we don't want to investigate new ways that could maybe bring some economic prosperity to us. We're good with where we're at.

This weekend, I referenced a couple of times how sad it makes me to pick up *The Globe and Mail* and read letters to the editor about why does Nova Scotia think it's okay to sit back and accept our transfer money when we're the ones doing the drilling, we're the ones doing the fracking? And they're sitting over there in Nova Scotia with their cap in their hand saying, send us money, we don't want to do anything here to bring ourselves forward, we want your money.

It makes me sad to read those letters to the editor, the perception that people are gaining of this province, the reputation this province is gaining and feeding into. Just this weekend I had a chance to sit down with a young fellow, he was home for the Mount Saint Vincent convocation. He came home here for convocation, he's living out West now and we were talking a little bit and he said, by the way, Tim, I saw you in Question Period when you were asking about something. I said, you saw me in Question Period - what in the world would you be doing watching Legislative TV - watching on the Internet, Question Period in Nova Scotia? He said, well, we do some work for oil and gas companies - he's in marketing and public relations - so we're watching very carefully as to what's happening in Nova Scotia on behalf of our clients.

So when they say Canada is watching, they really are - and you don't need to go too far, I found out this weekend, to see how true that is. This is a young fellow, he wanted to know, why are they doing that? What's happening that they won't explore, they won't talk to people, they won't think about ways to make money? I said well, Andrew, you know, I don't have an answer for that. I can't answer that question for you as to why we find ourselves where we do in this Legislature, third reading of this bill, trying to figure out what the bill means. I do hope that maybe when the minister ultimately rises to close third reading, whenever that may be, I do hope he at least explains at that time what high-volume hydraulic fracturing is. It would be nice if after hours of debate and numerous questions that he at least closes that loop for us and says this is what it means.

As we stand up in this Chamber and talk about this bill, I remember the other night I heard somebody saying - I don't know from where in the House it was - what a waste of time, what a waste of time for these guys to stand up over and over and talk about this bill. Well, I don't see that as a waste of time, because we're hoping that we'll say something and somebody will say, you know that makes sense - I never thought about that; I understand what the question is; I understand the issue. But they won't listen, because it's a waste of time.

It's a waste of time to talk about legislation that comes before this House that has such an impact on the future of our province. We've seen that with other bills. We have a very controversial bill, I don't know if that one is going to come before us again, Bill No. 60. I don't know what's going to happen with Bill No. 60, but I can tell you I sure hope that one comes back to the floor as is because I'd love to stand and talk for hours and hours on that one, because that's a flawed piece of legislation.

Bill No.6 is a bad bill; Bill No. 60 is a bad bill; and there are holes in Bill No. 51. It's just a theme of this government that you bring something forward that's not properly thought out, that's not properly consulted, not properly investigated. Take a flawed bill, you know what you do? You use a majority government and you ram it through the Legislature, and you say it doesn't matter, we don't care, we have the votes, we're going to push it through, and we don't care what Nova Scotians say. And that's a shame.
(Interruption)

The issue with Bill No. 51 (Interruption) Well, I hope the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal does stand up and I hope that every minister stands up and talks about this because this is an important issue. Bill No. 51, we have concerns, we raised an amendment on Bill No. 51. While I understand the minister's position on it, it doesn't make it right. It's just something - it's a hole in the legislation. (Interruption)

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. Order. We are discussing Bill No. 6 and the honourable member for Pictou East has the floor.

MR. HOUSTON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's a bad bill; Bill No. 6 is a bad bill. There are lots of them but they'll get rammed through this Legislature and we'll stand up every time we can and we'll talk about what we see as issues with legislation that comes before this House. That's what you do when you're in Opposition. That's what you do when you're an ordinary Nova Scotian and you have concerns about legislation that your government is putting forward - you stand up and you raise concerns. Guess what? It's well within the government's ability to listen to those concerns and try and react to them. That's all. That's all this is about.

So we're standing here, we're raising concerns about legislation. People want to ignore us. People want to discount it. They can discount it; they can explain it away. That's not going to stop me from standing up and raising concerns about legislation that I'm concerned about. I'll do that every chance I get. I would love to see a government member stand up in support of Bill No. 6 because guess what we haven't seen yet? We haven't seen anyone stand up and support this bill except for the Energy Minister himself. Hours of debate, nobody stood up and said, this is a great bill. Maybe tonight we'll see that. Maybe tomorrow we'll see that.

The problem with this bill is, where is the plan for Nova Scotia? Where is the plan to move this province forward? Fifteen billion dollars' worth of debt; \$680 million deficit last year; \$300 million deficit this year, fine-tuned to \$274 million - where is the plan, Madam Speaker? The plan rests in saying no to new ways of doing things. The plan rests in saying no to new ideas. That's not a plan. That's not a plan. Taking a piece of legislation, ramming it through, fulfilling personal agendas is not good legislation. We don't need just legislation to come before this House, we need good legislation, and that requires stuff that can be well thought-out.

Madam Speaker, I think it was Peter Drucker who said, if you look at any great company, you can trace it back to a tough decision that was made at some point by the people running that company. Good things come from tough decisions. It's very rare in life that good things come from easy decisions.

What we have here is a bill that required some tough decisions, some tough analysis. And do you know what we got? We got a bill that fits on one page. It's a one-page

bill and just within that one page, what does it mean? You can't even get past the first sentence before you're confused as to what it means. I am disappointed by this bill, and I'm disappointed by other bills that come before this Legislature, so we will talk about them.

My colleague talked about the number of flights to Alberta and people having to move to Alberta for work. I was talking to a neighbour of mine yesterday. He was looking to book some flights for a trip to Florida for March and the first flight that came up said \$679, so that was pretty good. The next flight on the list of the cheapest was over \$1,000. If you looked closer at the \$679 flight, it was a 23-hour travel time. Do you know where the flight from Halifax to Orlando connected through? Edmonton. Do you know what that tells me, Madam Speaker? That's a high-traffic route, when you can fly cheaper to Orlando. So what are we going to do about it in this Legislature? Are we good with that? (Interruption) Yes, it was WestJet, actually.

I'll tell you what they do in Alberta that we could be taking a cue from. They have the Alberta Energy Regulator. That's an institution that was borne out of the government. At one time it was 100 per cent funded by the government. Now, I think the funding is 30 per cent government and 70 per cent industry, something like that, 50/50. What it tells you, Madam Speaker, is that at some point that government had vision. They had a vision to establish a regulator to try and help people feel comfortable with industry.

Is there any talk about that here? I haven't heard anything like that. I haven't heard any type of a plan as to how we're going to turn this economy around. What are we going to do? What's going to happen with the onshore mapping - we're hearing onshore mapping. A prior government here in this province made an investment in offshore mapping, invested \$15 million to map the offshore resources, and that's an investment that's paying off now. That's an investment that's coming home to roost right now. The province is getting tremendous benefit from that investment.

We hear that the government is going to do onshore mapping. What's the investment that's going to be made? Is there a dollar amount? Do we know when that's going to be? Do we know who it's going to be? If you're going to say you're going to do that, then give Nova Scotians a little plan that says that you will do it, how you'll do it, and when you'll do it. You'd have a better chance of getting support when you stand up and say what you're going to do and say how you're going to do it, but just to say, this is what we're going to go - and by the way, the onshore mapping is an initiative that's been talked about for a number of years already.

I had a chance yesterday to talk to the Deputy Minister of Energy, and he was talking about the offshore potential, about the hydro potential and a lot of the good initiatives that were happening there. I said, that's all really exciting stuff, and that's really promising stuff, but does that mean that we don't have time or energy - no pun intended - to look at the onshore stuff? Is that what this is about? Do we not have the resources to focus

on the offshore and the hydro and also devote resources to the onshore? I don't know, Madam Speaker. Maybe that's what this is all about.

At the same time, I understand that while the ban is in place - the prohibition is going to be legislated at some point, maybe some point next week this will pass through, and we'll have this bill legislated and a prohibition will be in place. At the same time that's happening, the department is working on regulations for hydraulic fracturing. What am I missing, Madam Speaker, that we're banning something here and at the same time we're preparing for it over here? We see the minister talking at different times about whether it's a temporary ban or when he's going to repeal it, when he's going to change it.

We just don't know what's happening here, and the good news is we don't know it's happening but we're in good company, because not a lot of people do know what's happening. But we'll see if this gets rammed through. We heard the Health and Wellness Minister standing up today saying that his bill is flawed - probably push that through too. Why not? Just push them all through, right?

The real danger here is that if we want to ever develop that onshore industry here, we're going to have to take - it's going to take research. It's going to take lots of discussions involving lots of people, and now we've pushed that further away. There is an exemption in this bill for exploration, I think, and research and development, but I've talked a few times and I'm curious as to who would ever use that exemption, knowing that they can't commercialize the resource as it stands now. Then I really asked that question of who would ever ask for that exemption, when I think about what's happened, what this bill has done to the cost of doing business in this province.

If we think about the onshore development, Madam Speaker, if you're going to do some exploration onshore, you're going to need rigs. Well, rigs are very expensive things, and you know where most of the rigs are not? They're not in Nova Scotia. They're mostly out West. So if you're going to get some of those rigs to do a bit of exploring, you're going to have to move them here. Moving rigs here is very expensive, but in this industry the way it generally works is a few companies will go together on a project like that. They would bring a rig to an area here, and they would say to the company next door to them, well, I'll use it for this long, you use it for that long, another company will use it, and we'll split the cost of the transportation.

Right now there are no companies to split the cost with, so if you don't have companies to split the cost with, you have to absorb the cost yourself. Now it has become that much more expensive, again, to do business here. (Interruption) The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic says well BP and Shell. I hate to rewind but what we're talking about today is onshore development - offshore is a completely separate thing. What I'm focused on is wondering why we don't build an offshore industry and an onshore industry. Is just having an offshore good enough? Do we have enough business in this province that we don't need more?

The reason you spend money in oil and gas is to find and then develop a resource. That's what you do, that's how the industry works. We have shut this off now (Interruption) That's not going to happen because nobody is going to come here and try to explore and nobody is going to try and develop here because this is a bill that doesn't allow it to happen. It just won't practically happen, Madam Speaker.

When companies are looking at where they're going to spend their money, where they're going to do their research and development, they make tough decisions. They sit around, they have competing interests around the boardroom table with people who are proponents of different projects within the same company and they make decisions on how to allocate that cash.

Madam Speaker, there's not going to be anyone at those boardroom tables pounding on it, saying we should definitely invest in Nova Scotia; we should definitely go and explore there. It's just not going to happen. That's because of this bill because there's no certainty around what this government will do. There's a lot of uncertainty with this bill. We can't expect people to come here and invest money in this province, under these circumstances.

I was curious when I read on the Department of Energy's website that says quite clearly, ". . . investments will not be affected by this decision." So in the Question and Answers section on their website it says ". . . investments will not be affected by this decision." I just wonder how in the world you can make that statement unless there are no investments and you expect no investments. It's just a statement you can't possibly make because how can you sit in a department and understand what a company may have been contemplating doing. You just don't know how they might have valued a property they have a lease on in Nova Scotia or what their plans for that property might have been. You just don't know that.

Now, when they see this legislation pass, it's a virtual certainty that they won't continue to invest in those projects that they may have contemplated investing in. It's a sad fact, Madam Speaker, that people won't invest their time or their energy in things that just can't happen, unless it's me - I'm the only one investing my time and energy in speaking against this bill right now and it's never going to change.

In business, people will focus their investments where they can get a return. This bill has just undermined the ability to get a return by investing in this province. That's not a good thing for this province. That's a bad reputation to earn and it takes a lifetime to earn a reputation and it can be tarnished and lost very quickly; we all know that.

This bill doesn't do anything to help generate information necessary to alleviate the concerns of Nova Scotians. In fact it pushes us further away from gathering the evidence we need. I wonder if there are other ways we could gather the information that Nova Scotians need to alleviate their concerns.

Maybe we could be finding an area and doing a test in an area; maybe we could do some research with them, I don't know, Madam Speaker, but what I do know is that this bill doesn't help alleviate the people's concerns, it just pushes them further away. It might have alleviated the concerns, there might be people out there who read this bill and said oh, I feel so much better now there will never be fracking in Nova Scotia.

Well, that's not going to be the case, we already hear the minister saying at some point he's probably going to repeal this bill, so it didn't alleviate the concerns of anyone and it's the same thing we've seen with other bills that have been brought before this House. It's not helping to move industry forward, this is a bill that sets the province back.

We had a lot of submissions and I talked to a lot of different business owners and they've been astonished by this moratorium - even companies that were operating here that had been working with the Department of Energy as a partner on projects. They were just astonished to hear this - they were expecting the department to come up with regulations, strong regulations, that keep everyone safe that they could work within. They want to be good companies, they want to be good corporate citizens, they want to be good neighbours, and they were expecting they would get some tough ground rules to work within. They were quite surprised to see that no, that's not on the table.

Why is that? Why is it that we can't develop regulations that are strong enough to make Nova Scotians feel safe? Do we not have the confidence in our own abilities to develop regulations and to enforce those regulations? The question was asked in the question and answer on the Department of Energy's website - the question says: Do you think fracking can be done safely? The answer, on the department's website, was that fracking has been done safely in many instances, but there have been examples of things that have gone wrong when regulations weren't properly enforced and when monitoring wasn't properly done.

So that is to say that it can be done safely if properly monitored, if properly regulated. Why don't we have the confidence in ourselves to come up with the regulations and monitor the activities? That's what we should be working towards, not just banning things. We hear lots of talk in this Chamber, and elsewhere, about all the projects that are happening in this province, around this province in the offshore, in the coalbed methane in Stellarton. Those are good projects, but do we have enough? Do we just say, that's fine, we don't need any more, that's good. Do we stop there?

How can we possibly stop there? We should be moving forward looking for more projects, looking for more revenue generators so we can help finance the activities of this province. Right now we can't properly finance the activities of this province. We can always use more money on roads, we can always use more money on Community Services, we can always use more money in health care, and we deserve a government that is striving for that goal. We don't deserve a government that says you can't have it both ways - you

can't have classrooms and lower taxes. I don't subscribe to that, Madam Speaker, and I don't accept that for one second.

What we need is vision that says yes, that's what we need, that's where we need to get to, and this is how we're going to get there. I can tell you if somebody would sit down and write that path, that plan out, Bill No. 6 wouldn't be let's close businesses and ban activities. This is a province that says to companies, this is what we will do to you, whereas other provinces go to companies and ask, what can we do for you?

We have to get there. We have companies that paid money to lease packages in this province. I believe there are 10 active leaseholders in this province that have invested money in those leases, that are somewhere along a path of trying to decide what they're going to do there, and now they find out that there's a ban. There's a ban on some of the activities that they would have contemplated. So they would have paid money; they would have bid money. They'd have made a commitment to invest a certain amount of money in this province developing that package, that parcel of land.

Well, how did the ground rules shift now? Can they still fulfill the commitments that they said, we're bidding on this package, we're going to spend this much? Can they still do that? Or did something just shift and now they won't be able to? And what if they can't? Are they going to come after the province for the money back? What's going to happen there?

These are serious questions with real possible ramifications on this province, and I just have to ask, why? How did we get here, that this was a decision we made after Dr. Wheeler and his panel went around the province and talked to Nova Scotians, did a report, submitted it to the government? Three days later the government said, we're going to ban that. I just have to ask, why? Why was a decision made like that? What kind of a thank you is that to the people who were on that panel, who invested their time and energy trying to find the answers that Nova Scotians want?

What the Wheeler report said is, you know, this is worth looking at; it's worth trying to go forward. It said, go. Go slow, but go. They didn't say, slam the brakes on. They said, try and go forward. Try and get the information that Nova Scotians want. What harm would there be in actually doing that? What harm would there have been in going slow, instead of saying to those companies that are here in the onshore, instead of saying to those people on the panel, we are done, we're not doing this with you?

Why would they do that? So I was looking through some of the comments from some of the panellists, and you know, Ray Ritcey's one - I think we talked about Mr. Ritcey in this House before - and he said, "The decision taken by government to ban 'high volume' hydraulic fracturing on Sept. 3 is not what the panel recommended nor what I personally believe to be in the best interests of Nova Scotians."

Ray Ritcey was on the panel. Ray Ritcey would have been in the room where the deliberations were done, as they painstakingly looked at the wording of the report. He would have been there, and he says it's not what the panel recommended. He went on to say that it's not what he personally believes to be in the best interests of Nova Scotians. I wonder how Mr. Ritcey felt about standing up to be on that panel and investing his time and energy, to have that result come out of it?

I know if it were me, I wouldn't feel great about that. We're all busy people; most people are busy. I'm sure there were lots of other things that he would have chosen to have done with his time and energy if he thought that this was going to be the result: that they would invest in this report, and three days later, somebody would say, well, we're not really that interested in the report. Here's our decision. I wonder if the minister met with them before he came out with that decision. I hope we'll get a chance to hear that. That's a question that I would love to hear the answer to.

Another panel member, Brad Hayes, said in the media that the minister's comments and the minister's "quick move to ban the practice show that he doesn't understand the report or the subject." That's pretty harsh words. That's pretty harsh words for somebody to say, that it shows that the minister doesn't understand the report or the subject. For a panel member to come out with those strong words, he must feel pretty strongly about them inside himself to come out and say that.

It just leaves us with why, what's happening here? We don't want to be a have-not province; nobody in this room wants to be a have-not province. We are all here because we want to try to make the province a better place. We all want to try to move the province forward. We want good legislation that is in the interest of Nova Scotians, that protects Nova Scotians, of course, but that is in the interest of all Nova Scotians; that what we want. That's why we come here every day and we debate these things back and forth and we ask questions. It's because we are trying to find out what's right for the province.

Nobody should come into this Chamber with all the answers. Nobody should come in here knowing that they know exactly what's right. We should always be prepared to be questioned, especially when you are in the government. If you put a bill forward, you should hope that people question it. You should hope that people poke at it because that's the way things get better. Things get better through discussion. Things get made better through debate and the only reason we're standing up on this bill is because we believe it could be made better. We believe this bill could be made better and I don't question the minister's intentions in bringing this bill forward for one second. I know that the legislation that comes before this House is good intentioned legislation and that's a good thing. I don't question that.

What I would state to the House is that good intentions shouldn't just result in legislation, good intentions should result in good legislation and this is definitely legislation that could be made better and there are other bills here that could be made better.

I'm sorry if it offends somebody on the other side when we question something and make a suggestion on the way to make something better, because I'll do that every time I can stand up. If people don't want to listen, they don't have to listen. They want to get offended, they can get offended. When I see a way to make a piece of legislation better, I will certainly not be afraid to stand up and talk about that - every time, every time.

So Bill No. 6 is a bill that could be made better and Bill No. 6 is a bill that if properly done, if we look at these things properly, if we are open-minded as a government on things that can improve the way things are done here, if we are those things, we can make the province a better place and we all want to be part of that. I know my colleague from Sydney River-Mira-Louisburg talked a lot the other night, about trying to find a way to make this a have province, and that's all we want.

I have more to say on this topic and I look forward to finishing out my time at another date but given the hour, the late hour we are at tonight, I do move to adjourn debate for today.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. Tomorrow, following daily routine, the government's business will be third reading of Bill No. 6, Bill No. 51, Committee of the Whole House on Bills, Bill Nos. 60, and 64; if time permits a possible Address in Reply.

Madam Speaker, the House will meet tomorrow from 9:00 a.m. until 11:59 p.m. With that I move that the House now rise to meet again tomorrow.

MADAM 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 6:00 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 630**

By: Hon. Maureen MacDonald (Halifax Needham)

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

Whereas Kaleigh Trace is a sex educator with Venus Envy who promotes safe, shame-free, and consensual sex for people of all abilities, ethnicities, races, orientations, and gender identities; and

Whereas Kaleigh Trace is a renowned writer and blogger on the topics of sex education and feminism; and

Whereas Kaleigh Trace has recently released her first book, *Hot, Wet & Shaking: How I learned to Talk About Sex*;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly recognize Kaleigh Trace's commitment to sexual equality and education in our community and congratulate her on the release of her first book.

RESOLUTION NO. 631

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Treaty Day, held annually on October 1st, marks the beginning of Mi'kmaq History Month in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Treaty Day's purpose is to promote public awareness about the Mi'kmaq culture and heritage; and

Whereas on October 1, 2014, Libby Meuse was awarded the Grand Chief Donald Marshall Elder Award posthumously;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge that Libby Meuse was awarded the 2014 Grand Chief Donald Marshall Elder Award posthumously.

RESOLUTION NO. 632

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Treaty Day, held annually on October 1st, marks the beginning of Mi'kmaq History Month in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Treaty Day's purpose is to promote public awareness about the Mi'kmaq culture and heritage; and

Whereas on October 1, 2014, Helena Sack, a teacher at LSK School in Indian Brook, was awarded the Sister Dorothy Moore Educational Scholarship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Helena Sack on being awarded the Sister Dorothy Moore Educational Scholarship.

RESOLUTION NO. 633

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Treaty Day, held annually on October 1st, marks the beginning of Mi'kmaq History Month in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Treaty Day's purpose is to promote public awareness about the Mi'kmaq culture and heritage; and

Whereas on October 1, 2014, Nevin MacDonald was awarded the Chief Noel Doucette Memorial Youth Achievement Award;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Nevin MacDonald on being awarded the Chief Noel Doucette Memorial Youth Achievement Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 634

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas every year the Shubenacadie, Elmsdale, and Enfield Legions join together to provide a \$1,500 bursary to students at Hants East Rural High; and

Whereas the winner of the bursary is based on the student's merits; and

Whereas a committee from the three Legions and the school's guidance counsellor chose Hailey Stuart as this year's recipient;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Hailey Stuart on being awarded the Legion Bursary and wish her well in her Pharmacology studies.

RESOLUTION NO. 635

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the mandate for the Women's Institute of Nova Scotia is to continue to provide opportunities to enhance the quality of life through education and personal development, allowing us to meet the changing needs of our local and global communities; and

Whereas the Women's Institute of Nova Scotia vision statement is "Learning, sharing, and improving the quality of life for all"; and

Whereas the Gore Women's Institute recently presented the Hants North Food Bank and the Rawdon District School breakfast program with \$300 donations;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly thank the members of the Gore Women's Institute for their donations to the Hants North Food Bank and the Rawdon District School breakfast program.

RESOLUTION NO. 636

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Bruce Harvey has a total of 36 years' work experience with Home Hardware Stores; and

Whereas at Ettinger's Home Hardware in Shubenacadie, Bruce always greets the customers with a warm welcome; and

Whereas Bruce's wonderful personality and expertise in everything from plumbing parts to building houses keeps people coming back to him for advice;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Bruce Harvey on receiving the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Customer Service (Individual) 2014 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 637

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas over the past several years the growth and success of the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce is partially due to the leadership, positive support, and many hours of hard work and dedication by Sharon Prest; and

Whereas Sharon brings all her positive attributes to her position of regional manager at Mariposa Reading Achievement Centre Limited, where she has taught many students that reading is succeeding; and

Whereas it would be a privilege for any group to have this remarkable woman as part of their team;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Sharon Prest on being named the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce Tom Parker Chamber Member of 2014 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 638

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas charity organizations could not survive without the dedication and commitment of volunteers; and

Whereas the Elmsdale Legion Care-Actors write, produce, and perform dinner theatres for charities; and

Whereas over the last seven years they have raised approximately \$100,000 for charities, including the Canadian Cancer Society, Women in Crisis, the East Hants Emergency Response Centre, Corridor Community Options for Adults, and the Enfield, Elmsdale, Waverly, and Shubenacadie Legions, just to name a few;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate the Elmsdale Legion Care-Actors on receiving the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce Community Booster 2014 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 639

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Alan MacLeod Senior and Alan MacLeod Junior both worked for Ettinger's Funeral Home in Shubenacadie for many years before purchasing the business in September 2013; and

Whereas the MacLeods and their knowledgeable staff help families in Hants East make the planning of their loved ones' funerals as easy as possible; and

Whereas after the service, Ettinger's staff help the bereaved family complete the necessary documents and ensure their affairs are in order;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ettinger's Funeral Home on being named the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Customer Service Team of 2014 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 640

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas for over 35 years Tom Parker, owner of Parker's Service Station in Middle Musquodoboit, has worked long hours six or seven days a week, plus volunteers many hours to community organizations; and

Whereas Tom has given many people their first, and has taught them that happy customers are extremely important to the success of a business; and

Whereas Tom is known for always greeting his customers with a smile on his face, for his honesty, and for his fairness; and

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Tom Parker on being named the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce Business Person of 2014 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 641

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas after giving birth to her son, Jessica Edgar fulfilled a need for her family and community by opening Branching Out Natural Parenting and Living in Enfield; and

Whereas Branching Out Natural Parenting and Living offers sustainable, quality local products that are toxin-free and ethically manufactured; and

Whereas Jessica reaches a broader market by having an online store, a gift registry, and a customer loyalty program, as well as a play group and complementary products;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jessica Edgar on being named the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce Young Entrepreneur of 2014 and wish her continued success in her new endeavour.

RESOLUTION NO. 642

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Adam MacDonald had the insight to see a need in the community for fast on-site car maintenance; and

Whereas over five years ago Adam started Mac's On Site Oil Change Inc. in the parking lot at Mic Mac Mall, where people could shop while their car had a complete oil and filter change service; and

Whereas the quality of work and the excellent customer service provided at Mac's On Site Oil Change Inc. has allowed Adam to grow his business and expand to Burnside;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Adam MacDonald on being named the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce Rising Star of 2014 and wish him continued success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 643

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Elmsdale Landscaping Limited has been in business for over 50 years and employs approximately 150 people; and

Whereas Elmsdale Landscaping is one of the largest landscape companies and sod producers in Atlantic Canada; and

Whereas Elmsdale Landscaping has the largest program in Eastern Canada that uses source-separated organic compost as a soil conditioner and amendment, which in essence completes the ecological cycle and "green cart to green yard";

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Elmsdale Landscaping Limited on receiving the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement 2014 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 644

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Canada 55+ Games is a program that promotes the spiritual, mental and physical well-being of Canadians 55 years of age and older; and

Whereas the 2014 Canada 55+ Games were held August 27 to 30 in Alberta; and

Whereas Nova Scotia finished fifth with 21 gold, 17 silver and 19 bronze medals

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Cindy Miller of Lantz for being part of the silver-medalist hockey team.

RESOLUTION NO. 645

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Canada 55+ Games is a program that promotes the spiritual, mental and physical well-being of Canadians 55 years of age and older; and

Whereas Nova Scotia finished fifth with 21 gold, 17 silver and 19 bronze medals at the 2014 Canada 55+ Games held August 27 to 30 in Alberta; and

Whereas Margaret Harris of East Gore has been attending all the Canada 55+ Games since they began in 1996;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Margaret Harris on being made an honorary captain of Team Nova Scotia and being presented with a certificate signed by Premier Stephen McNeil.

RESOLUTION NO. 646

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Canada 55+ Games is a program that promotes the spiritual, mental and physical well-being of Canadians 55 years of age and older; and

Whereas Nova Scotia finished fifth with 21 gold, 17 silver and 19 bronze medals at the 2014 Canada 55+ Games held August 27 to 30 in Alberta; and

Whereas Pearl Neil of Upper Rawdon has been attending all the Canada 55+ Games since they began in 1996;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Pearl Neil on being made an honorary captain of Team Nova Scotia and being presented with a certificate signed by Premier Stephen McNeil.

RESOLUTION NO. 647

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Susan Abboud is a long-time resident of Porters Lake and a devoted wife and mother who also owns and operates an in-home day care full time; and

Whereas Susan has been an active member of the Porters Lake Community Services Association since 2010, serving in many roles; and

Whereas Susan is also an active volunteer coordinator with Lake and Shore Days, Foundation United Baptist Church, Girl Guides of Canada and Orenda Canoe Club;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Susan for commitment to the people of Porters Lake through her various volunteer activities.

RESOLUTION NO. 648

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Shirley Hines, a lifelong resident of Head of Chezzetcook, is a devoted mother and grandmother; and

Whereas Shirley Hines is a retired social worker; and

Whereas Shirley Hines is a well-respected pillar of her community being very active in her church, St. Genevieve's, East Chezzetcook, and was formerly president of the Chezzetcook Historical Society;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Shirley Hines for giving of her time and talents for the betterment of the Eastern Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 649

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Monica Hoveland is a full-time business owner, mother and wife who is an active member of the Porters Lake Community Services Association since 2009; and

Whereas Monica has been Youth and Teen Dance coordinator since 2010, providing a safe and fun place for youth and teens in Porters Lake and the surrounding area to go to three Fridays a month; and

Whereas Monica has also volunteered with O'Connell School, Gaetz Brook Junior High, Girl Guides, Orenda Canoe Club and Porters Lake Soccer Association,

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Monica for volunteering her time to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 650

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Mary Steinburg is a resident of Musquodoboit Harbour and a devoted wife and mother; and

Whereas Mary is a retired flight attendant and takes a very active role in her children's upbringing; and

Whereas Mary is a dedicated volunteer at her children's school with such activities as Play, book fairs and day trips, and is a dedicated president of the Eastern Shore Ringette Association and a Girl Guide leader.

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of assembly join me in thanking Mary for being a positive role model not only for her family but for all residents on the Eastern Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 651

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Ken White is a long-time resident of Musquodoboit Harbour and devoted husband and community member; and

Whereas Ken is retired from the Canadian Armed Forces; and

Whereas Ken is a very active member of the Musquodoboit Harbour District Lions Club taking a leadership role in many Lions events;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Ken for his years of volunteering and recognizing the importance of giving back to your community.

RESOLUTION NO. 652

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Kaye Bruce, a lifelong resident of Chezzetcook is a wife, mother and grandmother; and

Whereas Kaye Bruce is a retired nurse; and

Whereas Kaye Bruce is a pillar of her community being active in her church, St. Genevieve's, East Chezzetcook, regularly greeting parishioners, reading from Scripture, and working church suppers;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Kaye Bruce for giving of her time and talents for the betterment of Eastern Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 653

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Jeff Crowell is a life-long resident of Musquodoboit Harbour and a devoted husband and father; and

Whereas Jeff has been a long-time employee with Fossil Power, a locally owned business; and

Whereas Jeff is an active member of the Musquodoboit Harbour District Lions Club taking on many leadership roles such as head of the youth Leo Club;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking Jeff for his many years of serving his community and for his embodiment of the Lions Club motto of, We Serve.

RESOLUTION NO. 654

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Heather Laycock is a life-long resident of Musquodoboit Harbour and devoted wife, mother, and daughter; and

Whereas Heather Laycock is employed with CDHA as a continuing care nurse coordinator and serves the Eastern Shore; and

Whereas Heather is an organizer of the annual Terry Fox Run in Musquodoboit Harbour and is instrumental in the John Fraser Fall Classic fundraiser in support of The Birches and Twin Oaks Hospitals Foundation raising over \$160,000 in the past eight years;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking Heather Laycock for her continued support to the community and for being a great role model for our residents on the Eastern Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 655

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas George Bernier, a long-time resident of Porters Lake is a husband, father, and grandfather; and

Whereas George Bernier is a businessman having owned and operated Bernfield Kennel Service for over 25 years; and

Whereas George Bernier is a community minded individual being active in his church, St. Anselm's, West Chezzetcook, and currently Grand Knight of the local Knights of Columbus Council;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking George Bernier for giving of his time and talents for the betterment of the Eastern Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 656

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on November 5, 2014 the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce recognized local businesses during their Annual Business Awards and announced Randsland Farms the Outstanding Exporter of the Year; and

Whereas this award is sponsored by NSBI and it recognizes a local business that is more than three years old with a significant strength in export that exports a product or service outside of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Randsland Farms Incorporated was the winner of this award because they have tripled their production of southern greens, which they recently began growing for C.H. Robinson, one of the largest produce wholesalers in the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Bruce and Andrew Rand of Randsland Farms Incorporated for winning this year's award and thank the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce for once again encouraging local

business to continue to grow and market their services and products nationally and internationally.

RESOLUTION NO. 657

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on November 6, 2014 Phillip Keddy of Keddy Farms in Kentville, Nova Scotia, will be honoured with Dalhousie Agriculture Campus' Young Alumni Achievement Award recognizing his exceptional achievements as a volunteer and a contributor to the agricultural industry; and

Whereas Phillip has worked with his father Charles to build Keddy Farms into the largest sweet potato producer in Atlantic Canada and a leading exporter of certified strawberry nursery plants to all parts of the United States; and

Whereas he has taken on leadership volunteer roles in the industry, most recently as president of the board of the Nova Scotia Young Farmers and vice-chair of the Canadian Farm Business Management Council;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Phillip Keddy of Keddy Farms for receiving this great honour and award, and for doing such an exemplary job representing the next generation of farmers here in Nova Scotia who think innovatively and give back to industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 658

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas on November 9th, Port Williams will celebrate its 9th Remembrance Day Observance; and

Whereas Wayne Blenkhorn has served as coordinator of this event since inception; and

Whereas Wayne has served in the regular forces obtaining the rank of Master Warrant Officer and as a reservist in the militia obtaining the rank of Captain and is now a vital part of Legion Branch No. 73 in Canning;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Wayne Blenkhorn for his life of service to country, province and community.

RESOLUTION NO. 659

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas 2014 marks the Windsor Regional Library's 10th Anniversary in their new location on Albert Street in Windsor; and

Whereas since their initial opening in 1949, the Windsor Library has kept up with advancing technology now offering nine public access computers along with two reference express computers; and

Whereas celebrations on November 4, 2014, included a spectacular art exhibition by Mi'kmaq artist Alan Syliboy and included a demonstration by Mi'kmaq drummers;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Windsor Library staff on celebrating 10 years and wish them all the best for many more years to come.

RESOLUTION NO. 660

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas on November 5th, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce handed out their 2014 Business Awards; and

Whereas Canning Village Meat Market received the Small Business of the Year Award; and

Whereas Canning Village Meat Market is a family owned meat market specializing in its famous smoked pepperoni, maple smoked bacon and a large variety of their fresh sausages including delicious breakfast sausages;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Canning Village Meat Market for being awarded Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year for 2014.

RESOLUTION NO. 661

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas on November 5th, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce handed out their 2014 Business Awards; and

Whereas Equilibrium Engineering Inc. received the Micro Business of the Year Award;

Whereas Equilibrium Engineering Inc. provides energy services firmly rooted in sustainable building design and energy conservation by acting as equilibrium partners with their customers to help reduce energy costs, greenhouse gas emissions and overall ecological footprint;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Equilibrium Engineering Inc. for being awarded Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce Micro Business of the Year for 2014.

RESOLUTION NO. 662

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas on November 5th, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce handed out their 2014 Business Awards; and

Whereas Don Wallace was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award; and

Whereas Don's almost 50-year career began in construction and then expanded into the accommodations sector after he built the Old Orchard Inn;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Don Wallace for being awarded Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award for 2014.

RESOLUTION NO. 663

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River)

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

Whereas Truro native, 79-year-old Peter Grant was part of the Truro Masters Club for Adult Swimmers who participated in the FINA World Masters Swimming Championships in Montreal this summer; and

Whereas the Truro swim team managed to bring home nine provincial records; and

Whereas Peter is also an avid skydiver, completing nearly 600 dives to date;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Peter Grant for his lifetime dedication to sport and competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 664

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River)

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

Whereas Maggie's Place is a Truro family resource centre offering programs and services for parents/caregivers and children aged 0-6, and is celebrating their 20th year of community service; and

Whereas their mission is to strengthen and enhance the health and social development of children and families in Cumberland and Colchester Counties; and

Whereas all programs and services at Maggie's Place are free and child care is provided;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Maggie's Place for their positive involvement in the community, and wish them much success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 665

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River)

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

Whereas Salmon River resident Judy Adams spent six months on a trip to Haiti with Global Partners, a mission arm of the Wesleyan Church, serving more than 90 countries; and

Whereas Judy witnessed much unrest but also saw positives in Haiti such as the working program for women called Sew Hopeful, which teaches women to sew, and a carpentry program for men; and

Whereas knowing how to speak both French and Spanish helped Judy as she volunteered in a children's hospital, as well as assisting at a feeding program called Outside the Bowl;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Judy Adams for her altruism and dedication to helping those much less fortunate, and wish her great success on her future mission trips.

RESOLUTION NO. 666

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River)

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

Whereas Dr. Dale Ells of Truro was presented with the A. Gordon Archibald Award for his volunteer contributions and support to the Dalhousie Agricultural Campus; and

Whereas Dr. Ells was instrumental in organizing the faculty of agriculture's international programming, which includes development programs in many countries; and

Whereas he also wrote a comprehensive illustrated history book on the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, called *Shaped through Service*;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Dr. Dale Ells for his dedication and promotion of the Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, and wish him every success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 667

By: Ms. Lenore Zann (Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River)

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

Whereas Atlantic Canada's first regional seed bank has been formed at Dalhousie University's AC campus in Bible Hill; and

Whereas Assistant Professor Nancy MacLean will oversee the seed bank and focus on preserving the genetic purity of the collection; and

Whereas the seed bank currently holds 24 varieties of ten vegetables and grain crops which will be made available to farmers and students studying plant and sciences agriculture;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Dalhousie AC for its desire to maintain high-quality seeds that hold cultural and historic value in our area, and wish them great success in the future.