



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

Published by Order of the Legislature by Hansard Reporting Services and printed by the Queen's Printer.

Available on INTERNET at <http://nslegislature.ca/index.php/proceedings/hansard/>

Second Session

FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2015

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ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Tue., Mar. 31 st at 1:00 p.m.	3102
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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2015

Sixty-second General Assembly

Second Session

9:00 A.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Ms. Margaret Miller

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We'll begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

MR. SPEAKER: As Speaker, I would like to table the House of Assembly Management Commission 2014 Annual Report.

The report is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1190

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall:

(1) read and table the message from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor transmitting the Estimates of Sums required for the service of the province for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016, for the consideration of this House;

(2) table the Estimates Books;

(3) table the Crown Corporation Business Plans;

(4) table the Estimate and Crown Corporation Business Plans resolutions;

(5) deliver my Budget Speech; and

(6) move that the Estimates of Sums required for the service of the province, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016, being Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, and the Crown Corporation Business Plans be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on Supply.

Mr. Speaker, for the information of the House, the budget will be presented on April 9th.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 71 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 35 of the Acts of 2014. The Limitation of Actions Act. (Hon. Lena Diab)

Bill No. 72 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 7 of the Acts of 2011. The Fair Drug Pricing Act. (Hon. Maureen MacDonald)

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you seek the consent of the House to have Bill No. 71 added to today's order paper and considered for second reading today, under Government Business.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

We will add Bill No. 71 to the order paper for second reading.

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

SOS PROG. - CONGRATS.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Save Our Sons, Save Our Sisters Rite of Passage Mentorship Program. SOS is a brainchild of four pastors: Dr. Britton, Cornwallis Street Church; Pastor Anderson of the Hammonds Plains Church; Pastor Spivey III of New Beginnings Ministries; and Pastor Porter of the East Preston Baptist Church, who are addressing violence and sexual exploitation of youth in the community through preventative programming and events.

Mentors give their time freely to SOS by instructing and empowering youth, ages 8 to 18, to become healthy, productive, and successful young men and women. I applaud and encourage them to continue to move forward in their creed that we believe every life has value, every person has worth; we will strive for excellence to be our best self to God and make a positive impact on our homes, our communities, and our world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

JACKSON, CARLY - CUMBERLAND CO. MINOR HOCKEY ASSOC. BURSARY

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Carly Jackson, a Cumberland Blues goaltender. Carly recently received a \$1,500 bursary from the Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association. She has been an amazing role model for girls and has accomplished much in her 17 years, and she is an inspiration to all who know her.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Carly Jackson on receiving the bursary from the Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association and wish her continued success in all her future endeavors.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

SENIORS' PHARMACARE PROG. - FUNDING

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the Seniors' Pharmacare Program ensures Nova Scotians have access to affordable medications. More than 120,000 seniors are currently enrolled in the program. On January 30, 2015, the Minister of Health and Wellness unilaterally eliminated the funding ratio which required government to pay 75 per cent of the cost of the program and seniors to pay the remaining 25 per cent. Now, seniors could end up paying an even greater share of cost of the program.

Nova Scotia's seniors are not rich. More than 17,000 seniors receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement. I'm not sure why the McNeil Government thinks seniors can suddenly afford to pay more for their Pharmacare, but I hope we'll find out in this session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I just want to remind the honourable member for Halifax Needham that members' statements should not be used to debate any legislation or resolution currently before the House.

The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery today we have Cassidy Megan and her mother, Angela, and her grandmother, Kathy. Cassidy, would you please stand for the House. (Applause)

Cassidy started Purple Day for epilepsy in 2008 to help people recognize the types of seizures and respond with appropriate first aid. Purple Day is now celebrated across Canada, and on every continent, to increase understanding, reduce stigma, and improve the quality of life for people with epilepsy.

Cassidy, you will be pleased to know that all Parties in the Legislature did members' statements yesterday for Purple Day. I ask that we give Cassidy the warm welcome of the House. Thank you. (Applause)

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

MCDOUGALL, AMANDA - VITAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Amanda McDougall from Main-à-Dieu on being recognized by the Cape Breton Partnership. Amanda received the Vital Excellence Award in the Individual Category as a Main-à-Dieu

community advocate and volunteer. The awards were created to honour Islanders, ages 16 to 40, who make a significant impact in their community or workplace.

It is a privilege for me to congratulate Amanda as she is a very good friend and a valued constituent in our community of Main-à-Dieu. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: ROSEWAY HOSP. - ER CLOSURES

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, Roseway Hospital, in the beautiful town of Shelburne located on Nova Scotia's South Shore, has experienced an increase in emergency room closures in the recent months, especially notable in the last six months with a total of 452 hours of closures since September and counting. Our staff, both in Shelburne and the Halifax office, has tracked these events over the last seven months and they are: closed, Thursday, September 18th, starting at 8:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.; closed, Friday, September 26th, starting at 8:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m.; Sunday, September 27th, closed; Tuesday, September 30th, starting at 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m. Wednesday.

Roseway Hospital was closed Saturday, October 4th from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.; Roseway Hospital was closed October 11th, starting at 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m.; closed Monday, October 13th from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m. Tuesday. Roseway Hospital . . .

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

The honourable member for Hants East.

HANTS NORTH SEN. BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM - GOLD BANNER

MS. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to speak about the Hants North Rural High senior boys basketball team, the Hants North Flames. The Flames had a very successful regular season with a 28 to 3 win-loss record. They ended the season with a 75 to 52 win at the Provincial Senior Boys Basketball Tournament, bringing home the gold banner.

Toby White and John Tanner, Hants North Rural High alumni, have coached the Flames for the last two years. They believe that the boys' dedication to the sport, great work ethic, and the fact that so many of them have played together on the school's minor basketball team are factors for the success of this winning team. The boys' parents were always there to support them and provide drives and fundraising to help with the cost of running the team. This team is a shining example of the joint accomplishments of players, parents, and coaches. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

CANNING VOL. FD/CHIEF WEISNER - GRATITUDE EXPRESS

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my gratitude to the Canning Volunteer Fire Department and Fire Chief Rick Weisner for the service they provided the community in the past year. Their commitment to our community has expressed itself in countless hours of training and practice to prepare for any emergency. They have offered their assistance to those in need at all hours of the day and night and in all sorts of weather. Each year they respond to about 140 emergencies.

Through Canning Volunteer Fire Department Station No. 2 they provide a vital emergency service to the community of Scots Bay. I also wish to thank Captain Blair Steele and the members of Station No. 2 for their service.

Our communities are better places to live because of their willingness to give of themselves in this great act of service of being volunteer fire department members. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: ROSEWAY HOSP. - ER CLOSURES

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, in my earlier statement today I tried to get all the closures of the emergency room at Roseway Hospital in Shelburne under the McNeil Government in one statement. It is clear that these closures have risen nearly 800 per cent over this time last year. Residents of Queens-Shelburne and all Nova Scotians are concerned about the erosion of health care services and emergency rooms not being kept open, from Cape Breton to Shelburne. I will continue to make sure and make note where I left off in my earlier statement. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne has the floor.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Thank you very much, and I'll continue the closure dates. Roseway was closed Wednesday, December 24th, starting at 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.; closed Thursday, December 25th, starting at 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.; closed Monday, December 29th, starting at 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.; closed Friday, January 2nd, starting at 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m. Saturday; closed Tuesday . . .

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

MR. BELLIVEAU: I'll continue next week.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

HENNEBERRY, CAPT. HAROLD: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak of Captain Harold Henneberry from Sambro. A few months ago I stood before this House congratulating Harold on his 100th birthday. It is with great sadness that I stand here today to say that Harold passed away on January 13th.

Mr. Harold Henneberry was a great family man and a pillar of our community. He was also known as a great storyteller, passing on the history of Sambro through his stories. In 1956, Harold and his crew were lost at sea and survived seven days in the North Atlantic. They rowed over 300 miles in dories before they were rescued. This story was the inspiration for the movie *The Disappeared*, which debuted at the 2012 Atlantic Film Festival.

I ask the members to join me in sending our condolences to the Henneberry family. Harold Henneberry will be missed by his family and the entire community of Sambro. Thank you.

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

DOUCETTE, VERNON - CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, on February 3, 2015, Vernon Doucette, a 94-year-old veteran from Wedgeport, Nova Scotia, was in Washington, D.C., with 13 other comrades to receive the Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of their superior service during World War II. Mr. Doucette was the member of the First Special Service Force until 1944 when it was disbanded and he was wounded and discharged in 1945. The FSSF was also honoured in Canada on January 27, 2013, in Ottawa. Vernon Doucette was present at the ceremony where he met Governor General David Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Vernon Doucette for receiving this very prestigious honour, thank him for his service and wish him continued good health.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: LUN. - CEC OPEN

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, the evidence shows that the Collaborative Emergency Centres work. The Department of Health and Wellness's 2013 ER Accountability Report showed that ER closures in communities that have CECs went down by 92 per cent that year. Despite this evidence, the minister halted plans for a CEC

in Lunenburg and commissioned his own review of the CEC model. The findings of that review were not a surprise to those of us who have been paying attention. That review acknowledged that CECs tailored to community needs are extremely beneficial. With the ER at Fishermen's Memorial Hospital closed more and more every year, when will the minister heed the advice given in his own review and open a CEC in Lunenburg?

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

SKI CAPE SMOKEY: VOLs. - RECOGNIZE

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the volunteers and community members who made it possible for Ski Cape Smokey in Ingonish to open again this season. Ski Cape Smokey is operated by volunteers and the Ski Cape Smokey Society who dedicate their time and efforts to the hills so that it can be enjoyed by the community and it is certainly enjoyed. As a resident of Victoria-The Lakes I am appreciative of every person who makes this recreational facility available and I am especially grateful that another generation of kids will grow up with the love of skiing because of Ski Cape Smokey. Thank you.

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

JOHNNY MILES FEST.: ICE JAM FUNDRAISER - THANK

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the organizers of the Johnny Miles Festival in Sydney Mines who just finished their annual Ice Jam, which is a major fundraiser for the summertime festival. The Ice Jam is a 10-hour event showcasing the most popular musical acts in Cape Breton who volunteer their talents. A group of 20 volunteers work long and hard to make Ice Jam a very successful story. Thank you to the dedicated Ice Jam volunteers for making our community a better place to live.

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

MCNEIL GOV'T.: CECs - OPEN

HON. DAVID WILSON: Emergency rooms from North Sydney to Shelburne to Middleton have racked up hundreds of hours in closures since the McNeil Government came into power. This is concerning to us and to all Nova Scotians, I believe, Mr. Speaker. We know collaborative emergency centres improve access to primary care and reduce stress on emergency rooms. The minister's briefing note prepared last Fall even acknowledged this and yet the minister hasn't even opened a single CEC under his mandate.

In little than over two years the previous government opened eight CECs. There also were plans for another six CECs. Now it is almost two years into the McNeil

Government's mandate and not a single CEC has opened to date. It's time the McNeil Government admit their decision to stop implementing CECs was wrong and get to work improving patient care by opening more CECs.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

VEINOT, KATHLEEN: FREE SPIRITED - PUBLICATION

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: When someone publishes their work to be a work of fiction, nonfiction, or poetry, they are sharing a bit of themselves with the world. They are opening themselves and inviting everyone to take a look. It takes courage, especially when you choose to do it for the first time after four decades.

That's exactly what Kathleen Veinot of New Germany has experienced; she has been writing poetry since she was 14. Her new book, *Free Spirited*, is a collection 107 poems and illustrations she has compiled over the years. She told the local newspaper she chose to publish selected poems because she didn't want to see them published by someone else or perhaps discarded in the future. Kathleen still writes every day and has no plans to stop any time soon. She has said that she was in part inspired by her grandfather to write poetry. May her book inspire another young writer to pick up a pen or pencil and write poems of their own.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

EARTH HOUR - MEMBERS PARTICIPATE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask members to join the global environmental movement raising awareness about climate change by participating in Earth Hour. Earth Hour was founded in 2007 by the World Wildlife Federation. Its goal - to raise awareness about climate change and to get us thinking about other small changes we can make in our daily lives to reduce our carbon footprint.

On March 28th, at 8:30 p.m., simply turn off all essential lights and electronics for one hour. Let's join the millions of people from more than 162 countries who participated in 2014 by turning off the lights and unplugging for one hour Saturday evening. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: PATIENT CARE - FOCUS

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, while the government was distracted picking fights with health care workers, front line patient care was deteriorating. ER Site Chief at the Halifax Infirmary, Dr. Sam Campbell, sent out a call for help earlier

this month when conditions became untenable in the ER. He told the local media that the ER is way worse today than we were at the time when we called code orange. He is worried because patients are waiting way longer than the nationally recommended guidelines.

The Premier should begin to listen to health care professionals like Dr. Sam Campbell and turn his focus to patient care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS - DONATE/VOLUNTEER

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Halifax has been making a positive difference in the lives of our nation's youth, through a wide range of mentoring programs for the past 48 years. They believe that opening a child's eyes to what is opens their mind to what could be.

As Canada's leading child and youth mentoring charity, Big Brothers Big Sisters facilitates life-changing relationships that inspire and empower children and youth to reach their potential, both as individuals and citizens. Their challenge is to find matches for the hundreds of youths on their waiting lists. I am proud to be a supporter of Big Brothers Big Sisters and encourage others to donate or volunteer their time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

OXFORD REG. EDUC. CTR. LADY GOLDEN BEARS - NSSAF BANNER

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the Oxford Senior Girls Lady Golden Bears who captured their fourth consecutive NSSAF Division 4 banner this year. The championship team was led by the lone graduating player and captain, Megan Thompson.

Members of the Golden Bears are: Taylor Mattinson, Megan Thompson, Rhyse Black, Mackenzie Mattinson, Bethany Warwick, Courtney Patriquin, Keyonna Stevens, Kathryn Hickman, Ashley Wheaton and Emma Oderkirk. The team is coached by Kendall Black and Peter Swan.

I congratulate the Oxford Regional Educational Centre Lady Golden Bears on this outstanding achievement and wish them continued success in the future.

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

**ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH (N. SYDNEY): LENTEN LUNCHESES -
THANK**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate St. John's Anglican Church in North Sydney. For over 35 years they have held weekly ecumenical lunches during Lent. Every Wednesday during Lent is reserved as a time for fellowship, conversation, a wonderful lunch and a very interesting guest speaker. Over \$53,000 has been raised since 1979 and it goes to helping those in need worldwide. I would like to thank the army of volunteers at St. John's Anglican Church for their annual Lenten lunches.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**RADVANYI, MS. MADDIE: CAN. GAMES (2015)
- SNOWBOARDING SILVER MEDAL**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to celebrate the achievement of a young athlete from Kings South, Ms. Maddie Radvanyi, whose hard work and talent has resulted in her bringing home a silver medal in snowboarding in the parallel giant slalom event from the 2015 Canada Games. Although she is a native of Toronto, she attends Acadia University and elected to compete in the games as a proud Nova Scotian.

On behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia I'd like to congratulate Ms. Radvanyi on her achievement and thank her for making Nova Scotia proud with her podium finish. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

MASON FAM. (STELLARTON) - HOCKEY PARTICIPATION

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, the Mason family from Stellarton is an exceptionally busy one during hockey season. Their basement is hockey central with hockey nets located at opposite ends of the room. Hockey is everything, so much that the five children share rooms so they can play hockey in the basement. During the winter hockey dominates their lives with all five children - Annika, Lucia, Kevin, Jaden and Joseph - playing competitive hockey at the highest level available to them. A typical weekend will have the family attending eight games, not to forget the practices scheduled every night of the week between the five children. One particular weekend they had 15 games to attend.

Through hockey they have met great friends and coaches, and the sport has kept them busy and healthy. When they are not playing hockey for their teams or practising in the basement or on the pond, the Masons can be found at the rink cheering on their siblings and cousins or watching a game on TV.

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

HOLLAND RD. ELEM. SCH. - FUNDRAISING CONGRATS.

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the students of Holland Road Elementary School in Fall River.

The students of Holland Road Elementary School in Fletchers Lake are very proud of their efforts to raise money to purchase goats for the families of Africa. The money was earned through snow shovelling, forgoing birthday presents in lieu of donations, and performing chores for their families. The students raised \$3,237 - enough to purchase 64 goats.

Students from Primary to Grade 6 participated in sacrificing money that they could have spent on themselves. These young students are learning at an early age to care for their community and the world they live in.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

STASHBELT: ENTREPRENEURS - CONGRATS.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate entrepreneurs Jonah Brotman and Pictou County natives Jeff Davis and Seth Rozee on their new business venture, called StashBelt. Jack, a journalist, was arrested while covering a political protest in Nairobi, Kenya, and accused of being an American spy. He did not have his passport with him. Luckily, he had a photocopy of it stashed in his homemade version of a StashBelt.

A new and improved StashBelt was designed, and out of a sense of social responsibility the men have them made in Kenya, creating good, sustainable jobs in Africa. The entrepreneurs appeared on *Dragon's Den*, securing a partnership with David Chilton.

I am pleased to offer my congratulations to Jonah, Jeff, and Seth. Thank you.

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

REDDICK, DEACON ALONZO: COMMUN. INVOLVEMENT - HONOUR

MR. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I would like to honour Deacon Alonzo Reddick, who is a lifelong resident of the community of Lincolnville and has dedicated his life to making his community and communities at large better places to live.

He is involved with numerous committees such as the Freemasons of Nova Scotia, the Lincolnville Development Association, the Men's Brotherhood, the Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Board, and the Antigonish-Guysborough Black Development Association, all with the goal of making positive change.

In addition to his community work, Alonzo is a deacon with the Tracadie United Baptist Church, one of Nova Scotia's oldest Black Baptist churches. His dedication has earned him the following awards: the Black Cultural Centre's Award Wall of Fame and volunteer recognition by the Municipal District of Guysborough and African Nova Scotian Affairs.

I am proud to have Alonzo Reddick as a member of our community. Alonzo personifies the true meaning of community person. I would like to thank him for all the remarkable things that he has done for his community and the Province of Nova Scotia. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

HARVEY, WILL: COMMUN. ASSISTANCE - THANK

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I wish to rise today to say a few words about Will Harvey.

Will moved to the Valley early in February to accept a job. For most of February, Will was homeless, relying on assistance from many people and groups. I wish to express my thanks to Open Arms and the Kentville Police Service and the many individuals who donated time and money to help Will.

During the month my office worked with Will and the Department of Community Services to try to find accessible, affordable housing, Will needed an apartment that would accept his large power wheelchair. I am pleased to say that Will now has suitable housing in Kings West.

However, there is a serious lack of affordable, accessible housing in our communities, and much for us in this House to do to address that situation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

SEMANSKY, MATT: SMALL BUSINESS AND THE CITY - PUBLICATION

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Matt Semansky, who co-authored a new book called *Small Business and the City* through University of Toronto Press. The book launch took place in the riding of Halifax Needham at FRED earlier this week.

Fred Connors is an entrepreneur who has taken his business from the north end of Halifax to New York City. This is an example of small businesses that change a neighbourhood, and that Nova Scotians can be proud of.

In Chapter 3, this book talks about Halifax and many challenges facing our city's businesses, one of which is red tape. As a small business owner, I want to commend the government for undertaking a regulatory review and the creation of a position where a deputy minister will focus solely on this important matter. This is a start to building a foundation for businesses to succeed.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**JACKSON, CARLY - CAN. WINTER GAMES (2015):
FLAGBEARER - CONGRATS.**

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take the opportunity today to also congratulate Carly Jackson for being named the flag bearer representing the Province of Nova Scotia for the ceremonies of the Canada Winter Games. Carly is a goaltender with the female hockey team who has a string of accomplishments to her credit, including her participation in the 2015 International Ice Hockey Federation Under 18 Women's World Championships. Carly is headed to the University of Maine to play for that school's female hockey team.

The 2015 Canada Winter Games took place in Prince George, British Columbia, from February 13th to March 1st and hosted more than 4,400 athletes competing in 19 sports across 17 venues. All of the people of Cumberland North are proud to have Carly Jackson represent us and the Province of Nova Scotia as flag bearer at the 2015 Canada Winter Games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HANDSPIKER-WADE, HAILEY
- LT.-GOV.'S RESPECTFUL CITIZENSHIP AWARD**

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the Nova Scotia Lieutenant Governor's Respectful Citizenship Award recognizes students who are making a positive difference in their schools, their communities, and their province. Our Hailey Handspiker-Wade is one of the recipients of the 2015 Individual Respectful Citizenship Award.

Hailey is a Grade 12 student at Digby Regional High School, was instrumental in resurrecting the school's Gay Straight Alliance Group, is a founding member of the Anime Club, and is an active member of the Me to We Group. Hailey also played a key role in the Anti-Violence Youth Theatre Stand Up and Take Notice program. Congratulations, Hailey,

and keep up your work on having a positive impact on your community and the world. Thank you.

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

GOV'T. (N.S.): LAND PLANNING - MUN. DEVOLUTION

MR. IAIN RANKIN: I wish to acknowledge the direction of the province in devolving more land planning authority to municipalities, where full responsibility and accountability for planning should reside. This has been the stated philosophy of Premier McNeil to the municipalities before the election and after the election. He has made good in recent legislation with support from across the floor and I'm grateful for it.

Halifax has greatly appreciated this new enhanced authority to help unleash even greater economic growth, especially in the downtown core of this capital city. Halifax City Hall and other municipal halls can now make and execute their own decisions without another level of government meddling, as in the past, delaying timely action by questioning the quality of those municipal decisions. Municipalities want to be positioned in being nimble enough to amend policies and around shaping their own commercial and residential development. This government has demonstrated support, not by rhetoric alone, but by proof of legislation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

**LUN. QUEENS MADD: HOCKEY FUNDRAISING
- PARTICIPANTS CONGRATS.**

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate the organizers and participants of a recent hockey game that raised funds and awareness for Lunenburg Queens MADD. Held on February 28th, the Bridgewater High School and Park View Education Centre all-star hockey team took to the ice against the local police and RCMP, but the big winner was the local MADD group. I'd like to thank the organizers, participants, and volunteers for the time and effort they put into organizing this worthy cause.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

CRESCO DEV./TEAM: N.S. FAM. ENTERPRISE OF YR. - CONGRATS.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: I rise today to congratulate Hossein Mousavi, his co-principal Taleb Abidali and the rest of the team at Cresco Developments Limited on being named Nova Scotia's Family Enterprise of the Year by the Nova Scotia Chapter of the Canadian Association of Family Enterprise. In its 25 years in business Cresco Developments Limited has built over 2,000 single-family homes in Halifax and has become

known in Nova Scotia's homebuilding industry for their innovative technologies and construction practices which allow them to build some of the most energy-efficient communities in Atlantic Canada.

The Canadian Association of Family Enterprise has recognized Cresco for the contributions it, as a family-run business, makes to job growth, economic prosperity, philanthropy, and innovation. Please join me in wishing good luck to the team at Cresco Developments Limited when they join other regional finalists in Toronto this May for the announcement of National Family Enterprise of the Year Award. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

SALSMAN, DEAN: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. KELLY REGAN: I would like to tell you about Dean Salsman who died recently at the age of 91. Mr. Salsman, as I always called him, hailed from the Annapolis Valley. After a stint in the Navy in World War II he became a successful businessman. As head of Industrial Estates Limited, now known as NSBI, he helped bring Michelin to Bridgetown, and yet Mr. Salsman was humble. Although he didn't court accolades, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands named him an officer of the Order of Orange-Nassau, a rare and high honour for a non-Netherlander.

He was a devoted husband to Evelyn Jones for 66 years. They had four children and 11 grandchildren and Mr. Salsman delighted in them, even sitting at the kiddie table for dinner. Mr. Salsman was unfailingly kind, polite, charitable, and always well dressed; he even wore a suit to mow the lawn. He was a mentor to many, a lifelong Liberal, and a role model to all. We are poorer for his loss. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

CITIZENS ON PATROL - VOL. OPPORTUNITY

MS. MARGARET MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to say a few words about the volunteer organization Citizens on Patrol. Citizens on Patrol is a group of dedicated volunteers that works closely with the police agencies to help prevent crime in their area. Using their own vehicles these volunteers work in pairs to patrol our communities and make police aware of suspicious situations or crimes in progress. They are an extra set of eyes, often in the right place at the right time.

Citizens on Patrol members get to know their community, give at least 120 hours a year, and attend meetings and training sessions. You must be at least 19 years of age, hold a valid driver's licence, and have vehicle insurance for this province. COP members do not put themselves in danger, carry unauthorized weapons, or take enforcement action. What

they do is make a real difference. I would encourage anyone who is thinking about a volunteer opportunity to join Citizens on Patrol. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

VIOLA DESMOND DAY (02/16/15) - CELEBRATION

MR. BRENDAN MAQUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak of Viola Desmond Day. February 16th saw the first Heritage Day holiday in Nova Scotia and was marked throughout the province with various events. In my riding of Halifax Atlantic we celebrated the day by bringing families together with free bowling and pizza at our local Bowlarama. I was happy to host this event and it was open to all members of our community. The Spryfield Bowlarama was filled to capacity with over 300 people in attendance. By all accounts everyone had a great time having a chance to spend time with their family and friends at a fun-filled event.

The holiday gives Nova Scotians a chance to reflect on and celebrate our heritage. The celebration can take many forms from informative to fun. I want to send a special thanks to the wonderful staff at the Spryfield Bowlarama. I ask the members of the House to join me in recognizing the importance of our new February holiday and give a special thank you to the minister for working so hard to make this a reality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

VICTORIA CO. WINTER ACTIVEFEST: ORGANIZERS/PARTICIPANTS - RECOGNIZE

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the organizers and participants in the fourth annual Victoria County Winter ActiveFest that was held this year from February 13 to March 15, 2015. During ActiveFest there were organized events like snowshoe hikes, downhill and cross-country skiing, yoga, outdoor walks, luncheons, square dancing and skating, all aimed at getting people out and active during the sometimes sedentary winter season. Victoria County offers a myriad of outdoor activities and I am pleased that the municipality is embracing winter fun that is good for the body and the soul. Thank you to the organizers, volunteers and participants of ActiveFest. We look forward to next year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

DAUPHINEE, LEIGH: NORTHFIELD DIST. FD - THANK

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Today I would like to take some time to recognize one of West Northfield's foremost volunteers, Leigh Dauphinee. The Northfield

District Fire Department was in existence for about eight years when Mr. Dauphinee followed in the footsteps of his friends and other young men in the community by signing on to join the brigade. This year for his many efforts in volunteering in the community, Mr. Dauphinee was honoured by the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg as its recipient of Volunteer of the Year, which will be received at the 41st Annual Provincial Awards ceremony to be held on Tuesday, April 7th.

Mr. Dauphinee spent 55 years with the Northfield District Fire Department. He served through the late 1950s, continuing into the 1960s. In 1974 he became the department's fourth fire chief. He kept the title until the early 2000s, thereby becoming the department's longest serving chief. In 2013 he was honoured with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for making a lasting impression on his home community and beyond. Thank you, Leigh.

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

CONRAD, LUKE/CARTOON CONRAD PRODUCTIONS - CONGRATS.

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Luke Conrad of Cartoon Conrad Productions in Beaver Bank. Mr. Conrad has been operating his animation business in the Sackville-Beaver Bank area since 2003. At present Cartoon Conrad has a staff of 45, and since 2003 has had earnings of approximately \$5 million. Their goal was to create high-quality entertainment animation for kids and teens; today their products include training modules for business and nursing, as well as interactive multimedia and graphic design.

Mr. Conrad is a true success story. As an entrepreneur, Luke wanted to live and work in his hometown and build a business to allow him to do just that. Not only has he realized his goal of living and working in Sackville, he is making money doing what he loves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

WARREN, JANE: ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS - CONGRATS.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate a talented athlete from Kings South, Ms. Jane Warren, who was recently named by Athletics Nova Scotia as Masters Female Athlete of the Year for 2014. Ms. Warren competes in the 55 to 59 age category with the Masters division in throwing events. Her overall national rankings for the 2014 indoor season were first in weight throw and third in shot put, and for the 2014 outdoor season she ranked third in weight hammer discus throw, fifth in javelin throw, and sixth in shot put.

She is to be commended for an active lifestyle and excellence in sport as a member of a dedicated community of competitive Masters athletes in Nova Scotia. On behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly I would like to congratulate Ms. Warren on her impressive achievements and dedication to her athletic career. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

DOMPIERRE MEM. BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT - FUNDRAISING

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the annual Bill Dompierre Memorial Basketball Tournament.

The sixth annual Bill Dompierre Memorial Basketball Tournament took place at Lockview High in the Gordon Snow Centre on January 9th and January 10th and featured 12 high school boys and girls teams from across Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Lockview High hosts the tournament each year to honour an incredible man, Bill Dompierre, and to help raise money for kidney cancer. Bill's passion was basketball. He started coaching with Bedford minor baseball, basketball and then moved on to the coach of Charles P. Allen, Lockview High and, finally, Dartmouth High.

Monies raised from the tournament go to support Kidney Cancer Canada. To date more than \$6,000 has been raised. Thank you Lockview High basketball for your continued support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

GOV'T. (N.S.): LACEWOOD BUS - TERMINAL

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the support our government has committed to improving transit development, specifically in assisting with transit development funding throughout this province after more than 20 years of no provincial investment in transit.

Today, among other project initiatives across Nova Scotia, I cite the impressive new Lacewood terminal being presently constructed, opening this summer, through an enabling \$1 million of provincial funding to the Halifax municipality. While not located in my riding, it will benefit the many transit users in adjacent areas, especially workers in getting to their jobs with much better scheduled reliability. Fifteen per cent of our workers throughout Halifax take transit to get to work. As impressive as this percentage is, Halifax wants to increase that to a targeted national standard of 20 per cent by 2020. The Nova Scotia provincial government, with the support across the floor, is helping more workers get onto the bus and to work on time. Thank you.

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

**ANTIGONISH-GUYSBOROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD
INTERVENTION PROG.: STAFF - THANK**

MR. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, the Antigonish-Guysborough Early Childhood Intervention Program has been providing free support services for families raising young children from birth to school age with special needs or developmental concerns for over 15 years. The office for the program is staffed by Karen Roberts, early childhood interventionist, and covers the entire County of Guysborough.

Antigonish Guysborough's Early Childhood Intervention is a valuable asset for our communities providing one-on-one interaction, school transition support, parent/child advocacy and resource lending library. All services are delivered with a family-centred ethos.

I am pleased to have such a tremendous service in our community. I would like to thank Karen Roberts and her staff, who continue to provide such an exceptional service to the families. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**AMHERST POST OFFICE STAFF:
CAN. POST COMMUN. FDN. - PARTICIPATION**

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank and congratulate the Canada Post staff at the Amherst Post Office for their participation in Canada Post Community Foundation. Through the foundation Amherst staff have raised funds by selling stamps and soliciting donations.

The funds raised in Amherst have been donated to youth projects sponsored by the Sexual Health Centre for Cumberland County and the Amherst Regional High School Youth Volunteer Program. These programs have received \$5,000 and \$3,000 respectively through the Canada Post Community Foundation.

I am proud to commend Canada Post Community Foundation and the Amherst, Nova Scotia postal staff for choosing two Amherst-based programs to receive grant funding through the National Community Foundation. Thank you.

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

**JENKINS, ANA & WILSON/MEXICO LINDO REST.:
PHILANTHROPY - APPLAUD**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, Ana and Wilson Jenkins, owners and operators of the amazing Mexico Lindo Restaurant in Fairview, are not only responsible for providing the most amazing Mexican food in the province, but they are great philanthropists who often fundraise not only for our local community, but for the community that Ana comes from in Mexico.

I would like to ask this House to commend all of their efforts and give a round of applause for two of the most amazing philanthropists I've had the pleasure of knowing and working with. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

HFX. WEST HS IMPROV TEAMS: IMPROV GAMES - CONGRATS.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Halifax West High School improv teams for their outstanding performances at the regional tournament for the Canadian Improv Games in February. The Halifax West Chicken Strips, with team members Carly Penrose, Aiden Lemire, Sarah Chambers, Caitlin MacMullin, Connor McKiggan, Coleman Merry, and Jennifer Scott won first place and will be representing Nova Scotia in the national tournament in Ottawa.

The Halifax West Line Crossers, with team members Evan Matthews, Kathleen Jones, Harrison Souchereau, Jared Taylor, Lilly Kirk, Victor Lamoureux, and Chris Duvar placed third, and Line Crosser Jared Taylor won the Impressive Spirit award and a scholarship to attend Improv U this summer in Ontario.

I'm proud to have such talented and creative young people in my community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

LYNCH, BRIANA - RUSSELL ALCORN AWARD

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, Theatre Antigonish wrapped up their 40th season in March with their One Act Play Festival and handing out of their annual awards. I would like to take a moment to congratulate one of the three award recipients who were honoured at this ceremony.

Briana Lynch received the Alcorn Award, which is awarded to someone who has made an outstanding contribution to the activities of Theatre Antigonish over the past year

or years and whose contribution reflects the qualities of dedication, unselfish service, artistic integrity and generous spirit of support and co-operation.

The award is named after Russell Alcorn, who demonstrated all of the attributes that I just mentioned. Briana was presented the award on behalf of Theater Antigonish's Board of Directors and I congratulate Briana on receiving this award and thank her for being in integral part and member of Theatre Antigonish. Thank you.

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

DIGBY AREA: TIDAL IND. - OPPORTUNITIES

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned many times in the past and will continue to mention it in the future, the Digby area is blessed to have tremendous opportunities in the tidal industry. A lot of work has gone on there in the past years with the municipalities working together, industry has been very interested. There has been a study done that shows Digby Harbour is the port of choice for servicing tidal in Nova Scotia.

I would like to stand here today before everybody in this House and encourage the support of having the resources of our province within the tidal sectors still shown to be serviced by people of our communities. I think this is one of the most valuable things that we can do is to encourage our resources to be kept in our communities to the advantage to our community. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

CHRISTIE, ROSS WEBBER: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. KELLY REGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to play a verbal lament today for the loss of one my constituents, Ross Webster Christie. I knew Mr. Christie from our chats at events where the Clan Farquharson Pipes and Drums were playing. Ross drummed with them for years. He was a political mover and shaker for many years with the Progressive Conservative Party. He served as an executive assistant to several ministers, and was valued for his political insight. At his funeral, one of his former colleagues talked about how they loved to hang out at the Bedford Yacht Club, talking politics and making plans.

Ross was an active volunteer. He was a former chair of the board of governors at NSCAD and was deeply involved in Bedford Minor Hockey, the Scots, the North British Society, and of course the Clan Farquharson Pipes and Drums. He leaves behind his wife, Donna, their three children, Sean, Steven, and Sheri, and six grandchildren, as well as three siblings: sisters Margaret Embree and Reverend Cathie Christie, as well as former MLA and minister Peter Christie. He will be missed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

L'ARCHE ANTIGONISH: JUBILEE HOUSE - OPENING

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. February was a month of jubilee for the residents of L'Arche Antigonish. On February 26th the organization held the official opening of their new home, Jubilee House. Residents and L'Arche staff enthusiastically showed visitors around the home, and I was proud to be part of the celebration and official ribbon cutting.

I have to say that the jubilation, the happiness, the feeling in that house on that day was overwhelming. I think it is the same feeling for the residents, for the whole community, for anyone who steps through the front door. Whoever chose the name of the house certainly chose correctly.

L'Arche has been in Antigonish for over 30 years. Their homes and day programs offer a variety of learning experiences. The organization is proud to offer a home environment that follows a community model of living. People with disabilities and those who assist them live together and are equally responsible for the life of their home and community. Mr. Speaker, to see the sheer joy on the faces of the residents of Jubilee House was an incredible experience, and Antigonish is so lucky to have L'Arche within the community.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Just before we get ready for Question Period, I'll take the opportunity in the last couple of minutes to make a Speaker's Statement about the Members' Statements. I just want to provide a little reminder to all members on all sides of the House that we can't use Members' Statements to speak directly to constituents or organizations.

I will quote a reminder that I brought forth on October 29, 2014, when I supplemented the guidelines with a notice to members that statements are, like all discourse that occurs in this Chamber, to be directed to the Chair and should not, for example, be exhortations directed directly to the public or to the TV audience or other members of the House. That is, they should be written in third person and addressed as such. I noticed a number of them today started out in the right direction but ended up speaking directly to the topic or the person aimed at in the statement. I just wanted to provide that clarification moving forward.

Having said that, we'll take a one-minute recess until Question Period.

[9:58 a.m. The House recessed.]

[9:59 a.m. The House reconvened.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We will now begin with Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The time is now 10:00 a.m., we'll conclude at 10:50 a.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM. - CARBON TAX: IMPOSITION - CONFIRM

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the government announced an increase in 1,400 user fees, digging deeper into the pockets of all Nova Scotians, leaving taxpayers wondering if that is just the tip of the tax iceberg. We still haven't heard from the Premier on whether they intend to impose a carbon tax on Nova Scotians, a tax recommended by the government's own study, which also estimates it would raise \$400 million, which is almost \$450 per person.

I'd like to ask the Premier a direct question. Is he considering a carbon tax, yes or no?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the honourable member. We will deliver a budget in the coming days, on April 9th. I will remind him that it is the Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta that is raising taxes in this country, not the Liberal Government of Nova Scotia.

MR. BAILLIE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is also the Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta that has 30,000 onshore gas wells generating wealth for the people of Alberta, something that has been banned here in Nova Scotia. I know it's a complex topic but it took the Premier three whole days after the gas report to ban fracking. Here we are today, four months after this report, and Nova Scotians are wondering if they are going to be taxed in a whole new way or not. So I'll ask the Premier, why leave them waiting all this time when they want to know, is this just the tip of the iceberg or is a bigger carbon tax yet to come?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I know it is a novel idea for the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party but the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has been out consulting with Nova Scotians. Nova Scotians will see their fingerprints on our budget when we introduce it to them because they had direct input with our government.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, they already see the fingerprints of the Premier deeper into their pocketbooks, as of yesterday, with the increase of 1,400 user fees. No wonder

they are wondering what is going to happen next. After all, his campaign spokesperson told them in the election that they would not face an increase in user fees but that same campaign spokesperson has yet to tell us whether there is going to be a \$400 million carbon tax imposed on Nova Scotians or not.

I'd like to ask the Premier, will they know the answer to that question on April 9th when the budget is tabled?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, on April 9th they will know not only that answer, they will know the direction that this province is going to sustainability and they will understand that we're providing opportunities in the private sector to grow good jobs and they finally have a government that is living within its means, controlling its expenditures and going to the bargaining table and defending their interests as well.

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

PREM.: PATIENT CARE - DETERIORATION

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Premier. While this government was distracted, picking fights with health care workers, front line patient care has been deteriorating. The ER Site Chief at the Halifax Infirmary, Dr. Sam Campbell, sounded the alarm earlier this month and he told a local radio station: We are seeing unprecedented levels of overcrowding. As I speak, there are 12 ambulances in the Emergency Department waiting to try and offload their patients.

He went on to say that it was worse than when they called Code Orange. My question to the Premier is this, why did his government allow patient care to deteriorate to this point while he was busy picking fights with health care workers?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to thank the Leader of the New Democratic Party for recognizing that it has been this government that has been defending the interests of all Nova Scotians when it comes to collective agreements. I also want to remind the Leader of the New Democratic Party that when she was Minister of Health and Wellness that same issue was happening downtown. I also want to remind her there are structural challenges facing this province. This government is going to get to the bottom of it.

I also want to remind that member opposite that while she was spending \$700 million in wage increases, she did nothing to shorten wait-lists or improve access to health care in Nova Scotia.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, when this person was Minister of Health and Wellness, we never had a Code Orange. The emergency rooms never had to declare an emergency.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Campbell is worried about patient care, and so am I. He is also worried about the stress that ER overcrowding is having on emergency room staff, and he said that the significant stress on staff is actually resulting in staff getting sick from the strain. It's a difficult situation. I want to ask the Premier why he doesn't care about the mounting stress levels on our front-line health care professionals.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, every member of this House, regardless of what side of the House they sit on, cares about the people who work and operate across this province, and for the Leader of the New Democratic Party to suggest otherwise is simply unfair and is actually below that member. But let me tell you, the only solution to fixing health care isn't just writing another cheque and throwing \$700 million at union leaders from one end of this province to another. It's looking at the structural challenges that are in our system, and we're continuing to work with health care providers across this province and we will make structural changes.

MS. MACDONALD: I don't know where the Premier is coming from with the \$700 million, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps he thinks that health care workers should work as volunteers. It seems to me that's what he's saying.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Campbell isn't the only one who is concerned; 33-year veteran ER doctor, Robert Martel, from the Richmond area says that Premier McNeil needs to push the reset button on health care and listen to what front-line workers like Dr. Campbell have to say - and I'll table that.

So my final question to the Premier is, when will the Premier begin to listen to front-line health professionals, like Dr. Campbell and Dr. Martel, and finally turn his focus on patient care?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to tell all Nova Scotians that the Minister of Health and Wellness, from the day that he was appointed to that portfolio, has continued to be focused on patients and patients alone, and we will deliver a health care system that is sustainable and that all Nova Scotians will have pride in.

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

PREM. - FERRY FEES: INCREASE - JUSTIFICATION

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday we learned that the government is going to increase our user fees, 1,400 of them, across the board, not by CPI as the Premier said but some by as much as 160 per cent. Certainly the consumer price index is not at 160 per cent, and I'm referring to the fees charged for our ferry services, which is an essential service for rural Nova Scotians as they get back and forth to work, and are a vital

transportation link. I'd like to ask the Premier directly why he thinks it's okay to charge 160 per cent more for Nova Scotia's ferries.

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is this province spends \$9 million in this province on the ferry systems that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party talks about and we collect \$1 million with these present changes. That means the rest of Nova Scotians are subsidizing those links, and what we've done is tried to strike a balance to ensure that that service would be in place in those communities, at the same time ensuring that the residents of the particular communities do not absorb the kind of increases that the member is talking about. But they would be there for those who are coming to visit on passes to help pay for those services that all Nova Scotians want to keep.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians already pay the highest income tax in the country, the highest sales tax in the country, the highest general corporate taxes in the country and, depending on where they live, maybe among the highest property taxes in the country. Now they see increases of up to 160 per cent in their user fees, something the Premier himself had once described as just a fancy word for a new tax. He also said of the previous government that if they believed so much in user fee increases then they should be debating those increases right here in the Legislature.

This is a great example, a 100 per cent increase for our ferries in rural Nova Scotia, something people use every day to get around. Why did the Premier not bring the user increases to the Legislature for debate, as he called for when he was in Opposition?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The user fee does not even come close to covering the cost of delivering the services across this province.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, as I've said during the election campaign and every day since, the financial challenges facing this province are enormous. They have been long-standing; they have been for decades in the build. We have, in 18 months, continued to chart a course that will continue to rein in the costs of delivering services to the people of this province. When we get to the point where we reach a balanced budget, we will ensure that we can deliver those savings back to the people of this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

FIN.: FEE INCREASES - RECONSIDER

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. According to Stats Canada, food insecurity happens when households don't have enough money for the variety and quantity of food they need. That's a sad definition. But a sadder fact contained in the Stats Canada food insecurity report is that among the provinces, Nova

Scotia has the highest rate of food insecurity at almost 12 per cent. I will table that. That means that a lot of Nova Scotian families don't have enough money to provide food for their children.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is, given this alarming statistic, will the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board reconsider reaching into the pockets of Nova Scotia families by raising 1,400 provincial fees?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, certainly the information that the member opposite brings to our attention is disturbing. As I said in my speech at the chamber the other day, we are all very concerned for the most vulnerable in this province. That is one reason why we need to have a province that is sustainable, that is able to balance its budget, that has money to reinvest where it is needed most. We'll have absolutely no opportunity to address some of these fundamental needs if we don't make structural change. Thank you very much.

MR. LOHR: I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. According to Statistics Canada, food insecurity can be harmful to children's healthy growth and development. Living in a food-insecure environment can pose numerous health risks to children due to a lower consumption of fruits and vegetables, milk, and other products. Such deficiencies lead to serious health problems, like obesity, developmental abnormalities, or a compromised immune system.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister of Health and Wellness is, given the long-term costs and impacts that food insecurity will have on the Department of Health and Wellness' budget, will the Minister of Health and Wellness ask the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board to rethink the decision to hike the fees and make Nova Scotians' lives even more expensive?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I know one of the programs that does assist our low-income families is the Child Tax Benefit. This is a program that is delivered with federal funding in conjunction with provincial funding. We know that this is certainly helping families.

We're in the final stages now of drafting a nutrition policy for our schools. We know that the work that is done by an organization like Nourish Nova Scotia is doing absolutely tremendous work right across our province. But as the member points out, certainly there are needs that continue to need to be met. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - PATIENT CARE: ATTENTION - FOCUS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. The Valley Regional Hospital reached a new level of over-capacity. In fact, the hospital was declared a Phase III over-capacity for more than 16 hours in a period last week. Earlier this month, acute care VP Tim Guest said since January, there has been significant pressure on the hospital due to closures of long-term care beds in the area and a shortage of home care workers.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, when will the McNeil Government begin to listen to the health care providers like Tim Guest and focus their attention on patient care?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to attribute the excessive patient flow into our ERs on seasonality, but we know that this year, the flu was much more severe. In fact, we've had three times as many deaths, unfortunately, in our province from the flu this year. Severe winter took its toll, of course, on many injuries. All of that was part of the mounting pressure.

However, we do have that structural problem in a system that is nowhere near as integrated as what it needs to be. This is why the changes that are coming are going to bring relief to ERs and bring access to care to a new level in our province.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I have to say, the minister has already indicated a moratorium on new long-term care beds so what plan is he talking about? Amalgamation of district health authorities is not going to help with a shortage of long-term care beds and shortage of home care workers. Tim Guest told *The Chronicle Herald* today the hospital is still pressured this week but the situation is the same across the province. This is not the first time we've heard this. I was in Shelburne earlier this week and I heard the VP for the new authority say the very same thing at a public meeting. I would like to ask the minister, what is he going to do to address the issues we've seen across the province in our emergency rooms with overcrowding?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much to the member opposite. We know that there are a couple of spikes every year, primarily in March and July, on our ERs. What I can tell the member opposite is that a great deal of work has been done with Capital Health and other emergency rooms across the province in just the past couple of weeks, and what I can tell the member opposite is that we will do a great deal more than move from code orange to code census.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

TIR - HWY. NO. 101: TWINNING - UPDATE

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question through you this morning is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. As the minister would know we've had many conversations since he has become minister, as well as during the last few months, with regard to Highway No. 101 which is still un-twinning running through the Windsor area. I know that they have been working on a plan and I wonder if the minister could update me and all constituents this morning on that plan.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. We've certainly had many discussions about Highway No.101, the entire corridor along the stretch that the member represents, and obviously it's an important stretch for the region. There are many significant challenges there. We have been working on some short-term signage and alignment elements of the particular area around the causeway and we're actually now conducting an internal review on the entire Highway No.101. We are going to look at some short-term changes, without question, and the member has been very good to bring those issues to our attention, but there are also long-term solutions there and we're working toward that and we'll certainly keep the member apprised of those plans as they move forward. Thank you.

MR. PORTER: Mr. Speaker, through you, I would just ask the minister, realizing it takes time to put a long-term plan in place and it's expensive and everyone understands and appreciates that, we have had discussions around short-term actions that could help with some prevention out there and I wonder if there is a time frame on maybe seeing some of those short-term actions put into place.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, certainly there is with some of the particular elements that the member had suggested, we are moving forward on some of those where we can. The real challenge that we are trying to address is putting a barrier through that very heavy traffic area, through the Windsor causeway, based on the fact that the alignment is very tricky and it's not wide enough for the partitions, the jersey barriers. We're working on some of those things but I'd invite the member to get in touch with our office and maybe we can have a meeting about some of those things and how close we are to putting them together. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: DEMENTIA STRATEGY - STATUS

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Last year he committed to introducing a new dementia strategy for Nova Scotia. At the time the minister said the new strategy would be unveiled in the Spring of 2015. However, since the initial announcement, we've heard little about the provincial dementia strategy. The PC caucus joins patients, families, advocates and

countless others who are keenly interested in steps the minister plans to take to address dementia and other mental health issues. So my question to the minister is, will the minister please update the House on the status of the provincial dementia strategy?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, I want to point out to the House and to all Nova Scotians, dementia, with our aging population, is one of those real challenges for the individual affected, families, communities, and of course, our health care system. In fact, there are 17,000 Nova Scotians who are affected by dementia, and this is why our government embarked on a strategy that will, in fact, have many pieces that can be acted upon both in the short and long term to improve support to those families. The member opposite won't have to wait too much longer.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I respect the answer the minister gave. The dementia strategy is very important to all of us in this House and, of course, to all Nova Scotians, not only to the 17,000 people affected, but the families of those 17,000 people as well. An initiative as important as this deserves careful scrutiny from all invested in its success, including Members of the House of Assembly.

So my question is, will the minister commit to unveiling the dementia strategy before the Spring legislative session concludes so that Opposition members can have the opportunity to question the minister on the contents in the House of Assembly?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what our government and the department are working toward is a Spring announcement on the dementia strategy. I was in the room the day we brought together 20 experts in dementia who said this was the first time that they had even come together as a group to share their expertise, and to plan for the province what I anticipate to be one of the most ambitious dementia strategies in our country.

I am pleased to say that our province is actually a co-lead with Alberta in working on a national dementia strategy.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: SENIORS' PHARMACARE PROG. - FUNDING

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the Seniors' Pharmacare Program helps Nova Scotians 65 years and over with the cost of their prescription drugs. More than 120,000 Nova Scotia seniors are currently enrolled in the program. On January 29th the minister eliminated the funding ratio that required the government to pay 75 per cent of that cost to operate the program, with the seniors paying the remaining 25 per cent.

My question for the Minister of Health and Wellness is, why are you asking Nova Scotia seniors to burden more of the costs of the Seniors' Pharmacare Program?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, I'm sure he will be a most willing partner in telling Nova Scotians, especially Nova Scotian seniors, that the premiums have not gone up. He knows that 35 Nova Scotians turn 65 each and every day and what we're actually doing is spreading the cost of the Seniors' Pharmacare over a growing seniors' population and there has been no increase in premiums. We're doing what is necessary to do to make the right adjustment.

MR. DAVID WILSON: I hope the minister listens - I did not say that. I said he is placing more burden on seniors who enter the Seniors' Pharmacare Program. He knows the difference.

Seniors in Nova Scotia aren't rich. More than 17,000 Nova Scotian seniors receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement. In 2014-15, seniors would have contributed more than \$40 million toward the cost of the Seniors' Pharmacare Program. Now the minister wants them collectively to pay even more of a share of the program. There were other options the government could have chosen.

My question to the minister is, why does he think the seniors should pay more for the Seniors' Pharmacare Program, placing more burden on seniors when it should be on the government?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite. His government realized that the 25/75 formula was no longer working - it kept inching up by 1 per cent a year over the last number of years. We are not in any way increasing the burden to seniors. Our seniors who are receiving the OAS and the supplement do not pay the fee, the burden is not there on low-income senior Nova Scotians. What I can tell the member opposite, and all Nova Scotians, while I'm Minister of Health and Wellness there won't be an increase in premiums in Seniors' Pharmacare.

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

FIN.: USER FEES - DEBATE

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, in 2011, criticizing the former government's increase in user fees, the Minister of Energy suggested that all 1,400 user fee increases be debated in the Legislature, yet the Minister of Finance hid in his office and refused to be accountable to the Legislature.

My question to the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board is, why aren't we debating the increase of these user fees and voting on them as suggested by the Minister of Energy?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. We have many, many opportunities here in Question Period for debate of the fees. I know we've had quite a few questions today. I'm sure they will continue in the days ahead. Thank you very much.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, what is shocking about this is that Nova Scotians have been given less than a week before the fee increases come into effect. For those who use rural ferries, that is less than a week to grapple with a 160 per cent increase in the cost of the use of the ferry. At the very least, why did the minister not provide Nova Scotians with more notice before increasing these user fees?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, earlier in Question Period, the Premier said it costs \$9 million a year to run our ferries within the province. That's a hefty fee, a very expensive fee. We received back only - in fact, currently less than - \$1 million. With the fee increases, it will be about \$1 million back towards that cost.

The people of Nova Scotia are very committed to the ferries. That's why they are being supported to such a high level.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party with a 45-second question.

PREM.: NEW HEALTH TAX - DETAILS

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Yesterday, Alberta increased taxes and they introduced a new health tax. The Finance and Treasury Board Minister has been talking about Nova Scotians having to prepare to feel some pain.

My question to the Premier is simple. Is part of the pain that Nova Scotians need to prepare themselves for a new health tax?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I said to the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the budget will be introduced on the 9th of April. I do want to assure the honourable member the first I heard tell of a health tax was by a reporter sometime this week.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, a health tax was never part of the Broten report to the McNeil Government. However, in the minister's consultations around the province, it certainly was part of what people were asked to discuss, it appeared, which certainly begged the question.

So my last question is to the minister; will a health tax be part of the pain that Nova Scotians will be expected to suffer after the budget?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. As the member opposite would know, we are in our discussions asking Nova Scotians to consider where we might have other sources of revenue in the face of a declining number of working Nova Scotians. That working age population is declining and our income tax is bound to decline. We've already begun to feel that.

What we had in our consultations was very broad. We wanted people to look at other provinces, look at what our other options for taxes are, and the health premium is one of those. We did that discussion and we'll know more as we go forward.

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

TIR - MV MINER: REMOVAL - TIME FRAME

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. As the very lucrative fishery in the Main-à-Dieu area is coming up on May 15th, where you get the best lobsters in the world (Interruptions) I would say that if there are others in other areas of the province that disagree with that statement, I'd be glad to do a testing for them.

Mr. Speaker, the question I have for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal is, with that very important season coming forward, I would wonder if he could tell us if the removal of the *MV Miner* will be complete by May 15th?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I'm going to table some photos from about two weeks ago of the *MV Miner*. I saw the vessel again, hopefully for the last time.

Where we're at now, based on the pictures and my terrible math, we're probably about 80 per cent done of the actual removal of the ship. It is being pulled onto the beach and cut up and readied for salvage. We're probably a few weeks away from the vessel being gone in its entirety from the water. Then we're into the very difficult logistics of moving, by way of barge, the trailers, the equipment, all the heavy gear that has been shearing and cutting the vessel. So we are going to hit that target of May 15th for sure and it looks like we're a few weeks away from actually having the boat entirely cleaned up.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for that answer. I guess one of the concerns that the fishery does have is that indeed although the vessel will be out of the water, there still is the breakdown of the camp, as the minister mentioned. Can we have a guarantee that no removal by barge will take place during the fishing season because it would impact on that season?

MR. MACLELLAN: Certainly, we've allowed the community, the stakeholders, and the fishers being a key piece of that group, to dictate and really determine what our

plan is so we'll continue moving forward by way of barge once the vessel is gone and we certainly won't allow any impact on the fishery, that's the number one priority. Really May 15th has been the date we're working back from as the member said, and he has been a good supporter of this project, and it was our government that stepped up to clean up the vessel. We're going to do this right and we're going to protect the fishery there and that's exactly what we'll do. So we'll make sure that the fishery isn't impacted this year, thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

JUSTICE - DEPT./LEGISLATION: ERRORS - RESPONSIBILITY

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. I understand that we are going to pass a bill in the Legislature today, and that is a wonderful thing; it's very important. There are a couple of things that struck me in a media briefing earlier this morning. One was that the mistake in the Limitation Act, as it is being referred to now, the indication by the minister was that it was made by the department. Will the minister accept that ultimately it is the minister who is responsible for the department and what happens and what legislation is brought forward to this Legislature?

HON. LENA DIAB: As I said in the media briefing, my heart goes out to the victims and to the pain they've endured over the years and certainly some of them have been saying it has been 20 years. In terms of the error that happened with respect to the limitation of action and in particular to researching the retroactivity, we do take full responsibility for that and of course as the minister I'm the one in charge, so my apologies for that mistake, thank you.

MR. MACMASTER: I know that will mean something for the survivors. Mr. Speaker, another thing that was very striking during the briefing was a question that was asked by Dale Sutherland and he had stated: Who are you to tell me I cannot sue the person who raped me? Mr. Speaker, I think this is important for the healing of the survivors. I think the issue has been divisive in this Legislature. I know members have been upset with the discussions that have taken place, but I think it's important for the healing of the survivors that we put that aside and I want to ask the Premier, as the leader of the government, if he would show some indication to the survivors that this government and this whole Legislature understands what these people have been through and understand why this piece of legislation was so important, and why they would be hurt with the delay in its passing.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I think all members of this House, over the last number of months, have been talking about this piece of legislation. I know particularly Mr. Martin has been here. I want to on behalf of all Nova Scotians congratulate him for his tremendous courage, not only over the last four months (Applause) - not only over the last four months, Mr. Speaker, but for decades, pursuing what was fair and just in this province.

I'm very proud of the Minister of Justice who brought forward a piece of legislation that has been for her department for a decade. She brought a piece of legislation in the Fall that needed to be enhanced. Today we are going to enhance that piece of legislation that will ensure that victims have their day, not only in this province but their day in court.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: LONG-TERM CARE BEDS - MORATORIUM

HON. DAVID WILSON: According to documents obtained by freedom of information by our caucus, which I'll table, there appears to be a significant number of seniors lingering in our hospitals throughout the province, waiting for access to a long-term care facility. In total, 256 Nova Scotians are waiting today in hospitals throughout Nova Scotia - in some cases over 130 days to access long-term care beds. Interesting enough, there is no mention of new long-term care beds in the 2014-15 capital plan.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, why is it his government put a moratorium on creating new long-term care beds in our province when the evidence in front of us show there is a need?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for that very, very important question. We all know that for seniors who are in a hospital bed, it is in fact not the best place for them on many different levels of addressing their condition. We are making a very clear departure in terms of the wait list and getting some movement in the wait list of seniors both in home, but especially those in hospitals, to get to a nursing home.

We are finally addressing a list that does not reflect the real needs and the kind of risks and especially the movement from hospital into our nursing homes and, in fact, when we have real need and real risks assessed, we will actually free up about 1,000 more beds as we shorten the time when in fact people are in a nursing home.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, that's interesting, but I don't buy that for one second. We've heard over and over from the minister that they are going to save \$15 million with the amalgamation of district health authorities. A few months later, oh sorry, it's not \$15 million. To say today that there are going to be 1,000 open up over night because you're going to refuse people access to the long-term care wait list - I don't believe it, Mr. Speaker, and we're here to hold them to account. We have such a long wait-list for long-term care entry and the government makes no mention in the capital plan, so why has the minister and his government taken the position of creating no new beds for long-term care?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, that may require a little bit longer answer than you may like, but shut me down if you have to.

What we know is that the current wait list is one that we need to make considerable adjustments with. Last year when the department went through even the first 100 on that list, 33 refused to go because they said they weren't ready. When Mount Saint Vincent did a full study of the 2,400, 2,500 on the list, it was almost 50 per cent who said they weren't ready to go to a nursing home. Once we get that true list and the true movement of people from home or from hospital into the nursing home, and also those being there with shorter stay, we will in fact make more beds available to Nova Scotians each and every year forward.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

JUSTICE - SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS: SERVICES - AVAILABILITY

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday during Question Period I asked the Minister of Justice what services the Department of Justice could provide to Nova Scotians who experience sexual assault. The Minister of Justice offered to provide them with phone numbers of people to contact. With all due respect, we know that some of those Nova Scotians already called the number 911 and didn't get the services they needed, where they needed them in a timely manner.

Is the Minister of Justice saying that the only service the province's justice system has for Nova Scotians who experience sexual assault is a phone directory?

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, of course we have many services available in the province and, quite frankly, in this government we work across departments. I meet regularly with my counterparts the Minister of Community Services, the Minister of Health and Wellness, and the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. We talk about all of these aspects and we have many services available.

I would ask that you give me a call personally, if you need to, and I can certainly not just give you a phone number but direct you to any services that you may need. Thank you.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her answer. Statistics tell us that the victims of sexual assault are less likely to report to police than victims of other crimes. We know that many who experience sexual violence have an overwhelming sense of fear and guilt. We also know there are a number of government departments responsible for ensuring proper protocol is followed for sexual assault victims.

With a sexual violence strategy being developed for the past year, has the Minister of Justice collaboratively been working with the Minister of Health and Wellness and the Minister of Community Services and so on to ensure that these crucial services for sexual assault victims are met?

MS. DIAB: As I stated earlier, we are working across department lines with our counterparts. I would request that the Minister of Community Services address that particular question for you so that she can elaborate on it.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: I appreciate the honourable member across the floor and her concern on this, because I know what happened in Pictou this week. I'm very pleased to say that in the last year Rene Ross and Jean Flynn have done an extraordinary job in talking to the community, meeting with over 60 community groups. We had over 1,000 people respond to the online survey.

The development of that strategy has been ongoing in the last couple of months. It will be released this Spring, and it will be the first time in the history of this province that there will be a sexual violence strategy to address the needs of victims in this province.

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

LAE: TUITION CAP - STATUS

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I'll try this question again to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. This June, thousands of students from across the province will graduate from high school with a plan to continue their education in September at a post-secondary institution. Unfortunately, parents and students have no idea what the full cost of the degree will be, due to uncertainty around tuition fees.

Again, my question to the minister is, can the minister confirm whether the cap on tuition will increase or remain in place?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for his question for the second time. We do realize that this is a significant investment for Nova Scotian families. These are big decisions that families are making. Unfortunately, we can't reveal details ahead of time, because of the budget, but I want to let the member know that we are committed to making sure that Nova Scotia institutions are in good shape for Nova Scotia students. Thank you.

MR. ORRELL; Mr. Speaker, students want to have a level of certainty on how much it will cost for them to receive their degree. So far the minister's answers have been a little vague and not reassuring to some of these students.

Students are concerned that this budget will see further increases in both fees and tuition. After the elimination of the Graduate Retention Rebate last year, I can understand how these students feel. Will the minister bring forward a new plan that will help Nova Scotia's post-secondary students?

MS. REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member. Some of the details that I revealed this week did indicate that we will have increased services for Nova Scotia students. For example, a student who has a permanent disability will be able to access assistance under student assistance and have a much longer period to finish their degree. They will be able to get up to \$15,000 back if they qualify for a student loan. They will be able to get the full provincial portion back even if they take up to 10 years to do their degree. That's just one of the things that we're doing for our Nova Scotian students.

We do understand that it's a significant investment to take on education, whether it's at community college or at university. I want to assure the honourable member that they will know the exact figure very soon. Many of the universities are posting what they anticipate fees to be, and those are based on historical precedents. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - FISHERMEN'S MEM. HOSP.: CEC - CONFIRM

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. The situation at Fishermen's Memorial Hospital in Lunenburg is absolutely serious. Emergency room closures are up more than 10 per cent over last year. So far the minister has said that a CEC model would be implemented. Then he mused about introducing a family practice model, and then he said outright that he just wasn't going to close the ER. So Mr. Speaker, has the minister come to some conclusion about what to do to ensure better access to patient care at Fishermen's Memorial Hospital?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I thank the member for the question and of course as we know, Lunenburg is not open 24 hours a day now. It does have some periodic closures when a physician is not available. I've been down for a recent visit in the last couple of weeks, primarily with the collaborative medical practice, and they gave me a number of important insights as to what the community needs, and were primarily for Lunenburg, realizing that primary health care is being delivered through that model at exceptional care but it is the area where we need to expand on.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: In October I asked the Minister of Health and Wellness whether or not he was planning to open a Collaborative Emergency Centre at Fishermen's Memorial Hospital. The minister said he needed to wait for a review of CECs to be completed first. The report was released three months ago, so through you, Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering how much longer will people in Lunenburg have to wait for a Collaborative Emergency Centre to open in their community?

MR. GLAVINE: What I can tell the member opposite is that yes we have the excellent report that Mary Jane Hampton has given us around CECs across the province. In fact, having a look at each one on an individual basis is very, very important to the

direction we will take. We also had very recent talks with Dr. John Ross, who is keen to work and support the new CECs that will develop across Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: VALLEY REG. HOSP. - OVERCROWDING

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Overcrowding has been an issue in Valley Regional Hospital for the past couple of years but reached new levels last week. The Kentville Hospital was declared to be in phase three over capacity from 4:20 p.m. on March 17th to 8:30 the next morning; not a very good St. Patrick's Day for them. The hospital has been in a prolonged state of over capacity since January, and I'll table that report. My question for the minister is, can the minister tell us what plans are in place to address this situation?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: What I can tell the member for Kings North is that when we are looking at addressing one single flashpoint of the ER, it will not bring about the kind of structural changes, the kind of sustainable changes that are needed to address the challenges of the ER. We need to look at the whole system and that's why one provincial health authority, with some very specific recommendations coming forward from Dr. Campbell and Dr. Petrie, will enable us to put in place both a short and a long-term plan for ERs, not only in Capital but also throughout the province.

MR. LOHR: I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. One possible solution in Valley Regional Health would be to build the hospice and palliative care centre. As the minister knows the fundraising for that is virtually complete now. My question for the minister is when can we expect the announcement on the construction of the hospice?

MR. GLAVINE: What I am pleased to hear from the member for Kings North is that while he is not their Health Critic he realizes the interconnectedness of the entire system because it's not just one little area that you correct. He is addressing one of those areas that is a challenge for Valley Regional and that is the number of palliative patients that from time to time will take up beds at Valley Regional and in fact on my desk this week is the report . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers has expired. We will now move on to Government Business.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 71.

Bill No. 71 - Limitation of Actions Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I move that Bill No. 71 be now read for a second time.

During the last House session, we introduced amendments to the Limitation of Actions Act that modernized and improved the piece of legislation. The Act as it stood prior to the amendments was inconsistent, confusing, and outdated.

The amendments established a two-year basic limitation period for most civil claims, like those involving breach of contract or personal injury. It also created an ultimate limitation period of 15 years for legal claims which may not have been discovered right away. Most importantly, the bill eliminated any time limits for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence who want to file civil lawsuits against their abusers. This new bill represented a significant step forward for Nova Scotia and I was proud to introduce it.

As the issue unfolded in the Legislature and after the Law Amendments Committee around whether Nova Scotia's limitation of actions legislation should include a form of retroactivity to address historic sexual assault, we committed at the time to do further review and look at other provinces. We've done that work. At the time, we needed some time to look at various provinces and we've done that work and found that there are a number of provinces across the country that do have different provisions in their legislation that deal with that. We also found there are a number of provinces that do not have that provision. The additional due diligence, though, allowed us to consider further improvements to the legislation.

These amendments will go a step further. In addition to allowing claims to be made retroactively for sexual misconduct, the amendments that I've introduced this morning will now also allow claims to be made retroactively for abuse sustained in intimate or dependent relationships. This will benefit more victims. It was always expected that it would take a period of time before the new amendments were proclaimed, as complex changes require time for legal professionals and self-represented litigants to become acquainted with them. I'm pleased today to have introduced those amendments to the Limitation of Actions Act so that victims of historic sexual abuse can address those matters civilly.

Finally, the amendment today will also confirm that the new Act does not apply in relation to equitable claims made by Aboriginal people against the Crown. My hope is that before today ends, and with the agreement of all Parties, that we pass these amendments into law. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that this bill is going to be passing today. As I understand, we have an agreement to make sure it makes its way through the Legislature.

I want to say some words here, repeating what Dale Sutherland said this morning. They are strong words and they are words that are even hard to repeat in saying, but I think it's really what this whole issue about this amendment comes down to. He said, who are you to tell me I cannot sue someone who raped me?

I think some of the reasons why in the past these issues have not been dealt with is because people don't want to talk about them. They're uncomfortable. Sometimes that keeps the public from hearing about it and expressing their feelings about it, and then it becomes a world of secrecy for the survivors. I can only imagine what it must be like for them today to be sitting in the gallery watching us discuss this matter and not being able to say something. Hopefully I, and perhaps others, can say some things that they've been thinking about and things they've been saying to us.

I talked briefly in Question Period about some of the division in this Legislature that has come about because of this issue. I just want to state - and it's something else that Dale said during the media briefing - that if anybody should feel hard done by, and if anybody still does feel hard done by in the Legislature, think about the survivors and what they've gone through. If anybody should feel that, it should be them. But they are strong and they are brave and they are with us today, and I'm sure there are many others watching and listening around the province.

In the case of Bob Martin and Dale Sutherland and their co-survivors, they had to wait 20 years and more for justice that in large part failed. It took almost 15 years to finally bring their abuser to court to face charges that were ultimately thrown out. Most of them were thrown out because it took too long.

They have been through a lot, and they have also been through the last number of months wondering if this change was going to happen - the change that we are going to make today. No doubt that caused a lot of frustration, especially for people who have gone through so much in this province and in this country with governments and a justice system that have not served them well and not served the many other victims who came after them because they weren't served well by our justice system.

Hopefully we are taking a step today with the passage of this bill to do a better job in the future. When we pass it, I think we can show that we listened and we cared and that we took action to try to make things better.

I want to talk about a couple of things, too, that I think need to be put on the record. Another thing I heard Mr. Sutherland mention was - and this whole issue has been referred to as a mistake - that he felt that the mistake undermined the apology the province made to them. The federal government also apologized when Mr. MacIntosh was permitted to travel the world to continue the actions he has been doing. We all know he has been put in jail now, and we all know why.

Mr. Speaker, the mistake in the eyes of these survivors - at least in Mr. Sutherland's case, he felt it undermined the apology that was made to them. The purpose of the apology was to say yes, we should have done better, and we're going to do better in the future. Then just months later, once again, something happens to these survivors. That's why it's important that we listen to them and hear them. If we just say, well, we're sorry, and then go along with our business, we may make another mistake. We don't want that to happen. These people have been through enough.

There are still questions about why the mistake was made and why it wasn't fixed immediately. Beyond this particular instance, there were many mistakes through the years that these survivors ultimately had to deal with the outcome of. The question arises, are people going to be held accountable, and are they ever held accountable? I think of the lawyer for the federal government who handed back Mr. MacIntosh's passport - no reasons given. There was a meeting between the lawyers, and the lawyer representing the government said, do you know what, here's the passport back, sorry, we must have made a mistake.

Mr. Speaker, I called that lawyer myself. I thought, maybe she'll tell me something, so I'll have a better understanding. Maybe there was a good reason. I can tell you that when I tried to speak to that person, they pretty much hung up the phone in my ear. How can we make improvements when people in the system do not accept responsibility and do not personally make their effort to make things better?

There were others, Mr. Speaker; there were delays in extradition. They knew where this predator was living in India at the time and they could have made a better effort to bring him back to Canada to face justice, to face the charges in a more timely manner so that he could have been put in jail here instead of being allowed to abuse more young boys around the world.

There were certainly delays in the Crown Attorney's Office here in the Province of Nova Scotia. There have been many reasons given for that. Ultimately what I find - and you know I'm just going to make this statement as a layperson. I'm not a lawyer. I do have friends who are lawyers. I know people in the justice system and they may be offended by

what I'm about to say but I will say this: as someone looking on at a justice system, the question in my mind arises, whose interests are we serving? Because we see a lot of these matters become delayed. I know they have to be balanced with people's rights but it just makes me wonder - are we all pulling in the same direction for justice?

I know Mr. Martin made a comment when he was questioned. How can Nepal put a man like this behind bars in 48 days that we in 15 years can't do? That tells me that people in the system are not pulling their weight, Mr. Speaker. People have to forget about what's in it for them. The comment Mr. Martin actually made was that we would probably have a lot fewer people working in the justice system if things were handled more expeditiously.

So I apologize if that offends anybody. I say it because I issue it as a challenge because we in this Legislature make the laws and sometimes we are responsible for those delays and for those shortcomings of justice but everybody, I think, we have to be in this together. I say these words because I think it's important for people working in the justice system to hear them and I would certainly be happy to hear from them if they see issues that we could fix here in this Legislature, because I can tell them that if I hear about them I will try to fix them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize these survivors. They have helped so many people in this province and around the country and around the world. I have been hearing stories; people have come to me directly. Because this issue has been made so public, because it is not kept behind closed doors like it used to be, it is giving people confidence to know that there is support out there for them and that people care, that they shouldn't feel ashamed, that we will try to do things to help them.

I know these survivors - we can leave here today and move on with our lives but these survivors, I know, they're going to go on to continue helping people. They've helped people immensely by putting a face on the abuse and, Mr. Speaker, I think it's obvious it's an emotional issue but you see the pain that is carried around because I often see a tear come to the eye and I credit these people for being so strong and for not becoming vigilantes. They faced a lot of darkness that they didn't ask to face but they're able to look through it and past it.

I can only imagine - I'm sure there still is anger at times but to be able to get past that and perhaps not forgive the person that did what they did to them, because that's a very hard thing to do and that's ultimately for a person to do on their own, Mr. Speaker, but at least they can acknowledge that there is more for their life; they have more years to live. These people are helping people. They are the strong ones and hopefully they will make others, who have experienced the same thing, stronger too.

I wonder sometimes why this matter was such a struggle, Mr. Speaker, but I often think good things come from struggles. More people have heard about this issue because

of this. More people have taken the time to understand it, and I am sure only good can come from that. Maybe it was supposed to happen this way.

The public discussion, as I have mentioned, is helping people to come forward. As I've said, I've heard stories about people who have come forward. Even if they come forward to one person to break the silence and the secrecy, to know that they have support, that can do wonders - or so I am told from people who support survivors. I think this struggle is showing to all of the people out there who are carrying secrets around with them that people do care about them and they want to help them and that they can find some way, at least in some way, to move on with their lives. Peoples' lives are important.

Some of these survivors are not doing so well. I know when we see people out on the streets, sometimes we pass them by and think, well maybe they didn't try hard enough. But we never really know what goes on in peoples' lives. Many people who are out on the streets, I'm sure, have been survivors of abuse and they are struggling with untold horrors. It's hard to even understand what they must be going through.

I want to thank the minister and everyone in the Legislature for supporting this legislation. I would ask that we try to work together more in the Legislature. I'm not going to say too much. I was disappointed - there were a couple of tweets made. I have to say I'm not much one for Twitter - for whatever reason, I just have not been that interested in it. But to see Tweets made a couple of days ago - and people can go on the Internet and look at them - but they're just really ridiculous for people to be tweeting, trying to suggest, thank you for voting for our bill. I wonder what's going on in people's minds sometimes when they're suggesting that, well, we're fixing this and thank you for supporting us and we've got this in hand - as if to say, let this blow over. Mr. Speaker, that's really silly. These are important matters and they deserve to be treated professionally by us and by the people who work for us in our offices. (Applause)

If survivors can get past, at least to some extent, what has happened to them and live productive lives, why can't we get past division in the Legislature at least on some occasions and work together and get past the politics and do good things? (Applause)

I want to put this on the record as well. I've heard this a number of times from Mr. Martin: you know, are you going to sue the person who did that to you? I know he said this: yes, he will sue. He doesn't expect to get anything out of this. That's not his point. It's not about the money. It's for other people, and rightly so. There may be cases where, if matters cannot be handled in a criminal court, they can be handled in a civil court. I think in MacIntosh's case, he could have been reduced to a point where he couldn't travel the world. I think of it giving people another opportunity who have not been able to get justice in a criminal court, to give them another option. I think that's a good thing.

I think it's important for people to know that for Mr. Martin - and I know this because he was on television last night, interviewed, and I know he received hundreds of

emails about that. I don't even know if he's been sleeping. He gives a meaning to the word "tireless" because he has been hearing and communicating. I know he responds to everybody because his heart is for other people, and I think it's important that we acknowledge that this is not a measure for him. This is a measure that he's doing because of what he has experienced and he's doing it for others because he's a strong and brave survivor. (Standing Ovation).

Much work remains, but I want to thank these survivors, particularly the six gentlemen who came forward and publicly made a plea for the change in this legislation. They deserve every credit for making this happen and I want to thank the Legislature because I think in passing this bill today we are sending a message that we care. Mr. Speaker, may we continue to care, to listen, to understand, and to act. (Applause)

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

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in my place to make a few brief statements on behalf of the NDP caucus with respect to Bill No. 71.

I first want to acknowledge the courage of those who are here watching the proceedings, Mr. Martin and others. I want to acknowledge the process that I think has been gut-wrenching for many of us here in this Chamber and probably outside of this Chamber. But this isn't about us, this is about doing the right thing for those who are survivors of heinous crimes that have a profound impact on people for the rest of their lives. You know, the criminal justice system failed these people in this case and I hope that in some small measure Bill No. 71 will be a way that our political system doesn't fail where the criminal justice system failed.

I want to, in addition to recognizing the amazing courage of the survivors of this particular serial pedophile, I also want to acknowledge and recognize and thank the minister for reviewing the legislation, for probably fighting with her staff because I know what that can be like, and for bringing forward Bill No. 71. I want to thank you for that. (Applause)

I want to thank the member for Inverness for his tireless advocacy and his dogged determination in having this body do the right thing so that the political system will work and not where the criminal justice system didn't. You know, yesterday I spoke on another bill and I said it was a victory for our democratic system. I hope today, in some small measure, Bill No. 71 is a victory as well for our democratic system.

You know, watching what we do here isn't always pretty. We often are in significant disagreement. But there are lots of times when we can reach out across our disagreements and find agreement. That reflects the fact that we're all here for the same reason: to do the right thing for the people of the province, and to especially right injustices where they have occurred and where we have within our capacity the opportunity to do

that. So let's savour this moment. It's one of those moments that sometimes perhaps is all too rare in this Chamber, but nevertheless, this is also a victory for our political system. (Applause)

So I will not take more time on this. I know we want to get to a vote and move this bill along. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 71 - no.

AN HON. MEMBER: Close debate.

MS. DIAB: But I'd like to say a few words. Can I do that before I read?

MR. SPEAKER: The floor is yours.

MS. DIAB: I just have a few words to say, Mr. Speaker, given what has happened in the House and outside the House on this in the last number of months. First and foremost, I want to say that my heart goes out to all victims, particularly Mr. Martin and Mr. Sutherland, who are here with us, but also all the victims for all the pain that they have endured over the last 20 years. It has been difficult, very, very difficult, for them and none of us can imagine what they've gone through.

I want to publicly thank Mr. Martin for agreeing to meet with me yesterday and share with me some intimate stories, but also we had a few laughs as well. I want to thank him for that. I want to applaud his courage and the courage of other victims for carrying this - for carrying the torch, basically, for other victims in this province.

I'm pleased that we in Nova Scotia are joining a number of other provinces to make this change to Bill No. 71. It is my sincere hope that Bill No. 71 will bring some peace and justice to victims.

Finally, I do want to thank members of this Assembly in all caucuses who have shared with me over the last number of months their views and provided a lot of support over what, quite frankly, happened in the House. That has really brought a lot of attention to the issue. I have faith and my faith tells me that out of everything that happens and out of any struggles that you go through, something in the end better comes out of it, and I really believe this in this case. I believe that what we've gone through in this Legislature inside has provided a lot of peace for a lot of people that are in the outside in this province, but maybe even within Canada and outside Canada, that we can help victims in a way that we really had not before, maybe because we just were not thinking about it. I really do

want to thank everybody in this Legislature, but also in particular the member for Inverness for the courage to help and to bring this forth. (Applause)

I do wish - and being a politician for only a year and almost a half, I still consider myself new; I still consider myself learning. I'm afraid the forum sometimes that we go through here is not one that I'm used to. It's not one that I grew up with. It's not one in my family life, nor is it one that I grew up with when I volunteered in various community groups, nor, quite frankly, is it one that I grew up with in my professional life as a lawyer, where I believe very much in collaboration, co-operation, mediation, trying to get to a resolution without being litigious.

Sometimes, the processes in this House are not ones that I'm used to, so if there's anything that I've done that I was short-sighted on, I ask forgiveness for that. But at the same time, I ask other members in this House to please understand that a lot of us have not been here forever or have not been here for a long time. We are approachable; please do approach us. I do find it difficult when we are approached during Question Period or when we are here when there are other things happening in the House that don't particularly relate to the issue that we are dealing with and other minds are all over the place and it's not the appropriate place. So please, feel free to approach us outside the Legislature when we're sitting or not sitting, it really doesn't matter. We are very approachable people - at least I am, and I know most of us are in this room.

Again, I really do want to thank everybody, but again, this is not about us in this House. This is really about the victims. I'm very, very pleased that we have all agreed to do this.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 71 be now read a third time. (Interruption) No?

I also want to move that we close debate, and having closed debate - do we vote on that? Close debate on second reading. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 71. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to seek the indulgence of the House and unanimous consent to forego the Law Amendments Committee and the

Committee of the Whole House and ask for consent to go to third reading on Bill No. 71 now.

MR. SPEAKER: 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 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. 71.

Bill No. 71 - Limitation of Actions Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 71 be now read a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: 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. (Applause)

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I just wanted to point out that Bob Martin is also a professional photographer and has done my campaign photos for quite a few elections. Last election while we told the people of Cape Breton-Richmond that the photo was taken on the shores of Cape Breton-Richmond, it was taken in the back of Bob's house in Port Hood, so the member for Inverness may claim some credit for my electoral success over in Cape Breton-Richmond, but Bob, congratulations. I should add,

Bob, to show how good you are as a photographer, you didn't have much to work with so I appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, prior to concluding the government business for today, there is the matter regarding Bill No. 68, the Health Authorities Act. I can advise the House the Law Amendments Committee will be meeting on Monday. It will meet starting at 1:00 p.m. - Bill No. 69, my apologies, the Health Authorities Act. The Law Amendments Committee will meet starting on Monday and will continue. It is the desire of the government that the bill be reported back to the House on Tuesday of next week by the Minister of Justice, and I would ask now for unanimous consent that when the bill is reported back on Tuesday that it be added to the order paper and be considered for Committee of the Whole for debate on Tuesday.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Bill No. 69 will be added to the order paper for Tuesday.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, that now concludes the government's business for today and I certainly want to thank all of my colleagues in the House for their co-operation over the last few days in dealing with important legislation and look forward to that continuing into the session.

We will rise now to meet again on Tuesday, March 31st from the hours of 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., at which time, following the daily routine, the business will be Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 69.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn to resume on Tuesday, March 31st between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

The House now stands adjourned until Tuesday March 31st at 1:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 11:28 a.m.]