



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2015

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2015

Sixty-second General Assembly

Second Session

1:00 P.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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Law Amendments, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bill:

Bill No. 69 - Health Authorities Act.

and the committee recommends this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, just a reminder - with the unanimous consent that we received on Friday, March 27th, that this bill be added to the order paper to be considered for a Committee of the Whole House debate today.

MR. SPEAKER: Correct.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

RESOLUTION NO. 1191

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

Whereas the Department of Natural Resources is committed to striking the right balance between the economic, social, and environmental values of Nova Scotia's natural resources; and

Whereas the Porters Lake Canal, which runs between Porters Lake and Three Fathom Harbour, is a beautiful area which offers outdoor enthusiasts the opportunity to engage in activities like boating and hiking; and

Whereas the Department of Natural Resources was able to acquire the canal from the Government of Canada at no cost and plans to ensure the canal remains as a place where Nova Scotians can enjoy nature;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature celebrate the provincial acquisition of the Porters Lake Canal.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: There's a flaw in my agenda.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Nova Scotia, and across this province many communities are coming together to increase their understanding of this complex issue. We know that sexual assault and sexual violence can happen to anyone, and we all have a role to play in preventing it and supporting victims.

Mr. Speaker, changing the social norms and culture in our communities will take time; it also takes the ongoing participation of all Nova Scotians to reduce sexual violence. That has been the focus of work done in the past year as part of developing a strategic model of prevention and response to sexual violence, a first for Nova Scotia.

Over the last year we have engaged broadly on this issue. We have met with service providers and stakeholders, heard directly from Nova Scotians via an online survey, and engaged with our youth. We learned a great deal through these efforts, and know these important conversations must continue.

We heard that services and supports for victims and survivors need to be more visible, more accessible, and better coordinated. We remain committed to working with communities to address these challenges. We also know that we need to increase our understanding of the impact of sexual violence in diverse and marginalized communities.

Through Sexual Assault Awareness Month grants we are pleased to support communities with their innovative approaches to increasing awareness. I want to thank every person who contributed to our understanding of sexual violence in Nova Scotia. We will need their continued participation as we move forward together in addressing this most important issue.

Later this Spring I look forward to releasing Nova Scotia's first sexual violence strategy, which will include increased supports for victims, public education, and most importantly, a commitment from this government that we will continue to strive toward a province free of sexual violence. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for providing a copy of her statement to me in advance.

Unfortunately, we know that sexual harassment and sexual violence occur at all times of the year, but each April we work to raise awareness of this issue so that Nova Scotians can be informed about safe practices and work to reduce the frequency of sexual violence.

Statistics provided by the Avalon Centre indicated that in 2007 the rate of reported sexual assaults in Nova Scotia was higher than the national average per capita. That is an alarming statistic. In order to properly protect people and provide support for victims of sexual violence, the services must be available. All the effort is for naught if there are no services to help people when they need it. I hope that the consultation the government engaged in will result in comprehensive policies and increased education to protect people from all communities. To specifically speak with survivors would be of great benefit to the government, as these brave individuals who have experienced the horror of sexual assault had the courage to come forward, and their insight into ways to prevent and reduce the occurrence would be essential.

Many of us were moved last Friday to see relief and satisfaction on the faces of brave survivors of historical sexual assault who fought for decades for justice for all survivors. That was long-overdue legislation that will empower hundreds of Nova Scotians. I am pleased that government is making an effort to provide more resources to communities through Sexual Assault Month grants. It is my hope that communities are able to use these grants to support those in need and to raise awareness.

Reducing the number of sexual assaults in our province must be a priority. We need to do a better job of protecting people. Every member in this House needs to amplify their efforts and encourage others to do the same for the betterment of our province. Thank you.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, as NDP Critic for the Status of Women, I would like to thank the minister very much for her statement and for outlining the Sexual Assault Awareness Month grants that will be helping community groups throughout the province battle this important cultural and societal problem.

As a survivor of sexual assault myself and a staunch feminist, I'm proud to be a member of a political Party that has advocated and fought against the inequalities that women face in our society, whether it be wage parity, gender parity, or the fight against sexual violence, assault, harassment, and general misogyny.

In August 2013 the NDP announced that we had reached all-Party support - a rare thing in Nova Scotia - for the work of the action team on sexual violence and bullying, a proud legacy of the work of our former colleague and former Minister responsible for the Status of Women, the Honourable Marilyn More. The result of this work was the launching of the sexual assault strategy work currently being undertaken by the department. Interestingly, despite the work of the government, the issue of sexual assault and sexual violence has been topical in the news over the last few months.

We have a long way to go to completely eradicate the inequalities that exist within our society and to dismantle the culture of sexual violence that exists, especially towards women and girls. Patriarchy and all the horrible things that it supports, such as a culture of sexualized violence towards women, is something that we, as a society, can end. Women and their allies can work together to ensure that we create systems that are equal, that are safe, and that supports are in place to deal with issues when they arise.

I really hope that over the next four weeks we can have a real conversation about the effects that sexual violence has in our society and I truly hope that we can have that conversation here, in the Legislature, and show leadership as we all work together to ensure that we put an end to this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to show my sincere appreciation, and that of all members of the House of Assembly, for the quick action of the first responders to Air Canada flight 624 from Toronto to Halifax on Sunday morning March 29th. Most of us woke up Sunday morning to the news that an Air Canada flight broke apart upon landing in blizzard conditions at Stanfield International Airport. The footage and photos from the scene were alarming and told the story of the ordeal of the passengers and crew - 28 passengers were treated at local hospitals but luckily, miraculously, all 137 passengers and crew survived.

Mr. Speaker, as Minister responsible for the Emergency Management Office and on behalf of the Province of Nova Scotia, I want to thank the municipal and airport firefighters, paramedics from Emergency Health Services, the Life Flight crew, RCMP, and Halifax Regional Police who rushed to the scene to ensure passenger safety. These are the men and women who run towards danger when the rest of us are running away. Please join me in thanking these brave individuals for the commitment and dedication they bring to their work.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable House Leader for the Official Opposition.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the minister for providing a copy of his statement to me earlier today. I can say that all members of the Progressive Conservative caucus echo the minister's words of gratitude for the first responders, the municipal and airport firefighters, the paramedics from Emergency Health Services, the RCMP, the Halifax Regional Police, who bravely secured the safety of all 137 passengers on Air Canada flight 624.

All Nova Scotians are relieved that the crash did not end in tragedy. It is appropriate to thank our brave first responders after a significant incident such as the hard landing that happened at Stanfield International on Sunday. The truth is brave men and women in every community risk their lives every day to keep fellow Nova Scotians safe. The dedication and courage that they bring to their jobs makes our province stronger and most effective. They are very deserving of our thanks. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the minister for his comments and providing us a copy of those prior to the session. It is important that we recognize those emergency responders who worked extremely hard to ensure that no further harm took place to the passengers of flight 624 who landed at the airport in Halifax. As a former paramedic I know my colleagues over the years have responded to similar incidents and not often do you have the results that we had with no loss of life in Halifax and I think that all Nova Scotians are grateful for that.

Also, I would like to thank the health care workers who treated the dozens of injured passengers. When something like this happens in our province, the health care system does react appropriately and it is truly the dedication from those health care workers who allow us to respond in the manner that we saw on Sunday. I do want to associate myself with the minister's comments and acknowledge, congratulate and thank those who were involved in ensuring that there was no loss of life after that landing of flight 624 and thank them for their ongoing work and commitment to our residents here in Nova Scotia. (Applause)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 73 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 5 of the Acts of 1993. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. (Mr. Tim Houston)

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

The honourable Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, with your permission, before I introduce my bill, may I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw the attention of members here to the west gallery where we are joined today by a number of health care workers, nurses, in our health care system. They are accompanied by the President of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union, Joan Jessome. I would invite the members to give them all a warm welcome. (Applause)

Bill No. 74 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 208 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Protection of Patient Safety Act. (Hon. Maureen MacDonald)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

SPRINGHILL TOWN/CUMB. CO. MUN. - AMALGAMATION

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize that the incorporation of the Town of Springhill officially ends at midnight tonight, when the town joins the Municipality of the County of Cumberland.

Our feelings for this sentimental loss that comes with this change is balanced by the fact that there is a very bright future ahead for the community. As has been said many times over the past few months, Springhill will always be Springhill. That will never change. Springhill's rich history and identity, rooted in the mining community, continue to grow with innovations like the use of geothermal energy and a renewed ability to attract new industry.

Springhill has survived through good times and bad, proving the true resilience and hardworking nature of its people. Today, one chapter in the history of Springhill closes, but the next one is ready to be written. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

BILL NO. 37 - ANNIV. (1ST)

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, today is the one-year anniversary of the McNeil Government's Bill No. 37, which took away the hard-won rights of health care workers in Nova Scotia. Bill No. 37 interferes with the rights of workers to bargain collectively on behalf of their members and it unfairly targets a workforce that is dominated by women.

As we have learned with the McNeil Government's four attempts to fire respected arbitrator James Dorsey, they just don't seem to understand labour relations or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is time the McNeil Government offered Nova Scotia's health care workers a sincere apology. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - NURSE-TO-PATIENT RATIO

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, this time last year nurses in the Capital Region were here at Province House pleading with the Premier to address their concerns about patient safety. They advocated strongly for nurse-to-patient ratios. The Premier acknowledged concerns around staffing and promised to address their workplace issues.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, after a year things only seemed to have gotten worse. An unusual number of nurse retirements are happening, intensive care beds are closed, and private travel nurses are being flown in for the first time in a decade because they are short-staffed at the QE II.

Research shows that maintaining appropriate ratios results in positive patient outcomes, including reductions in complications, mortality rates, infections, and follow-up ER visits. It's time the McNeil Government recognize this and adopt nurse-to-patient ratios.

MR. SPEAKER: Before we go on to the next member, I want to remind the member for Sackville-Cobequid that we're pretty close to talking about a bill that was just introduced, and Members' Statements is not the section of our agenda to do that.

The honourable member for Hants East.

PARRY, MAKAYLA LYNN: ECMA AWARDS - NOMINATION

MS. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, 13-year old Makayla Lynn Parry, from Belnau, is a singer, songwriter, guitarist, and Nashville recording artist ranked by ReverbNation as the number-one country artist in Nova Scotia and number three in Canada.

Makayla has written over 70 songs, including “The Joke’s on You,” which is being used in classrooms and by the Canadian Red Cross as a theme for anti-bullying campaigns. She has shared the stage and opened for many country music icons. Makayla has shared her talent for many causes such as the IWK Children’s Telethon, the IWK’s Great Big Dig, Christmas Daddies, and the Nova Scotia Mental Health Association to name a few.

Makayla’s album “Daydream” was produced in Nashville in 2014 and has been nominated for four 2015 East Coast Music Awards that are being held April 8th to April 12th in St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador. May we all congratulate this amazing young woman.

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

CHRISTIE, ROSS WEBSTER: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. CHRISTOPHER D’ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a great friend and colleague whom we lost this month, Ross Webster Christie. Ross had a successful career as a business consultant and a political advisor. Ross was tremendously active in the Progressive Conservative Party and many of us in the PC caucus benefited from his good counsel.

Ross was an active volunteer in his community where he served as a former chairman of the board of governors at NSCAD, was incredibly involved in Bedford minor hockey, a past president of the Scots North British Society and Clan Farquharson Pipes and Drums.

Our thoughts are with his wife Donna, his three children, six grandchildren, as well as his three siblings. Ross brought great joy and insight to the people around him and he will be deeply missed. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: LONG-TERM CARE BEDS - MORATORIUM

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Health and Wellness tries to explain why he has put a moratorium on new long-term care beds, he states that the answer is not more beds but more home care. But the home care wait-list has increased by 80 per cent under the McNeil Government. Now home care workers are concerned that the competitive model of home care tendering of the Minister of Health and Wellness, or privatization, will result in job losses and a race to the bottom in home care workers’ wages, a workforce mainly made up of women.

The McNeil Government has to stop ignoring the concerns of home care workers and start improving home care - and I'd like to remind the government that picking fights with unions is not the way to improve home care. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MAGUIRE, BRENDAN & RENA: DAUGHTER - BIRTH CONGRATS.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a proud father of a new baby girl, Rufina. (Applause) That's probably the only time they'll ever clap for me, but that's okay.

Rufina Brigit Maguire - Rufina was born January 13, 2015. I am so proud of my wife Rena, who was so brave throughout the pregnancy, even when there were concerns early on. She is not only my wife, the mother of my children, she is also the love of my life and the driving force that keeps me going.

I cannot express the joy I've experienced in fatherhood, with the birth of my son, Oliver, less than two years ago and now the birth of my beautiful baby girl Rufina. My growing family has only reaffirmed my commitment as MLA.

I love our wonderful province and my amazing community of Herring Cove. I want it to be the best it can be for my family and all the families in Nova Scotia. I ask the members of the House to join me in celebrating the joy of family. Let's continue to work towards making our province the best place to raise our families. Rufina and Oliver, Daddy loves you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

COM. SERV.: HOUSING N.S. GRANTS - POLICIES

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, many seniors require help to stay in their homes. Fortunately, there are grants available through Housing Nova Scotia to pay for repairs. Janet Hingley of Westville was thrilled to access this funding to have needed work done. She signed off on the work and a contractor was paid. However, over the next few weeks, she became dissatisfied with the work.

Janet was not really qualified to sign off on the work, but felt obligated to do so and required to do so by certain provincial policies. I have since been told by department staff that when necessary, staff will assist elderly clients who need help assessing the repairs, but Janet was not aware of this. I ask, why not?

I urge the Minister of Community Services to review the policies around these grants to ensure that our seniors are protected and that their homes are being properly repaired and that taxpayers receive good value for money.

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

NAT. RES. - RURAL PARKS: SELF-SERV. MACHINES - PURCHASING INFO.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, before we even get to see this year's budget, the McNeil Government has eliminated nearly 80 jobs from our rural parks and tourist information centres.

Last week, I asked the Minister of Natural Resources about the purchase of these self-service machines for our parks - or as many locals call them, R2-D2s. If you Google R2-D2 robots on eBay, you will find you can purchase them for \$299.95 for each unit. And, for an additional \$64.99, these robots will move and respond to over 40 voice commands.

With the elimination of nearly 80 jobs in rural parks and tourist information centres, this member is looking forward to the budget process to ask whose eBay account was used to purchase the R2-D2 robots.

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

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I beg permission to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. EYKING: Mr. Speaker, Nancy MacLean, a friend of mine, a resident of Victoria-The Lakes, and a snowbird to Halifax this winter, is in the east gallery today. Nancy, would you like to stand up. (Applause)

Nancy has been operating Baddeck Gathering Ceilidhs since 1999. She finds local up-and-coming musicians and homegrown favourites and they perform nightly for locals and tourists in the summer season. The Baddeck Gathering Ceilidh was an immediate success and continues to be one of the highlights of the area.

Nancy provides a venue where people can enjoy a night of music and dance, and she can answer nearly all of your questions about the Celtic Cape Breton music. It is experiences like the Baddeck Gathering Ceilidh that celebrate and promote our region. Thank you, Nancy, on behalf of all of us for providing that venue for all of us to enjoy.

MR. SPEAKER: I just want to remind all the members before we proceed to the next member's statement that it's improper to refer to the subject of your statement directly. Please use the third person and indirect references.

The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

CAMPBELL, CATHERINE: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Catherine Campbell of New Glasgow on her retirement tomorrow, April 1st. Catherine has worked at Community Services in Truro for the past 27 years in many roles, including 22 years at the Children's Aid Society and as a senior executive assistant.

She was always known for her sincerity and thoughtful advice, and her guidance and encouragement have helped many people over her career. The service Catherine has provided during her career has impacted the community of Colchester and it is a much better place because of her understanding and responsiveness.

Just as her working career has been long and satisfying, Catherine's co-workers wish her a long and satisfying retirement.

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

TANCOOK ISLANDS/LAHAVE FERRIES - RATE INCREASES

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, if any of us woke up tomorrow morning and discovered it was going to cost us 60 per cent more to commute to work that day, we would be outraged. Unfortunately that is exactly what this government has done to the people of Little and Big Tancook Islands. They will wake up on April 1st to find that the McNeil Government has increased the cost of a book of tickets for their ferry by more than 60 per cent.

Perhaps Tancookers should actually feel grateful. At least they don't have to use the LaHave ferry system, which will see books of tickets increasing in price by more than 100 per cent. I do wish my colleague, the member for Lunenburg, luck in explaining that to her constituents.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

SELTZER, PAUL: MAHONE BAY VOL. OF YR. - CONGRATS.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to take the time to recognize one of Mahone Bay's foremost volunteers, Mr. Paul Seltzer. Paul has been a wonderful addition to the community, from the local chamber of commerce to

musical entertainment, abundant offerings of edible delicacies, and participation in numerous festivals and local events. This year Paul was honoured by the Town of Mahone Bay as its recipient Volunteer of the Year for the 41st annual provincial volunteer ceremony to be held on Tuesday, April 7th. Volunteers of the Mahone Bay Center are fortunate to have worked side by side with him over the years.

During that time his leadership encouraged active participation and commitment by the people he worked with. Paul led by example and could be found doing tasks or following through on projects, which spanned beyond the scope of the chairman's job description. I ask all members of the House to please join me in congratulating Paul.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

CURL FOR CANCER: VOL./DONORS - RECOGNIZE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize all the volunteers and donors who made the annual Curl for Cancer event a huge success. The Pictou event was held at the new Caledonian Curling Club with 30 teams participating. The teams raised close to \$24,000 for cancer research. Combined with the \$13,000 raised at the Curl for Cancer event that was held a few weeks prior at the Westfield Curling Club, Pictou County residents raised close to \$37,000 altogether.

I am grateful to live in a community where examples of such generosity and willingness to lend a hand are routinely evident. It is an honour to recognize the Curl for Cancer event and thank all people involved in any way in its success. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: FRONT-LINE WORKERS - PREM./MIN. LISTEN

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, while the McNeil Government was picking fights with health care workers, they were ignoring warnings of nursing shortages. More than double the amount of nurses retired this year over last and this is leaving serious shortages on units like intensive care units. In fact, for the first time since the 1990's the Department of Health and Wellness has had to fly nurses in from other provinces to cover off-shifts at the Capital Health District.

The Premier doesn't seem to understand that shifting the government's focus away from patient care has adverse effects. We are now seeing the impact of that. That is why the Premier and the Minister of Health and Wellness need to listen to front-line workers who understand best the impact that staffing shortages have on front-line patient care.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I am going to rule that member's statement out of order; that is to do with the topic of the bill - patient to nurse ratio. I'll review the member's statement and come back to you with a ruling.

The honourable member for Sackville-Beaver Bank.

BAGNELL, LEE/GET THE KIDS OFF THE COUCH: PROG. - CONGRATS.

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, Get the Kids off the Couch, a non-profit society formed in 2011 by Lee Bagnell, provides affordable and accessible options for youth interested in playing a variety of sports. The program's most successful venture to date is table tennis, attracting enthusiasts between the ages of five to 11 and as far away as Truro. They soon outgrew their facility and recently moved to the Rock Church in Lower Sackville and increased their tables from four to 15.

A professionally equipped facility, the society had five of the six Canada Games athletes train with the group at their venue. On March 7th the society hosted six table tennis athletes from all three Maritime Provinces for a day-long table tennis tournament. Please join me in congratulating Lee Bagnell and Get the Kids off the Couch on their outstanding success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**NORTHEAST KINGS EDUC. CTR. TITANS HOCKEY TEAM
- CHAMPIONSHIP**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand here today to congratulate the Northeast Kings Education Centre Titans hockey team for their championship win on March 30, 2015. Head Coach Colin Duncan and Team Captain Justin Allen led their team to a 4-1 victory over Eastern Shore and captured the NSSAF Division 2 hockey championships. The team goalie, Noah Turner, finished the year of outstanding goaltending by allowing only one goal in this championship match. Congratulations to the coaching staff and players of Northeast Kings Titans on this championship win.

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

**HAMMONDS PLAINS-LUCASVILLE CITIZENS - STORMS:
AT-RISK MEMBERS - IDENTIFY**

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, last week I was called to meet with a couple of seniors who are residents of Upper Hammonds Plains. I listened to them discuss their concerns indicating that more should be done to identify at-risk members of our community who may require emergency medical attention, while crews worked diligently to remove the snow from our streets. I recognize the residents of our community are extremely

conscious of others, have continued to show great resilience and help their neighbours when possible.

That being said, my comments today serve to recognize the increased risk experienced by many residents of my community, in particular our seniors and those who are disabled. I would like to take a moment and use this platform in an effort to encourage people in Hammonds Plains-Lucasville to take the time to call their neighbours during storms like the ones that have plagued our community over the past couple of months. Together we are better able to keep our neighbours safe. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Upon review of the earlier statement from the member for Halifax Needham, I will allow the statement to stand. It stops just short of the topic of the bill, but comes perilously close. I will caution members once again not to table members' statements that are the topic of legislation currently before the House.

The honourable member for Inverness.

VAN DEN HEUVEL, MRS. DINA - BIRTHDAY (100TH)

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, Dina Van Den Heuvel of Whycocomagh recently celebrated her 100th birthday, a landmark number only exceeded by the number of loved ones and community members who turned up to celebrate the occasion with her. After a special Thanksgiving Mass in the Brookville church, a beautiful buffet was prepared and enjoyed by her family and friends.

Apparently Mrs. Van Den Heuvel always said she wanted to live to be 100, so join me in congratulating her in reaching her goal. Mrs. Van Den Heuvel remains clear and mobile in her advanced years and is an inspiration to us all. Her goal to live to be 100 is surely an indication that we as a province can also do what we put our minds to achieving.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**LAFFIN, JENNY ET AL/CENTRAL KINGS SR. GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM
- REG. BANNER**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Central Kings Gators senior girls basketball team as well as their coaches, parents and supporters, for repeating as Western Region Division 2 Girls champions. CK head coach Ben Hachey, said his players never gave up and battled adversity to win their second straight regional banner.

On behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia, I congratulate the 2014-15 CK girls team of Jenny Laffin, Dakota Bundy, Serena Dolan, Rachel Benjamin, Ruth Hall,

Katelyn Meister, Cassidy Coombs, Katie Beaver and Emma Hachey on their achievements and wish them success in their athletic careers. Thank you.

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

COMMUNITY CARES (SYDNEY MINES) - RECOGNIZE

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Community CARES in Sydney Mines. The organization recently held an open house in support of Ryan's Hope-Love Life project. Local works of art were presented around the theme of Love Life - Live Clean, a message from Ryan Gillis who shared his struggles with addictions in the hope of helping others.

Ryan died at the age of 30 in a car accident in Alberta. Community CARES works with young adults to help provide opportunities for youth at risk. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to thank Community CARES for their community support. Thank you.

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

SHEET HBR. & AREA GROUND SEARCH & RESCUE: VOLS. - THANK

MR. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, the Sheet Harbour and Area Ground Search and Rescue is a volunteer organization which assists local police forces, when called upon, to search for missing persons or to assist in times of disaster. Trained volunteers from all walks of life answer the call to assist those in need or to perform tasks as required during natural and man-made disasters. Their team covers a vast area along the Eastern Shore of Nova Scotia. They continue to assist our community when it is at its most vulnerable time of need. They respond at all hours of the day - holidays, weekends, missed family events, anniversaries, and more.

I am honoured to have such an amazing team of volunteers who are ready, willing, and able to respond with the underlying principle of saving lives. I would like to truly thank them and their families for the important role they have and continue to play in the lives of so many. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

ARMSTRONG, DAVID: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Truro lost a true role model last month. David Armstrong was an honourable man both in business and in his community. He was a dedicated volunteer, never turning down the chance to help out a local sports team or a good community cause.

His energy may have been one of the most notable things about him. He was tireless. As a political activist, no matter the weather or time of day, you could rely on Dave to be out doing what he did best. Whether it was meeting new people or door-knocking or building lawn signs, he never failed to show up.

As a respected businessman and entrepreneur, he had a keen understanding of how to work with and encourage the people around him. To his family, who he loved and admired so much, I'd like to say that Dave Armstrong was a class act, and he will be sorely missed. Thank you.

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

**PRESIDENT'S CHOICE CHILDREN'S CHARITY:
ROACH FAM. GRANT - ACKNOWLEDGE**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the generous support of the President's Choice Children's Charity. On Saturday, November 15, 2014, at the Bayers Lake Superstore, 10-year-old Peyton Roach and his family received \$20,000 toward the purchase of a retrofit of a wheelchair-accessible van. Payton, who suffers from muscular dystrophy, requires a wheelchair to get around. This grant from the President's Choice Children's Charity will enable the Roach family to be more mobile and have greater freedom in their daily lives.

The President's Choice Children's Charity is celebrating its 25th year of supporting children with disabilities and their families across Canada. Please join me in commending the good work done by the President's Choice Children's Charity and in wishing the Roach family all the best in the years to come.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**SEASIDE WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS:
VOL. FIREFIGHTER APPRECIATION PROJ. - THANK**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to say thank you to Seaside Wireless Communications for their Volunteer Firefighters Appreciation Project. I am thrilled that of the 16 eligible departments selected in a random draw, two were departments from Pictou East: Pictou Landing and Barneys River.

There are huge challenges for all rural volunteer fire departments, and to small departments like Pictou Landing and Barneys River and District, \$2,000 is a wonderful boost. Seaside Wireless Communications considers it a natural step to support rural fire departments, and the fire departments in their communities consider it a giant step toward meeting their challenges. This aptly-named project is certainly appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

KHOURY, JULIANNA: MUTIMER AWARD - CONGRATS.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, Theatre Antigonish wrapped up their 40th season in March with their one-act play festival and handing out their annual awards. I'd like to take a moment to congratulate one of the three winners who were honoured at their awards ceremony. Juliana Khoury was presented with the Eleanor Mutimer Award, which was created to commemorate the tremendous contributions made by Ms. Mutimer to theatre in the community during her tenure as a teacher at Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School.

I congratulate Juliana on receiving this award and thank her for being an integral part and member of Theatre Antigonish. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

CHISHOLM, CHIEF DELANEY: COMMITMENT - RECOGNIZE

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, Delaney Chisholm has been New Glasgow's Chief of Police since September 2007. He is a veteran police administrator and officer with approximately 42 years of service. During his career, Chief Chisholm attended the Atlantic Police Academy, Canadian Police College, and Dalhousie University to continue his professional development.

Chief Chisholm was the recipient of the Canadian Police Exemplary Medal and the Nova Scotia Police Long Service Medal, and was presented with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal by the federal Justice Minister, the Honourable Peter MacKay, in recognition of his outstanding and dedicated service to his community. He was also the recipient of the Federal Police Exemplary Service 40-year service medal.

Chief Delaney's commitment to ensuring public safety and security, investigating crimes, and enforcing the law has made him an extraordinary leader during his exceptional career. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

PROJ. EMPATHY VIDEOS: PROSPECT RD. ELEM. SCH. (GRADES 4 & 5) - CONGRATS.

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize two outstanding classes of students at Prospect Road Elementary School and the respective videos they created for Project: Empathy. The Grade 4 students performed a depiction of a day in the life of a PRES student, designed to be uplifting and provide entertainment to children in the hospital

or otherwise unable to attend public school, to bring them love and to show them how much fun students at the school have each day.

The students planned a video, "A Day in the Life of Prospect Road Elementary," with a twist of fun and happy musical accompaniment. The smiling faces of the students, along with the uplifting music, clearly demonstrate the students' love of learning and pride in their school.

The Grade 5 students, realizing they knew little about the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa, decided to research the topic and share their findings through a YouTube video because they felt others were likely in the same situation and could benefit from their information. The YouTube video showed the depth of research that the students conducted and clearly demonstrated how the students learned from this initiative.

I would like to send congratulations on behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to all Grades 4 and 5 students at Prospect Road Elementary School who participated in the production of these Project: Empathy videos.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL COMM.: MEMBERS - THANK

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the members of the Support Our School committee for their outstanding and innovative approach in developing a hub model for River John Consolidated. They have proposed a concept hub model called the North Shore Scholar Ship Discovery Centre. The committee envisions a school that provides children with a quality education while maintaining their connection with their community.

Schools, particularly at the elementary level, help attract and retain young families and are vital to the future of rural communities. This is important if we are to promote and help rural life thrive in Nova Scotia.

I would like to single out Sheree Fitch and Valerie Langille-Suideest for presenting the committee's proposal at the final meeting with the school board.

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

**LE CLUB DES AUDACIEUX WILD GAME SUPPLER (8TH ANL.):
ORGANIZERS - CONGRATS.**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, on February 28, 2015, Le Club des Audacieux in Quinan hosted its 8th Annual Wild Game Supper for approximately 300 people. A very large variety of wild game is offered, including bear,

deer, moose, rabbit, goose, duck, and partridge. They also offer a variety of seafood, including lobster and clams, and prepare the Acadian dish of rappie pie, with a variety of wild game in it.

The event has grown in popularity and attendance over the years with local participants, as well as some who come from the U.S. to take part. Tickets are sold up to a year in advance.

I want to congratulate and thank the organizers of this event, which becomes something to look forward to in the long winter months.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

CHEESEMAN, JAMES & MICHELLE: HEROISM - GRATITUDE EXTEND

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize the bravery and quick thinking of two young cadets from the 2688 Bridgewater Kinsman Army Cadet Corps., James Cheeseman and Michelle Cheeseman.

On Friday, March 27th, James and Michelle were walking home from their bus stop when they heard a neighbour's shed collapse, and cries for help soon followed. Without thinking twice, these two young people sprang into action - Michelle running for help and James to the fallen shed and trapped neighbour.

I'm happy to report that although their neighbour suffered serious injuries, he will survive, in large part because of the quick thinking and heroic actions of James Cheeseman and Michelle Cheeseman.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to James and Michelle for their actions on the afternoon of March 27th and recognize them for their heroism.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MACMILLAN, DILLON: NSCC WELDING PROG. - CONGRATS.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, in 2013, Dillon McMillan's life changed forever. A tragic accident left him seriously injured. After six months of intensive rehabilitation, Dillon applied to the Nova Scotia Community College for the welding program. With the help of a manual stand-up wheelchair, he was able to do everything his classmates did, which included operating an overhead crane.

Dillon has fulfilled his lifelong dream of becoming a welder. He is an example to all Nova Scotians that a positive attitude and hard work make things happen.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

DENSMORE, RUBY: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to tell you about a wonderful woman from Bedford. Ruby Densmore had a smile that lit up any room she entered. She was a devoted volunteer at Bedford United Church, and actually visited patients in hospital with her pal Velma Redden every week for 24 years.

Her baking was legendary, and her pies were among the first sold at any bake sale. She was a 25-year member of the Bedford Legion and a life member of the Order of the Eastern Star.

Even though they were both in their 90s, Ruby and her devoted husband Eldridge have long been fixtures at events in Bedford. Together they raised a son, Tom, and had four grandchildren, two step-grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and even one great-great-grandson.

Ruby passed away February 16th, one day before her 70th wedding anniversary. How many of us make it that far?

Mr. Speaker, Ruby Densmore's legacy to all of us is her ministry of service, her gift of love. She will not be forgotten. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

SANDSTRA, MS. NALEAH: WE DAY PROJ. - CONGRATS.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Naleah Sandstra for her outstanding contributions to those less fortunate and in need of some aid. Naleah is a young lady who attends Evangeline Middle School in New Minas. As a project for We Day, Naleah created the Jeans for Teens event. Her goal was to collect several pairs of gently used jeans, which she would then donate to Open Arms for distribution amongst its clients. She was able to collect 94 pairs of jeans in just a short time.

It's wonderful to see young people take an active interest in their community and recognize others who may not have had the same advantages. And so, Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my gratitude to Naleah Sandstra for her willingness to give of herself with this act of service to those less fortunate.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

CEASEFIRE: PARTICIPANT - RECOGNIZE

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, how does society address an issue as complex as gun violence? In 1999, epidemiologist Gary Slutkin applied this expertise to the problem through his own unique model, treating gun violence as a public health issue.

His program, called CeaseFire, uses prevention, intervention, and community mobilization strategies to reduce shootings and killings. Focusing on the areas of North Dartmouth, North End Halifax, and North and East Preston, Nova Scotia is the first Canadian province to adopt CeaseFire. April 2015 marks their one-year anniversary.

I wanted to recognize the outreach workers or violence interrupters, mentors, faith leaders, police, and the Community Justice Society for their dedication and commitment to this program, particularly Carlos Beals, who is the interrupter in Dartmouth North.

With their continued efforts, we are sure to see the positive impact on reducing gun-related violence in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

JOHN, FR. THOMAS - SYDNEY MINES: SERV. - THANK

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Father Thomas John for six years of service to Nova Scotia. Father John spent the majority of his time in our province as parish priest of Holy Family Church in Sydney Mines. He was recalled to India to serve as provincial superior in charge of 85 priests and about 130 students.

Father Thomas John has had a major impact on his parish and his parish has influenced him as well. It's a true honour to have known Father Thomas John and I wish him well in India. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

CAN. GAMES: TEAM N.S. ATHLETES - CONGRATS.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Team Nova Scotia, who represented us all so proudly at the Canada Games. The Canada Games, held in Prince George, B.C., between February 13th and March 1st, saw the gathering of Canada's finest young athletes to compete at a national level.

Team Nova Scotia was made up of over 230 young athletes from all parts of our province. I am proud to say that 10 of the athletes came from my riding of Halifax Atlantic and I am so proud of all of them for being chosen to compete at this level.

Team Nova Scotia brought home four medals from the games, but more importantly, they brought home the experience of competing at a high level within their chosen sport. I ask the members to join me in congratulating all the Team Nova Scotia athletes on their performance at the Canada Games and wish them continued success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

SOLLOW, MARJORIE: CLOTHING/BLANKET DRIVE - CONGRATS.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, Marjorie Sollows is no stranger to adversity in troubled times. The Grade 12 student at Park View Education Centre has seen her share. When she was in Grade 7, she started experimenting with drugs and alcohol and she was headed down a very dark path.

Five years later, she is an IB student ready to graduate from high school and take on the world. She has aspirations of being a surgeon. In the meantime, she is working to make the world a better and warmer place. This past winter, she organized a clothing and blanket drive for Halifax's homeless population.

People today often question, where are the youth headed? There is no question that Marjorie is headed in the right direction. It fills me with great hope to know that there are young adults out there like Marjorie who show the strength to not only battle her own problems, but to help others battle theirs as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for Members' Statements has expired. We'll move on.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

FIN. & TREASURY BD.: HEALTH PREM. - CLARIFICATION

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week, in answer to questions in this House, the Premier said the first he heard of a possible health premium was from a reporter. The same time, the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has been travelling the province talking about a health premium as a possible new source of revenue for the government.

The Premier implied that a health premium is not on the table; the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board says it is. I would like to ask the Premier, which is it?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has said any such thing, but we'll introduce the budget next week and all Nova Scotians will get an opportunity to recognize that they have a government that is moving this province in the right direction and looking forward.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that but my concern and the concern of many Nova Scotians is that an additional tax is going to be imposed on them when we already pay the highest taxes in the whole country. The Premier said last week that Nova Scotians will see their fingerprints all over the budget. He was referring, I believe, to the tour that the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has been taking around the province where she raises the health premium as one of the options that's on the table.

I'd like to ask the Premier if he understands the worry that Nova Scotians have, and will he assure them that he won't use a pre-budget tour to raise their taxes, as the NDP did with HST?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure all Nova Scotians that this government will continue to do what we told them we would do in October 2013, which is change the direction of this province. We'll continue to fix the structural challenges that successive governments have ignored, we will continue to work with the private sector to drive opportunities and, unlike the Conservative Government of Alberta, we'll make sure that Nova Scotians fully understand the direction we're going in and not through the back door.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, one way to change the direction of the province would be to actually answer the questions in Question Period instead of to avoid them. One way to keep things the same is to constantly look for new ways to raise Nova Scotians' taxes.

So I'll ask the Premier very directly, will he confirm today for all Nova Scotians, that he will not be asking them to pay more in tax in the form a health premium in the upcoming budget?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, over the last number of weeks we've had that Party and that Leader fear-mongering across this province, looking to find every opportunity to scare a few more votes in their direction. The reality of it is the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board will stand in this House and deliver a platform and deliver a budget that has Nova Scotians' fingerprints on it and they will (Interruption)

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

THE PREMIER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's finally good to hear the member for Argyle-Barrington stand up and say something; he's been silent when it comes to his Party reneging on the Yarmouth ferry.

We're going to continue to fight for Nova Scotians. We're going to continue to fight for Nova Scotians and the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board will deliver a budget that has Nova Scotians pointing in the right direction - and that is forward, not looking backwards.

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

PREM.: NURSES - WORKING CONDITIONS

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Yesterday, at Law Amendments Committee, presenters made it clear this government unnecessarily wasted money fumbling around with health legislation while ignoring patient care. Now here we are months later, the same legislation being fast-tracked through this House to fix a legal mess created by the government. But, Mr. Speaker, there's an even bigger problem, one the government doesn't want to acknowledge and that's the working conditions of health care workers, especially nurses.

My question to the Premier is, why hasn't his government acknowledged the poor working conditions faced by nurses in our health care system?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we've acknowledged many times the mess that the former government left us and we're going to continue to not only improve the working conditions of nurses but we're going to improve the working conditions of all hard-working Nova Scotians.

MS. MACDONALD: More than double the amount of nurses are retiring this year as compared to last, and nursing overtime hours are growing by the day; in fact, things have gotten so bad that the government has had to bring in nurses from out-of-province just to cover shifts, something that certainly never happened under my watch.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is, why has he allowed nursing shortages to grow to almost crisis proportions in our province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to first of all congratulate the Minister of Health and Wellness for continuing to move our health care system forward, essential service legislation in this province so that Nova Scotians can rely and be reassured that the health care will be there for them when they need it, no matter what is happening at the bargaining table.

Mr. Speaker, there's one other thing that didn't happen under that government and that was the nurse-patient ratio. They know why it didn't.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, nurses have been telling us for months about the lack of respect they feel from that government. The nursing shortages that we face

today were completely avoidable and the responsibility for them rests solely on the Premier's shoulders.

My question is, when will the Premier listen to the nurses who are working in our health care system and deal with the staff shortages that are affecting patient care?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking all health care workers across this province who continue every day to respond to the needs of Nova Scotians. Let me reassure the Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party that the Minister of Health and Wellness and this government will continue to be focused on patients as we restructure the health care system that that government was unprepared to deal with.

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

PREM.: NATL. SECURITIES REGULATOR - DISCUSSIONS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario, and Prince Edward Island have all signed on to join the national securities regulator. They are working together to cut red tape and promote jobs and investment in their provinces. This is something the Premier has talked about doing here, so I would like to ask him, why has he rejected such an obvious way to cut tape and promote jobs and investment here in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we haven't outright rejected that. We are continuing to talk to the federal government to ensure that the revenue we would potentially lose in this province would be protected and ensuring that a voice of Nova Scotia is on a national regulator. How can it be wrong that we're standing up for the people of this province when we're building what should be a national network?

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, once again, the Premier is confusing talking about something with actually doing something. We now know today that the Province of Prince Edward Island has made an arrangement with the federal government to receive \$35 million in funding - five years' worth of lost revenue - to join a national regulator, which would actually cut red tape here in Nova Scotia and promote investment and jobs in this province.

The Premier says they're talking about doing it; that is good news. Will he update the House on when we might hear an announcement about Nova Scotia joining the national securities regulator?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we'll continue to negotiate with the federal government. We'll continue to negotiate, ensuring that we get the best possible deal for Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

AGRIC.: FOOD TRUCKS - FEE INCREASES

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Last week, the Liberal Government announced a 507 per cent tax increase on food truck operators; the fee went from \$38 to \$193.

The food truck industry is growing quickly in North America and offers entrepreneurs an opportunity to open a business with few barriers for entry. That tax barrier just increased by 507 per cent.

At a Select Nova Scotia event in November, the minister himself said that food trucks help create conditions which benefit local food producers. I will table that, Mr. Speaker. In *The Chronicle Herald*, Natalie Chavarie, owner of a food truck enterprise . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Does the member have a question?

MR. LOHR: . . . claimed the department did not consult regarding this increase, while giving only six days' notice before it took effect. I will table that too.

My question for the minister, Mr. Speaker, is why didn't he take the time to consult with small business owners and operators who work in this industry every day with this tax increase?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, indeed that's a very important question to all of us. Indeed, we are working towards a further cost allocation in our department to get a true cost in doing these inspections. We're moving to a closer cost recovery on these inspections - and that's the reason the fees went up.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. As the minister is aware, anyone in Nova Scotia who wants to operate a food service facility must have a permit. According to the information on the Department of Agriculture website, food establishment permits are valid from April 1st of one year to March 31st of the following year - I will table that - except this year. An update on the provincial website says there has been a delay in issuing renewal notices this year and that the department is extending current permits until April 30th, and I will table that. Interesting, considering the increased permit fees come into effect on April 1st.

My question for the minister is, will the minister come clean with Nova Scotians about what specifically caused these so-called delays or will he admit that delaying the renewal permit was planned so the government could take advantage of the increase in user fees?

MR. COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, indeed, this year there were some adjustments we knew were going to be made in the fees towards food safety and a move closer to cost recovery on these, so we presently have about 37 per cent of our total cost is recovered from inspections. We don't want the general public to have to pay for that when food safety is so important and that's why it was extended to the end of April this year. It's a one-time thing.

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

PREM.: NURSES - UNDERSTAFFING

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Premier. Over the last year we have seen double the number of nurses retire. At the QE II alone, 33 nurses have retired since January where there already were 40 vacancies in all of the hospital's critical care areas. This should not be a surprise to the Premier. He was warned about a nursing shortage last year, but the Premier was too busy picking fights with health care workers to hear the warnings, I think.

Mr. Speaker, my question is why is the Premier ignoring nurses about the growing problem of understaffing they face in our hospitals?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question, and I want to inform all members of this House that we continue to hire new nurses in this province - 92 per cent of the nursing grads in this province get hired by the Government of Nova Scotia. We're encouraged by that. We're looking forward to continue to build on that and make sure we have the proper level of staffing in all floors across this province. Everyone knows that, including the president of the Nurses' Union who suggested there should not be a nurse-patient ratio because you need to be flexible in order to meet the needs of the patients on floors across this province, and we need to make sure management and the nurses who are working on that floor have the flexibility to provide the services required in the individual institutions from one end of this province to the other.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, flexibility should not mean working short-staffed.

The Chronicle Herald reported comments made by the interim manager of recruitment services at the QE II which outlined the Department of Health and Wellness directive for the hospitals to hire travel nurses to be flown in from outside of the province to help fill vacancies at the hospital. The manager described this situation saying although at present our highest demand is in the critical care areas, we do anticipate a similar need might arise in the near future in all specialty areas, both at the QE II and other sites.

My question to the Premier is how much worse will the nursing shortage have to get before the Premier starts listening and addressing this problem?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, just to remind the House what I said previously, we hired 90 per cent of the nursing grads in this province to work from one end of this province to the other. The Minister of Health and Wellness is continuing to work to upgrade the nursing strategy to ensure we have health care workers across this province. I'm amazed how much work he has been able to do, considering the mess that government left it.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

ERDT: YAR. FERRY - SERV. PROVIDERS

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. To date Nova Scotia taxpayers have put over \$40 million into the Yarmouth ferry. The boat hasn't even set sail for the 2015 season and already we've spent \$2 million and the government refuses to tell taxpayers the details.

Mr. Speaker, one of the clauses in the 2015 contract stated that the company shall use reasonable commercial efforts to employ Nova Scotia residents, purchase products and services from Nova Scotians, and work co-operatively in an open and transparent manner with the province in an effort to maximize the economic development opportunities for Nova Scotians. I will table that.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is, will the minister provide an update today on how much has been spent on goods and services purchased in Nova Scotia?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I would remind the member that all the details regarding the Yarmouth ferry have been posted online. The contract has been posted online for all Nova Scotians to see. Any disbursements that have been made as part of the agreement are posted online as well. The company is currently negotiating with a number of different service providers and I would expect there will be more information in the very near future that will answer the member's questions.

MR. LOHR: I would like to thank the minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, yesterday on a design website a U.S.-based advertising company called Saltwater Creative posted pictures of their work for Nova Star, an ad campaign, "You've Never Seen Nova Scotia Like This". I will table that.

More searching on Nova Star Facebook page indicated that Saltwater Creative, based in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, is the company's ad agency. I will table a picture of the CEO and their rep from Facebook.

My question for the minister is, what does he have to say to qualified Nova Scotia advertising representatives whose own tax dollars are being used to fund an American-based advertising firm?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, Nova Star itself has a requirement to be able to advertise in the northeastern United States market to try to attract more visitors to Nova Scotia and more passengers on the ferry. As well, the Nova Scotia Tourism Agency has also been working on exploring more opportunities in that northeastern United States market. Last year's numbers were some of the highest numbers we have seen in quite some time and we're looking forward to building on that.

What I would remind the member as well is that it would appear the company is having some success because last year, throughout the entire sailing season, there was a total of 19 bus bookings for the whole year; as of today there are over 80 bus tours booked to come to Nova Scotia this year.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

EECD: SCHOOLS - BUILDING INSPECTIONS

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Teaching days lost to snowstorms and the actual structural safety of schools in Nova Scotia is becoming a huge issue for school boards and parents this winter, due to the volume of snow which has fallen on school rooftops. One day in late February there were more than 50 schools alone within the Halifax Regional School Board suffering from leaking rooftops. Today, after being closed for several days, five schools finally opened because school board officials were concerned about the weight load on those five schools.

The minister is aware of a letter I wrote to her in late February, which I will table this afternoon, concerning this significant issue. My question to the minister, can the minister please clarify for all members exactly how many schools in Nova Scotia have been visited by a building inspector and been declared safe from a roof collapse?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member opposite for the question. Of course the question is timely, not only for schools but for all our public buildings and even for our personal property, due to the severe weather conditions we have had this winter.

Our department is working very closely with the school boards. As the member would know, school boards have the responsibility for the facilities under their jurisdiction and they are vigilant as to what is safe. The safety of students, the safety of staff and anybody who is in the building is a number one priority and I commend them for closing buildings if they believe the conditions are unsafe.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, we are aware of unusual amounts of snow which have fallen this winter and it appears that the snow is not going away very quickly. With any amount of heavy snow, the school rooftops can only become more structurally unsafe. If there were 50 schools with leaks in their roofs in Halifax in late February, it would be worthy of the minister noting how many schools in total across Nova Scotia were reporting a similar difficulty.

The minister has to be cognizant of the fact this is an issue that required, and still requires, the immediate attention of herself and all school boards across Nova Scotia. My question to the minister is, is the minister able to provide any kind of reassurance to parents today that all Nova Scotia schools are structurally safe, as a result of site inspections by building inspectors and engineers?

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I will table the response that I gave to the member when he did send me some correspondence. He has tabled his letter; I will also table my response. In that I spoke specifically to the safety issue and to the vigilance that I know our operation staff have in all of our boards and I do commend them.

I would also like to say that we have sent a message out to all boards that we have put aside \$15 million again in a maintenance capital budget and that will, I believe, address some of the concerns that schools and boards have with leaking roofs and the need for roof repairs.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: NURSES - OVERTIME

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, ICU beds at the QE II have been closed for weeks now due to a shortage of critical care nurses. Nurses in one unit alone estimate thousands of hours of overtime has been worked since January 1st. For example, in one day there had been as many as seven out of 18 people in one unit working overtime, almost half the staff in that unit.

While campaigning during the last election, the Premier said his Party's plan will address issues around nurse overtime. Through you to the Minister of Health and Wellness, where is the McNeil Government's plan to address nurse overtime?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I can say to the member for Sackville-Cobequid is that in this particular year, the QE II Health Sciences Centre has been challenged, especially in the ICU and a couple of the other specialty units, and training enough nurses when we do have high numbers of retirements and that we can expect and anticipate for at least about a 10-year period. That is why we have increased the number of seats to about 400 in the nursing school in anticipation of this. We see this as a short term

issue. The nursing strategy in particular will address this and other nursing issues in the province.

MR. DAVID WILSON: A high number of nurses retiring - I wonder why, Mr. Speaker, I wonder why. Nurses are paying a price of constantly being asked to work overtime. Janice Nicholson, an experienced nurse, says she feels guilty turning down overtime shifts. She worries that her co-workers will be working short-staffed if she says no. Most of all she worries about how saying no will impact her patients who require a high level of care, yet Janice knows she has to consider her own health as she accepts these shifts.

I would like to ask the minister, what is the McNeil Government doing to ensure nurses like Janice aren't constantly asked to choose between their own health and their patients?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I can tell the member opposite we have a good number of nurses ready to retire - 65 is not a bad age. We have about 350 nurses in Nova Scotia who are 65 or over currently in the system. I don't think things can be all that bad because last year 133 nurses came from other provinces into Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

ERDT: VISITOR INFO. CENTRES - CLOSURES

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. The recent announcement from the Nova Scotia Tourism Agency regarding the closure of the Pictou Visitor Information Centre has been devastating for our community. A total of 12 good-paying rural jobs have been dissolved. Provincial Visitor Information Centres will decrease to six from eight. There has been clear indication from CEO Patrick Sullivan of the Nova Scotia Tourist Agency, that within 10 years all VICs will be phased out.

My question is, can the minister please explain to Nova Scotians, and especially to those directly related to the tourism industry, what the plan is in order to fulfill the audacious One Nova Scotia goal of doubling tourism revenue from \$2 billion annually to \$4 billion, while phasing out the service that our provincial VICs provide?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, we've listened very closely to the independent board of the Nova Scotia Tourism Agency, who told our government that the role of government is to bring visitors to our province.

We have seen a 40 per cent reduction over the last 10 years in the amount of visitors who actually go to a Visitor Information Centre. While the member indicates that there were previously eight Visitor Information Centres run by the Government of Nova Scotia,

I would also remind her that there are over 50 Visitor Information Centres from one end of our province to the next which are run by municipalities, tourism associations, and chambers of commerce for example, so there are still ample opportunities for visitors to be able to access information.

But the message from the industry was loud and clear: Government's role is in attracting more visitors to our province so that we can meet the Ivany goal of doubling our tourism revenues in the next 10 years.

MS. MACFARLANE: I thank the minister for his answer. Last week, I learned that another colossal change is taking place within the Nova Scotia Tourism Agency. Many of our seasonal businesses and museums received a letter indicating that our provincial Doers and Dreamers Guide will no longer be distributed free of charge, creating another financial burden for the loss of those in the tourism industry, especially to our non-profit museums that require necessary literature to help service our tourists. In fact, no longer can anyone in Nova Scotia have a travel guide mailed to them free of charge.

Will the minister please tell us what the total cost savings are for this unfortunate decision and where the money will be relocated, if at all? Thank you.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I certainly thank the member for the question. Just like with the VICs, the Doers and Dreamers Guide - fewer and fewer visitors to our province are actually asking for a paper copy of the guide. It's quite expensive to publish. More and more people are accessing that information online. We'll certainly do our best to ensure that those who need them will still be serviced with them.

It's interesting because just last week, I joined my colleague from Kings South in meeting with the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce, who runs a Visitor Information Centre. They said one of their biggest frustrations was, at the end of the season, having to rent out a truck to take the excess amounts of publications sent to them that were never used, having to take them to the waste facility, and the financial burden that that was placing on them of receiving documentation which was not necessary and not being used. The days of that type of waste taking place are over in Nova Scotia.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: PATIENT SAFETY/STAFFING CONCERNS - ADDRESS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, this time last year, nurses in the Capital Region were here at the Legislature pleading with the Premier to address their concerns about patient safety. At the time, the Premier acknowledged concerns around staffing and promised to address the workplace issues. I'll table that.

Unfortunately, a year later, things only seem to have gotten worse. An unusual number of nurse retirements are happening, intensive care beds are closed, and private travel nurses are being flown in for the first time in a decade because they are so short-staffed at the QE II. So through you to the Premier, I would like to ask why the Premier has allowed patient safety and staffing concerns in the Capital Region to go unaddressed for an entire year?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I totally disagree with the premise of the honourable member's question. Any issues that have been brought to the Minister of Health and Wellness, the Minister of Health and Wellness has directed to the employer to work to ensure that the concerns being brought forward by health care workers in the province are addressed in a meaningful way. He knows as a former Minister of Health and Wellness, as a former Minister of the Executive Council, that no government regardless of the political stripe would not listen to concerns of people who work on their behalf.

This is just nothing more than trying to generate some political rhetoric. When he was Minister of Health and Wellness, he should have dealt with the issue instead of leaving it for this government to deal with.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, we treated workers fairly, especially health care workers. We talked with them with respect. We didn't bring the heavy hand that the Liberal Government brought forward. Shame on them. Shame on them all, Mr. Speaker. (Interruptions)

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

MR. DAVID WILSON: I should say it again. I should say it again, Mr. Speaker.

Critical care nurses are reporting that they are almost constantly short-staffed. More and more, they are being forced to care for twice as many patients as they normally would, a situation that puts patient care at risk. They told the Premier, they told the government that last year. I would like to ask the Premier again - and maybe he'll answer it - prior to getting elected, he said he had a plan to address nursing shortages. Can the Premier deliver and show the plan to Nova Scotians today?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the honourable member and the member of his caucus who continues to heckle in this House that the fact of the matter is that over 90 per cent of the nursing graduates in this province are being hired by the Province of Nova Scotia.

The Minister of Health and Wellness just indicated there were 130-plus people who moved into Nova Scotia who were nursing, Mr. Speaker, wanting to work in the Province of Nova Scotia.

Is there more work to do? Of course there is, and I want to ensure all health care workers that they have a government that wants to work with them. But, Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility to ensure the sustainability of the health care system in this province, and throwing more money at it like the New Democratic Party did isn't the simple solution that they want to make it out to be.

Mr. Speaker, asking to be in government means showing leadership in defending all Nova Scotians, not just those who sit in the union leadership. (Applause)

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - CONTINUING CARE STRATEGY: UPDATE - TIME

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Struck a chord there.

On more than one occasion, I have asked the Minister of Health and Wellness about the 100-day review announced last January in continuing care services. Now it has been 425 days, to be exact, since the review was first announced. That's more than four times longer than originally announced, so I don't know if we're talking about lunar years or dog years or whatever we're talking about here.

The last time that I asked the minister about this, I informed him of a FOIPOP that stated the evaluation could take as long as 12 to 14 months, well beyond the 100 days as the minister promised. So if 12 to 14 months is accurate, the minister should have it on his desk by now.

Which is it? Can the minister tell us when we can expect to see the updated Continuing Care Strategy?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what the member opposite knows very well is that we said we would announce a continuing care update within the first 100 days of our government, get it underway, and get an advisory committee in place. That work is well underway.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: All right. I don't know, maybe that's Jupiter years, Pluto years - how long is it going to be? I mean, a 100-day review that is going to take 12 to 14 months to provide is giving the minister plenty of time to have this forward. There are 2,500 Nova Scotians waiting on the list for placement in long-term care facilities. There are seniors who have worked and contributed to this province their whole lives. They deserve better than this.

The minister should not tell families it will be 100 days until a new plan is done or anything like that when it will actually be more than a year. It is cruel to give desperate

families false hope. Enough is enough. When is the minister going to release the strategy and stop leaving struggling families in the dark?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what the member for Argyle-Barrington knows very well is we said that within 100 days we would initiate a committee, an advisory group, to review the Continuing Care Strategy first introduced in 2006, needed a refresh.

He knows very well that we've announced one major part of that, and that is on March 2nd, we said we would be looking at changing the entry into nursing homes so that those at high risk, those with high needs, would be the first to get a nursing home bed. We've started to roll that out.

The rest of the strategy, as he well knows, will come during the coming year.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: SAFE LINE - NURSES' CONCERNS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, when health care workers at Capital Health witness safety issues, they are told to call the SAFE line. The NDP caucus has received a transcript of calls to the SAFE line, which I'll table. An RN called on February 14th with grave concerns about low staffing levels resulting in "very unsafe conditions." So far, this RN's concerns have been ignored.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, when will the nurses' calls to the SAFE line about patient safety at Capital Health be addressed?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I know when I was Health Critic on two occasions, I was called to the QE II to take a look first-hand at the staff shortage. This was while the former government was in office. This is not a new problem, it's not a new issue, but it is one that we do ask that, yes, management be involved with nurses to correct.

However, doing a scan across the country, very often there are nurse-instituted initiatives that help deal with some of those too-frequent shortages of nurses on-floor, especially where the acuity is very high.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, maybe I wasn't clear. It was February 14, 2015 that that call went into the SAFE line. The RN who called the SAFE line was reporting from 5.1 at the QE II. That's the cardiovascular ICU. She said this is an ongoing issue. Hopefully things will change, because if a patient got into trouble, there would be no nurse to look after them.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, why is the Minister of Health and Wellness ignoring nurses' concerns about patient safety, even in the cardiovascular intensive care unit at the QE II hospital?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, he knows very well that we aren't ignoring any of those problems or concerns. There are times when there are gaps in the training for the very specialized care at the ER at cardiac care, and also in the ICU. These are very specialized, very intense nursing environments. Sometimes the training of that staff doesn't quite keep pace with retirements, and that can sometimes be an issue.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - ER CLOSURES: ROSS REVIEW - TIMELINES

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, on any given day, emergency rooms all over the province are closed. Frequent closures are plaguing Shelburne, North Sydney, Parrsboro, and Middleton. Dr. John Ross has once again been enlisted by the government to help fix the problem. The NDP ignored the bulk of Dr. Ross' recommendations from his 2010 report, and to this date the government has done nothing to address the problems of Dr. Ross' recommendations. There's no real mandate or deliverables given to Dr. Ross. It's hard to believe that this government is doing anything to keep emergency rooms open.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness, does the minister not believe that this problem warrants urgent action and that Nova Scotians, at the very least, deserve some timelines?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, again, we know that there has been some very good work done with trying to keep emergency rooms open. The CEC model is certainly supporting - however, it's not emergency care. Emergency rooms were closed.

We now have Dr. Ross advising for the next group of emergency rooms that do need to be addressed. Once again, the main feedback we are getting is, first of all, address primary care. New models of delivery as we modernize the system are going into action.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I thank the minister for that answer, but it still doesn't get the urgency of the situation right now. The minister has not provided Dr. Ross with a timeline, nor requirements to produce a report. He said there will be periodic updates. It doesn't sound like the minister is really committed to a solution.

While in Opposition, the now-Premier criticized the NDP Government for failing to act on emergency rooms and using Dr. Ross as a cover. He said they "hired" - a good quote at the time - Dr. John Ross for one reason, and that is to hide behind. I'll table those documents.

They've set out no clear outcomes for Dr. Ross, and have a willy-nilly timeline. Meanwhile, a valuable 2010 report is gathering dust on the desk of the Minister of Health and Wellness. Is the minister not once again hiding behind Dr. Ross to give the appearance that the government is doing something?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, maybe I'm pre-empting the member for Northside-Westmount's question that he'll bring along sometime, and that is an update on Northside. I can tell the House that Northside General is one of those hospitals that absolutely needs to change the model that they currently have there. That work is now underway, and we hope within a matter of months that we will have a CEC in that particular area - or I guess we should really frame it as Mary Jane Hampton said, and that is continuing care centres, because there is not emergency care in the CECs.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: NORTHSIDE GEN. - PRIORITIZE

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, as has been alluded, the persistent closures at the Northside General are wearing on the people in our community. The longer we wait for a solution and some leadership from the government, the more anxious the people are becoming. The minister recently said there can't be three ERs in Cape Breton and a regional hospital. He'll be happy to know that they're closed so often that no one in Cape Breton believes there are three ERs and an emergency hospital right now. He plans to have Dr. Ross look at a solution for Cape Breton. He gives him no timeline, no report, and no feedback beyond periodic updates.

The people of North Sydney are sick of the government's neglect. My question is, will the minister make Northside General a priority for this government?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, I took his invitation to go down to Northside and meet with staff there. There is, in fact, a great deal of change needed at Northside and in the community to develop collaborative care practices and to get primary care operating in particular at Northside General itself. Many of the requirements that the emergency room have can be served in the community and with a different model of care. That is now underway to being corrected.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, he also committed to come back and have a public meeting with the people of Northside. I hope that we can hold the minister to that. In a meeting with some of the public afterwards, he said he would come back and discuss the changes to the Northside General with those people.

Rumours of the future of Northside General continue to spread as the government turns a blind eye to these problems. It sounds like already he has made up his mind that one of these ERs will be closed and reorganized. It sounds like it's the Northside General.

It's good that we'll be reorganized, but he has also said that CECs aren't a substitute for emergency care. Could I ask the minister, what changes is the minister planning for the ERs and will he be upfront with the people on the Northside about it?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows that I have no problem coming back to address the concerns of his community, or any community in the province as far as that goes. We know that the emergency room indeed needs changing at Northside, but the one thing that the member opposite and all those needing emergency health care at Northside is that we have one of the best ambulance and emergency services in North America.

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

FIN. & TREASURY BD.: FILM TAX CREDIT - CUTS

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia's film and TV industry adds approximately \$125 million to our economy each year, bringing work and worldwide attention to our province. It's responsible for the creation of thousands of jobs. This success would not be possible without the support the industry receives through the provincial Film Tax Credit, a fact the McNeil Government acknowledged in its platform when it promised to extend the credit for a period of five years.

Today, however, I'm concerned that the future of our industry may be in jeopardy after last week the Finance Minister criticized the tax credit in front of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce. I'm curious, Mr. Speaker. Given the Ivany report's recommendation to grow our creative economy, why is the minister openly discussing cuts to a successful program like the Film Tax Credit?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to answer the question for the member opposite. In my chamber speech last week, I simply pointed out the value of the credit and a little bit about how it works in our province. It's valued at \$24 million; in fact, it was more last year, because we dealt with a backlog of applications that had been sitting there prior to our election. We have also worked with the industry - I met with them as recently as yesterday. Thank you.

MS. ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear the minister is so supportive of this tax credit, and in a September 2014 *Coast* article, Marc Almon, chairman of the Nova Scotia Motion Picture Industry Association said if the McNeil Government "were to make any change, it would have a damaging effect."

So, to the minister, to help calm any anxiety being felt by those who earn a living in the film, television, and animation industries of this province, can the minister please outline any changes that she may be considering to the film tax credit?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows that what she's speaking about is a budget item and that we would be unable to speak about that today, at this time. The budget will be delivered on April 9th.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

ENVIRON.: NORTHERN PULP - IA ISSUES

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment. Northern Pulp has indicated they plan to appeal the industrial approval issued to them by the Department of Environment. They claim that some of the targets are unrealistic and, in more than one case, immeasurable. They have asked on more than one occasion to sit down with the department and speak with the scientists who develop the standards so they can share information in hopes in finding a solution - or better, understanding how the standards were reached. The department has refused to share their information.

My question to the minister is why hasn't the Department of Environment provided any serious or substantial evidence to support its position?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for the question. Clearly the concerns of the constituents and the people of Pictou and the Pictou area have been heard loud and clear by this government over the past year.

With respect to the concerns being raised by the member opposite, I'm not exactly sure what he's referring to because in fact employees with the Department of Environment have met on an ongoing basis both in person, through phone, and written correspondence to continue the dialogue with the proponent. So, again, I'm not really sure where the premise of the question has come from.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I'm relating to recent requests to talk to the department about issues concerning the IA. The industrial approval is approximately 66 pages of you must do this and you must do that, without any rationale or context of how they should do it.

My question to the minister is where is the justification and rationale from your department with regard to the implementation of IA?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I guess to the point that the member opposite indicated that he was referring to recent requests to discuss the IA, if he'd submit more details with respect to who the recent request was made by and what that "recent" refers to so I can actually follow up specifically, I'd be happy to do that with the member.

With respect to the rationale, I guess as far as providing detail on how to implement, I'd be happy to educate the member opposite on that regulatory role. It's not general

common practice for regulatory bodies to be prescriptive in their regulatory directions but rather that we set the parameters that must be achieved. It's up to the proponents to identify the most efficient and effective ways to achieve those objectives as defined by our department. I assure the member and the residents of Pictou that the work that we do is based on evidence and that in fact these standards that we've established are evidence-based.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. The Department of Environment is proposing to add a fee to the purchase of off-road tires. This would add another fee for our farmers who would have to pay a fee for tractor tires.

My question for the minister, has the Minister of Agriculture told the Minister of Environment that he opposes increasing costs for Nova Scotia farmers?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker . . .

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

[2:50 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Ms. Margaret Miller in the Chair.]

[2:58 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Kevin Murphy, resumed the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and considered the following bill without amendments:

Bill No. 69 - Health Authorities Act.

and the chairman has been instructed to recommend this bill to the favourable consideration of the House.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you seek the unanimous consent of the House to have Bill No. 69 added to the order paper for consideration at third reading today.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

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. 69.

Bill No. 69 - Health Authorities Act.

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 69 be now read a third time. I would like to focus for a few minutes on the bigger picture, the ultimate goal of this piece of legislation. The labour section has naturally gotten a great deal of media attention. I think it's important for us to look at what we want and need our health care system to do.

Nova Scotians know that our health care system isn't getting the value for money that it could get. They know we could do a better job at ensuring that care is offered consistently in the places where it is needed most. They want us to do a better job helping them to get and stay healthy, as well as treating them when they are sick. Many times, they are willing to travel to get quicker access to the care they need. But they want to know that we are spending our limited health care dollars on the care they need - not on administration, but on front-line care.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that since I've become minister, I've noticed a great number of things we currently do nine different ways, depending on what DHA you are in. That's not consistent care and it's not a good use of our time.

One of the things that takes up a great deal of our time and attention is collective bargaining. It's important, of course, very important, but we don't need to do it as often. In 2009-10, for example, there were over 30 rounds of bargaining among hospital workers; 30 in one fiscal year. Too many times, we have found ourselves negotiating contracts months after the old ones have expired. That's not good for health care workers and it's not good for patients. It has put our health care services at risk far too many times in recent memory. That's not acceptable to Nova Scotians either.

These amendments, Mr. Speaker, will move us to four rounds of bargaining. The IWK and the Nova Scotia Health Authority will bargain together with each of the four councils of unions. The workers will be in bargaining units with other employees who do similar jobs. Nurses will negotiate for nurses.

Another key point is that one union will lead bargaining for each bargaining unit. One union will take the lead in reaching essential service agreements, coordinating strike votes, and getting members across the province to vote on tentative deals. One union will ensure that the health care unions agree on their bargaining position before everyone comes to the table.

Four rounds of bargaining. Not dozens, not 30 - just four. That's good, Mr. Speaker, because the Nova Scotia Health Authority has a long list of other things it needs to do with their time. It will work hand-in-hand with the IWK to provide coordinated province-wide care for all Nova Scotians. It must reimagine the way we offer health care and ensure that the greatest number of people have access to our human resources, the equipment, the surgeries; indeed the experts they need. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that the Nova Scotia Health Authority will have increased accountability to the communities it serves, to government, and to the public.

We are a province of less than one million people. Reimagining health care is not an impossible task. It must be done if our system is to remain sustainable, but we have to give the Nova Scotia Health Authority the time and the tools to do it. Mr. Speaker, that's what these amendments are all about. Thank you.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I think it's appropriate at this time that we review objectives that I hope I can say that all members of this House share and, in fact, that all Nova Scotians share - that is, we do want to find ways to constantly make improvements to the way that health care is delivered in our province. We want to make sure that the actions that are taken are consistent with our publicly funded, universally

accessible, portable health care system which all Nova Scotians are proud of and is, in fact, one of the great achievements of our country. We have a health care system that regardless of ability to pay, regardless of where you live in this country, regardless of how you think politically or in any other way, the health care system is supposed to be there for you.

Mr. Speaker, all members, in various ways, have come at this issue with all of those shared objectives in mind. I can absolutely assure you that that includes the Progressive Conservative caucus, who represent patients and workers and families in their own constituencies who want to know that their system is there for them when they need it.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to dwell a lot on this point except to say, as we debate how to make our universal system better, that we come at this with some pride. It was a Progressive Conservative Government in this province that introduced universal health care, that introduced these five important principles that are now enshrined in the Canada Health Act to make sure that Nova Scotians could all have access to our health care system.

The system is under stress today, Mr. Speaker. The system requires real change. The health care system, if it is going to be sustainable, has to be modernized to keep up with the times. It is no longer the 1960s; it is 2015. Those Nova Scotia families still want to know that system is there for them. They know that in law it is universally accessible but when the wait times go on and on, whether it's for important surgeries or to see a family doctor or to use your emergency room or to make sure there's long-term care for your aging parents, real questions about accessibility arise.

Mr. Speaker, the reason we are here today with this bill is because for us, as Progressive Conservatives, we agreed with the objectives originally set out - first in the election and then in the new days of this government - to find ways to save money on the administrative side, on the employer's side, on the health authority's side and make sure there were real savings that could be put into our front-line health care system. That we might have a few less vice-presidents but we might get more nurses in return. That we might have fewer accountants at head office, but we would have more family doctors in our rural areas. That the accounts payable department or the receivables department might have fewer needs, but the hours that our emergency rooms are open would be longer.

Let's not lose sight of those important objectives. All of this is meant to make sure we have a system that is lean and efficient, not as an end goal in itself but so that money can be put back in the front lines, so those great principles of the Canada Health Act that we all adore and cherish as Canadians are true here in the Province of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, the original bill that came before this House was Bill No. 1, as you will recall. It had two main components: one was to give effect to the consolidation of the employers, the district health authorities. Now we have our own vision over here on this side of how that would look that respected the differences between health care delivery in

the urban areas of our province compared to the rural areas. The government didn't see it that way; they wanted one employer, one health authority for the whole province.

Now Mr. Speaker, we were quite prepared to not engage in that argument because we shared the greater objectives of efficiency in administration. But the government didn't give us, or Nova Scotians more importantly, a chance to have their say because they lumped all their health, employee, labour relations provisions in that same bill and wanted it passed right away, facing a deadline much like today. That's why we argued that we should split the bill in two. That's why we brought procedural motions to this House to split the bill in two, so we could get on with the job of finding savings in administration and make sure that the labour provisions were fair to the workers, were fair to the taxpayers, were fair to patients and people who rely on the system and that they would actually result in something positive for our health care system.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I won't dwell on this. One can only imagine, if the government had done that and allowed for a proper examination of the course they were determined to go out on before that bill became law. But they didn't, and here we are today with a new bill.

Mr. Speaker, the point I want to make here on third reading is that six months have gone by and how much further ahead are we, really? Have any savings been found? No. Will some be found in the future in administration? I hope so.

The estimate by the Minister of Health and Wellness about how much may actually be saved goes down and down by the day. Will we get more resources into our hospitals and into front-line care where we can invest in nurses and doctors and other health care professionals and care? After all the six months of debate, not a word from the government on how that might happen.

Here we are on the eve of another government deadline, another dreamed-up government deadline, being asked to provide waiver to another bill because they couldn't figure out how to efficiently, and fairly to all, actually make positive change to our health care system. Now we're providing that consent, obviously, because we're on third reading today, but one has to ask how long Nova Scotians will have to put up with this haphazard, ill-thought-out chaotic approach to managing our health care system.

I was hoping in his remarks the Minister of Health and Wellness would tell us how the system will be better, how patients will get more care, how seniors will have a better long-term plan, how workers will be more fulfilled in their jobs or more supported by their government or have a greater ability to engage in their professional lives. None of that got answered in this debate, nor did it get answered or even raised by the government in the debate on the previous bill.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot that we agree on about what we want from our universal, publicly accessible, single-payer, portable health care system. There is a lot that we want to see by way of improvement to make all of those things true here in Nova Scotia, whether you live in Halifax or in Ecum Secum or in West Advocate or in North Sydney. There is a lot we could work on to make the system actually better but, quite frankly, we've lost all confidence in the ability of this government to actually make the improvement in our system. Although they are a majority government and this bill may pass today, they're already out assuring some people, depending on who's listening apparently, that nothing will really change. They're already telling people this won't change anything.

What happened to the great aim of making this better? What happened to the great goal of actually improving our system? What happened to the specific ideas about how we're going to get money out of administration and into front-line care? Why would we now, after six months of turmoil, turn to some Nova Scotians and say nothing is going to change, don't worry, and then turn to other Nova Scotians and try to pretend this was the plan all along? Mr. Speaker, they know better. Hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars could have been saved if the government had thought through what it was trying to accomplish before it asked this Legislature for its endorsement not once, but twice.

Wait-lists could have been dealt with, front-line workers could have been supported, surgeries could be going on, emergency rooms could be open more if our efforts were placed in that direction instead of what really turned out to be a sham process to pretend to be treating people fairly when, in fact, the government knew what it wanted all along.

I will give the Acting Leader of the NDP credit for pointing out the other day that it was the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that ultimately stopped this government in its tracks - and that is worth pausing to think about. A majority government can say what it likes, but it will be judged by its actions. The ultimate action it will be judged on is whether it actually focuses on the problems that Nova Scotians want it focused on, whether it keeps its promises, and whether it can actually make changes that make things better. None of that is answered today, just like it wasn't answered in the Fall.

We have a bill before us and I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I hope, somehow, some good for our health care system comes out of this, but I'll finish where I started. This Party has lost its confidence in the ability of that minister and that government to actually manage our health care system and make things better for Nova Scotians.

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

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to say a few words on Bill No. 69 from a perspective mainly as the Labour Critic, but a few other areas. One item in particular I want to speak on is this government's complete and utter lack of respect for Jim Dorsey. Jim Dorsey is a well-respected labour arbitrator and mediator across this

country, a former chair of the Canada Labour Relations Board, a man whom I had the privilege of appearing in front of a few times - but I won't share that story today.

But what I will say is that for some of the things that emanated from the government regarding Mr. Dorsey, you would think that he was solely appointed by the workers and not by this government - that the government had no say in who Mr. Dorsey was, and that it came as a complete shock that this learned man came up with the decision he did around the arbitration as it resulted from Bill No. 1 - as opposed to being somewhat humble or at least having the appearance of somewhat being fair, accepting the learned decision and saying we really didn't like this decision. But it was a sound and reasoned decision by a very intellectual human being who has the respect of everybody from Newfoundland and Labrador right to British Columbia.

No, this government couldn't rise to that occasion. Instead, they picked a fight with Mr. Dorsey. He was fired. Then they were going to change it by regulation; then they were going to change it by legislation. All the while, to the very end, grasping at the point and trying to ridicule this learned man.

Jim Dorsey is no stranger to the politics of Nova Scotia. Back in the early part of the 2000s, he chaired a review of the Workers' Compensation Board of this province. A very good document, a very wise document that still is out there, and I would ask if anybody has any issues and ideas on how to go about improving WCB, I would advise you to read Mr. Dorsey's report, as he was the chair. What we've seen, all the way through from Bill No. 1 to the redo here - what we see in Bill No. 69 - we've seen the Premier and the Health and Wellness Minister using it as a platform for taking shots at individuals throughout the process, whether they're leaders of a certain union that they don't really like or, again, Mr. Dorsey.

When Mr. Dorsey was asked to take on this very onerous job, he had a background in Saskatchewan and other western provinces where he had done something similar, but he certainly was not confronted with such an egregious piece of legislation, one that my Leader had rightfully put and said that we are here today because it won't pass the sniff test of the Charter. Everyone knew that. To the point though, the Premier and his minister would get up and say, no, it will, it will. But it took the foresight and the temerity of Mr. Dorsey when he gave his supplementary and slotted a group of workers that really put the government on its head and said, wow, what are we going to do now? We may not be all that friendly with this group of workers and we don't like the leadership of that group so maybe we have to do something.

That's when the more irrational statements started coming out, attacking Mr. Dorsey - the idea of how much he gets paid. The amount of money is significant but one has to ask the significance of that price when one is asked to do that type of report. I would say that it is within the average, at least, and I would say maybe even below the average.

To blame Mr. Dorsey for going outside of his bounds to find a reasonable settlement in this issue that would go about satisfying perceived challenges by the federal court, he was a very wise and learned person. But this government, led by the Premier and the Minister of Health and Wellness, would not acknowledge the rightness of Mr. Dorsey's decision but yet continued to - I would use the word "ridicule" - they ridiculed this learned man. I would ask on the floor today that the Premier in particular and the Minister of Health and Wellness finally do the right thing and apologize for things they said about Mr. Dorsey and the fact that - I hear a member across the way speaking and he certainly has the right to stand up. He can wave it off but if he doesn't want to, I understand, because he will not defend the rightness of a wrong position. (Interruptions) We now have some comments - Mr. Speaker, let me go on.

Let me talk about what has gone on since Bill No. 1. Have wait times for long-term care lessened? No, they've grown. Yet the minister likes to say he's keeping his eye on those things. All he has to do is look skyward because that's the way they're going. We heard earlier today that the Premier wanted to applaud himself that we are accepting 92 per cent of the graduates coming out with nursing degrees. The problem with that is there are more going out than coming in because of the actions of this government. That's the problem; that's the cat and mouse game here.

What do we have here when we have the soon-to-be demolished health care authorities, \$26 million to maybe \$30 million - who knows? - over budget and yet we've been told by the new head of the superboard that they're going to save \$5 million. That is still \$20-plus million to the bad side. Apparently that is all right with this government. I don't know where they're going to make that up.

Another issue that the minister brings up in his remarks - and he's right, but the full vision of it is not really fleshed out in his comments - the idea of multiple bargaining units are out there, which is true, but the majority of these bargaining units ended up signing agreements that could best be referred to as "me too" agreements. There was a multiplicity of them, but there was a little tweaking here and there when it came down.

Sure, there were 30 or 40 at some point, but there were some, what we would call "local issues" that would be negotiated. So those things - like this idea of throwing out all these collective agreements. The numbers may be accurate, but you have to delve down into it a little bit. It wasn't like you were doing one agreement and not doing another, finishing that and going on to another, going on to another. There were many tables going on at once, and they would break off - I would use the term "caucuses" - and then they would go back. At the end of the day you would go and you would bring your local grievances forward, and they would try to be hammered out at the table.

Mr. Speaker, by and large what Bill No. 69 is - and it's very much similar to what the working groups put forward to the minister last summer, who is on again/off again about supporting it - which, by the way, his Premier was always dead set against - there

will be no council of unions, there will be none of this. But it was the apparent intellect of Mr. Dorsey that finally took this Premier into the real world and said, no, this is how we have to do it.

Now, that's the reality here. What we've heard is all this talk about making the system better. Well, we had a choice about eight months ago to make the system better, and instead of passing a bill today, probably there would be collective agreements being signed today. This would be behind us. We would be going forward.

Instead, this government made such a boondoggle of this that we really don't know where we're going to be even in a year. There's nothing in here - when the minister says that there's no reason to have an agreement that has failed to be negotiated in a two-period time limit, I disagree with him. I would like to see the system like it would end, say, today, March 31st, and on April 1st there would be a new agreement. In a great world, that would be it, but it's not.

To have agreements go on for a long period of time is not unusual. This is not necessarily going to stop that. There's no panacea that says this is going to shorten up the period of collective bargaining.

There is going to be a learning curve during these sets of negotiations still about who falls where, and you are going to have to have people with divergent opinions coming from various other unions, and they are going to have different ways of getting there. That will take time.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, we are blessed in this province with very fine people in the mediation-conciliation department of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education. We're very fortunate to have them. They will help us through this, but they will also tell you that this will not be an easy task. It's the proverbial game of cards, and we've had a misplay. We have to take them all in and re-deal them all. This is going to be difficult.

If the Premier and the minister are trying to tell us today that tomorrow morning we're going to pull the blinds up, it's going to be April Fool's Day and everything is going to be okay, well, it's the biggest April Fool's joke ever perpetrated on anybody, because it's not.

We've got a long way to go, and for the Premier to stand in this House and say how much he wants to work with the workers in the health care system, I think more than a couple of statements in Question Period will take that. I mean, the idea of - some harsh things have been said, and yet it's reasonable people across the table who will do reasonable things. Let's hope they send reasonable people - both parties - that we get together here.

We've seen this bill, you know - we've seen a bill just on Friday which was a redo. We see this bill is a redo. We're waiting now for a redo on the Smoke-free Places Act. Is

that going to be the essence of this government - oops? Oops bills? They didn't know what they were doing.

One has to wonder after a while why we're here today, why we couldn't have done this when it was debated here last Fall. Split the bills, as a previous speaker said. One should have resided with the expertise over in the Department of Labour and Advanced Education. They could have helped ferry this through and we could've been on the way to having actual bargaining probably going on - well, I don't know if we'd have bargaining by now, but at least we would maybe have offers passed over to one another, getting ready to bargain. Instead, we're here the day before these new health authorities are to take effect and we're no further ahead - we're behind.

This is no great day for Nova Scotia when we have to do a redo of Bill No. 1 just to satisfy the perceived egos of some people across the way when it could have been done right the first time. I'm glad that one thing they did was agree to Jim Dorsey. This government should do what I suggested; they should write and apologize to that great Canadian. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to stand and speak a few moments to take what I've heard from my learned member to my left and from my Leader as well on some thoughts on this bill. It's sort of a mulligan kind of thing here. Those of you who do play a little bit of golf understand what this government is really trying to pull off here is the fact that they had a bad shot and they kind of missed the mark and are really just trying to kick it in the hole.

Quite honestly, that's what this bill is trying to do. It's trying to fix Bill No. 1 that was brought forward in the Fall. I don't know if everybody recalls the sitting of the House of Assembly last Fall. I do recall it being long. I do remember it being a little loud at times.

AN HON. MEMBER: Christmastime must have been close. There was bell ringing.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Yes, there was a lot of bell ringing, a lot of pot banging. As difficult as that time was, I think we as Opposition Parties were trying to find avenues in which to get the government to make some changes at that time. I know that the NDP had a number of changes proposed and I know we had a number of changes proposed, trying to split the bill, trying to hold up certain parts of it, knowing full well that were some tremendous challenges with Bill No. 1 as it goes forward - also knowing that there were a number of issues and ideals that were in that bill that we agreed with, and there were many of them that we disagreed with as well.

What Bill No. 1 ended up being is a seriously flawed bill, a seriously flawed bill when it came to the labour side. We've heard over and over again as the negotiations

started, or the conciliations and arbitrations, started to get going with Mr. Dorsey and to see that what the government tried to sell wasn't what was going to happen at all. I think Mr. Dorsey did prove himself to be a very tough individual, and one who was a little smarter, I think, than this government. Finally, the government did succumb to that criticism and made the changes that they needed to make.

The whole idea of bargaining or the councils of unions or bargaining associations - I think it was back in June or May of last year that these proposals were put before the minister, were put before the Premier. They were outright rejected because it wasn't apparently their idea and not what they wanted to do, so never mind this reasonable compromise. We're going to go forward with what we want - this is the government at the time.

I think it's unfair, I think it's unfortunate that we had to put health care workers and their unions through all this work, and patients in the end, of this uncertainty throughout this process of whether or not the nurse at this hospital or that hospital is going to take their retirement, whether this health care worker is going to be moving on because they don't like what is happening in the province. There has been a lot of uncertainties that have been happening in our health care system in the last number of months because of what has been happening with this bill and what they feel this government has been trying to do to them. It is a seriously flawed bill.

Now can I trust that Bill No. 69 is any better? You know, fool me once; you can't fool me twice. There are still some things in here that maybe are at question - is it better than what we had in Bill No. 1, but is it as good as it could be?

There's one of those things that I live by, or at least try to live by, trying to get everybody to agree and move on, try to get everybody along for the ride I guess when you're trying to organize your family to go on a trip or to do something for your community, you try to get everybody working in the same direction, you try to get everybody to do the right thing. I think that had government really reached out to health care workers they would have found that they do want change as well, that they do understand the need for change, for a whole bunch of reasons.

How is this government going to be able to go to them now and try to repair that bridge to get them to go in that direction? How are you going to be able to go to those health care workers, to those nurses, to those technicians, how are you going to be able to work with them to make our system better, because it takes all hands to make it better for patients.

I don't know how we're going to get there at this time. Maybe the minister can provide us with some of that information. This bill is not going to do that, and I think through the term of this government I don't think that's going to be able to be repaired.

The other thing I wanted to quickly talk about is a number of comments coming from the minister on the seamless transition between district health authorities. We know that our district health authorities have been trying their best, working within their budgets, to provide service to our regions, whether rightly or wrongly. Again, this is one of the parts that we kind of agree on, where there is a lot of administration we need to find a way to bring that down so we can take those dollars that we were spending on administration and get them to the front line so that patients are better served.

When I hear a minister or a Premier say this is a seamless transition and patients won't see a difference, why are we doing this? There's going to be no difference, we're not going to see a difference? We just went through all this for nothing? That's unfair, that's so far from what we needed.

All right, we're going to change a few business cards and hire a few different people - nothing is going to change? We have emergency rooms that are closed, we have emergency rooms that are in Code God knows what because they are so beyond Code Orange that they don't know what the heck they are doing. We have emergency rooms in North Sydney, emergency rooms in Shelburne that are closed most of the time, you figure they are going to be closed. We have wait-lists that are longer than they have ever been and we have a government that says no, nothing is going to change, when what I hoped they would have said is listen, this is our first step towards a better health care system, that we're going to be able to free up dollars over here and use them over here.

That's not what we're hearing. Nothing is going to change. What a big, colossal waste of time this might have turned out to be. (Interruption)

Taking no disruptions, okay, well maybe the minister can clarify on this one because I don't accept that we've done all this work, that the government has gone through all this pain, that unions have gone through all this pain and health care workers have gone through all this uncertainty for no change. If that's the case, we all should be ashamed of ourselves for going through all this work for nothing.

We are supposed to be here for our constituents; we are supposed to be here for patients. We need to make sure that the health care system is better for them. Only by working together, and that's working with all health care workers, all Parties in this House, can we make sure that happens. Can I trust this bill, this seriously flawed redo of Bill No. 1 that we see before us, Bill No. 69? I'm not too sure about that.

With those few words, I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to this bill.

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

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I hadn't intended to speak at third reading because I had an opportunity to speak at second reading but I have to say I was encouraged to get up and speak after listening to some of the comments from the members for Halifax Chebucto and Halifax Atlantic. The government members have their own members to thank for that bit of encouragement. I'm very pleased to speak for a moment and it may be more than a moment because I'm getting more encouragement from the member for Halifax Atlantic.

This bill here in its final stages is a bit of a pretense on the part of the government. Actually, it's more than a pretense. The minister and the Premier would have the public believe that this is what they wanted all along. That's their line, that's their spin; this is what we always intended. I was here. You were here. We were all here and we know with absolute certainty that this was never what the government intended. In fact, this piece of legislation in front of us today is what the health care unions proposed and which the Premier repeatedly rejected in this Chamber, outside this Chamber, and talked tough around and talked about how this proposal could never work, was completely untenable, was a ridiculous idea that no sensible, reasonable government would ever entertain.

I was here. I heard the Premier say these things. Those things are on the record, in the Hansard, and in the news publications of the day. Let's not kid ourselves. What we have here is a face-saving piece of legislation for a government that has no other choice but to bring this forward because the plan that they had was not supportable and would not be supportable if it had proceeded into court challenges, which were looking more and more likely beginning with April 1st, tomorrow, when certain decisions that were made by an independent, arm's-length, legally-constituted and appointed arbitration process where orders were filed in the courts of this province would come into effect.

This is a government that likes to talk about how they are not into picking winners and losers, but with Bill No. 1 they were very intent on picking winners and losers. They attempted to prescribe what health care workers would be represented by what health care unions without any attention to the wishes of those workers. Something that is a fundamental right in a democratic system that we, as people who are elected in that system based on those same principles, enjoy.

So let's be clear. This is a government prepared to bring in a piece of legislation that thought, because they had a majority, they did not have to follow the principles of our democracy. They came up against a process that they put in place themselves and an arbitrator who refused to be an usher, just escorting people to the sections in the room that the government thought they had prescribed for the various workers. Now we are here, having to fix that incorrect assumption on the part of the government - the Premier, the Minister of Health and Wellness, all of the members of the Executive Council, and all of the people in their caucus on their backbench who supported and voted for that fundamentally flawed piece of legislation.

As I said, this needs to be a lesson for everyone in this Chamber that no matter the majority that you think you have, no matter the power you think you have, our power is limited by the rule of law and the principles of law in the democracy that we live in. And thank heavens for that, because it means that a government so arrogant to believe that it is beyond the rule of law has some checks and balances in place to prohibit them using their majority to do whatever they please for the ends that they seek.

The final point I want to make about the pretense that's going on here, the whole pretense that this is what the government always wanted. It isn't what the government always wanted. What they had designed was quite different from what we're doing now. This, in fact, is the proposal from the health unions. It allows the health unions and the members of those unions to remain in the unions that they are with, which was the position of those unions all along. There's been a lot of damage done to the relationship of the government and the health care workers throughout this system as a result of the heavy-handed approach, and an awful lot of work will need to be done to repair that relationship. I'm not sure if that relationship will ever be repaired with this particular government.

The other thing that troubles me when I listen to the Minister of Health and Wellness, and indeed to the Premier, is the pretense that now that we're fixing the mess we made with Bill No. 69, everything is going to be hunky-dory from here on out. We're going to have a better health care system; all of the problems, we're going to be able to deal with. Well, Mr. Speaker, hold on to your seat, because the problems haven't ended with Bill No. 69's passing. The problems are just beginning, because this Premier and this government have sold the public a bill of goods about the impact of an amalgamated system. We've just seen the Province of Alberta, that went down this road seven or eight years ago, go back to a more regional approach because this process we're embarking on here has failed in that province.

Now this government, which demonstrated how little they know about labour relations in the health care field, in the face of what's happening in Alberta, say we know better. We're going to continue down this path because we're better. We know more. We're better at doing this, and we're not going to make any of those mistakes.

The mistakes made in Alberta weren't personal mistakes. It wasn't because they had bad managers. There's a fundamental problem when you set up one entity that's located in a central location and makes decisions for all those outlying communities across our province, that don't take into account local conditions and local realities.

This isn't a new problem. There's a whole sociology of the building of big bureaucracies and centralization and what those structural tendencies and features are, and the loss of local autonomy and local decision-making. I know with absolute certainty, as I stand here in my place, that we will see an erosion of health care services in many parts of the province as this government continues down this path.

Hold on to your seat, Mr. Speaker, because what you and the rest of us have been through in the last six months is only the beginning. This isn't the end with Bill No. 69. This is the beginning of an extraordinarily disruptive process that will see the public eventually coming to understand the impact of having a Premier and a health minister who don't really understand health care, who don't really understand the implications of what they are doing, just like they did not understand or they refused to see what it was they were doing with Bill No. 1.

I know I will have many opportunities to stand in my place over the coming years that are left in this government's mandate to address these issues, and there will be many of them. We haven't seen one penny of savings from this process to be redirected into the health care system - not one penny. We will be looking for that because that's the commitment and the promise this minister and this government made.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks. I will relinquish my time to any of my other colleagues who might feel that they want to say a few words. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, on an introduction. I would draw the attention of the members to the east gallery where Michelle LeBlanc has been seated all afternoon listening intently to the debate of the House. Michelle is a downtown Amherst businessperson. She owns the McCully Market which is a wonderful shop that sells antiques and other collectibles in downtown Amherst. She's also a tireless volunteer who volunteers with respect to the downtown business community in Amherst and the festivals and events. Michelle's the head of the Blueberry Harvest Festival committee and I would ask we bring to her today the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

The honourable Minister of Health.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the members for their input today regarding Bill No.69. A little note of clarification for the member for Argyle-Barrington because sometimes when we put forth a short sound bite - when April 1st comes, no, patients won't see the change in their appointments, their surgeries, all of those areas that Nova Scotians interact with on a day-to-day basis.

What I can assure the member opposite is that Bill No. 1, the new Health Authorities Act, the creation of the one provincial health authority and the IWK, the vision for modernizing health care in our province is a sound one. It's a sound one because we've learned some lessons, whether it be other provinces but more importantly it was the leadership of people like Pat Lee, Carmelle d'Entremont and numerous work teams that took over a year to put together what is a unique structure in Canada.

We did not put a template a year and a half ago on the new health system. Rather we let many Nova Scotians - in fact, hundreds of people who work in the health care system and those who have to respond to Nova Scotians each and every day - we allowed them to put a construct in place. Even before we get started, it's interesting the number of jurisdictions that are taking a look at the model we have put in place.

As we get underway we will start to see some of the roll-out and the changes that will be required and that Nova Scotians, over a period of time, will see the benefits of the direction that we are going. The one thing we all know for sure is that we can't continue to throw millions and millions of dollars more at the health care system and expect better outcomes. We know that. Over the past 15 years the average increase in the health care budget annually has been 9.2 per cent. We know that's unsustainable.

We have the largest number of doctors per capita and yet we don't have the best outcomes for Nova Scotians. We know that we have to modernize. We need e-health solutions, we need innovation; we need many different ways of doing things in our province. I'm very pleased to help the member for Argyle-Barrington make that little bit of a distinction and I think one of the things the leadership team will be doing is embracing all Nova Scotians in the path forward.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I close debate on Bill No. 69.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 69.

There has been a call for a recorded vote. We will ring the bells for a brief period of time, until all of the Whips are satisfied.

[4:00 p.m.]

[The Division bells were rung.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Are the Whips satisfied?

We'll now proceed with the recorded vote on Bill No. 69. I'd like to remind all members to please remain absolutely silent until the vote is complete. The Clerks will now conduct the vote.

[The Clerk calls the roll.]

[4:14 p.m.]

YEAS

Mr. Colwell
Mr. Churchill
Ms. Bernard
Ms. Regan
Mr. Samson
Mr. McNeil
Ms. Whalen
Mr. Glavine
Ms. Casey
Mr. MacLellan
Ms. Diab
Mr. Furey
Mr. Hines
Mr. Stroink
Ms. Arab
Mr. Delorey
Mr. Kousoulis
Mr. Ince
Mr. Farrell
Mr. Gordon Wilson
Mr. Rankin
Ms. Miller
Mr. Maguire
Ms. Eyking
Ms. Lohnes-Croft
Ms. Treen
Mr. Gough
Mr. Jessome
Mr. Irving
Mr. Corbett
Ms. MacDonald
Mr. David Wilson
Mr. Gosse
Ms. Zann
Ms. Peterson-Rafuse
Mr. Belliveau

NAYS

Mr. MacMaster
Mr. Dunn
Mr. Baillie
Mr. d'Entremont
Mr. Orrell
Ms. MacFarlane
Mr. Houston
Mr. Harrison
Mr. Lohr

THE CLERK: For, 36. Against, 9.

MR. SPEAKER: 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: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. Tomorrow being Opposition Day, we will sit from the hour of 1:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m., and I would ask the House Leader for the New Democratic Party to give us the business for tomorrow.

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

HON. FRANK CORBETT: I enjoy giving the member the business, Mr. Speaker. After Question Period, it will be Bill No. 70, the HPV Vaccine Act, and Bill No. 74, which was introduced today - the Protection of Patient Safety Act.

With that, I ask that the House do now rise to meet from the hours of 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House do now rise until tomorrow 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 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

[The House rose at 4:18 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1192**

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Alan Joseph Clarke has retired from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans; and

Whereas Alan Joseph Clarke served with the Conservation and Protection Branch for more than 35 years; and

Whereas he has served as well for 23 years as D.F.O. Area Chief of Enforcement;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alan Clarke on his retirement and thank him for his many years of service to the fishing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1193

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Doug and Elaine Thistle of Yarmouth have donated \$205,000 to the Yarmouth Hospital Foundation; and

Whereas the Thistles operated an automobile business in Yarmouth until their retirement two years ago; and

Whereas the donation is in honour of Elaine Thistle's parents, Walton and Josina Warner of Yarmouth, who died in a car accident in 1970;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Doug and Elaine Thistle on their selfless act and wish them the very best during their years of retirement.

RESOLUTION NO. 1194

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Jean François Grenier and Rob Mercier moved their business, Mouse Voyages Travel, from Quebec to Yarmouth in 2009; and

Whereas their business has now grown to a team of eight; and

Whereas Mouse Voyages Travel has recently been appointed as an Authorized Disney Vacation Planner;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Messrs. Grenier and Mercier on their initiative and wish them further success with their business venture.

RESOLUTION NO. 1195

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Milton Bourque has been named the 2014 Yarmouth County Official of the Year; and

Whereas Milton Bourque has refereed karate competitions Nova Scotia and elsewhere in Canada; and

Whereas his Yarmouth Karate Challenge was for the first time broadcast to a worldwide audience;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Milton Bourque on being chosen Yarmouth County Official of the Year for 2014 and wish him continued success as he referees karate tournaments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1196

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas the Scotiabank Peewee A Mariners won the gold medal at the KFC hockey tournament in Truro; and

Whereas the team was undefeated in all four of its tournament games; and

Whereas they were playing against teams from Truro, Sackville and Dartmouth;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Peewee A Mariners on their tournament victory and wish them well during the rest of their season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1197

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas the Yarmouth Skating Club comprised 12 award-winning members; and

Whereas those 12 members are Chantal Surette, Kylie Landry, Shayleigh Doucet, MacKenzie Cook, Allison Theriault, Esther Banjo, Hannah Babin-Stienne, Bailey Pitman, Ece Elusoy, Hillary Stone, Emily Cunningham, and Micayla Gear; and

Whereas their coaches were Megan Long, Katie Thurber, Heidi Sparkes, and Ann Young;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Yarmouth Skating Club and their coaches on their medal-winning season and wish them continued success.

RESOLUTION NO. 1198

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Nathan Bourque placed second in the 100-metre hurdles at the NSSAF Provincials; and

Whereas Nathan Bourque was a member of the winning intermediate boys team at the Nova Scotia Provincials;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Nathan Bourque on his athletic achievements and wish him every future success.

RESOLUTION NO. 1199

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School student Katie Lewis is a peer ambassador with the Nova Scotia International Student Program; and

Whereas Katie has been working with students from abroad, helping them to adjust to life in Canada; and

Whereas Katie has been awarded a \$2,500 scholarship to participate in a leadership program in Campeche, Mexico;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly thank Katie Lewis for being an ambassador for Canada and wish her well in all her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1200

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Katie Sollows of Yarmouth volunteered to participate in an Ebola vaccine trial; and

Whereas Katie Sollows is a journalism student at University of King's College; and

Whereas this volunteerism is a very selfless humanitarian act;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Katie Sollows for volunteering in this very important trial and wish her continuing success in her journalism studies.

RESOLUTION NO. 1201

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas 15-year-old Jenna Bishara of Yarmouth has been chosen for the junior star program at the World Men's Curling Championships in Halifax; and

Whereas Jenna has been curling for six years at the Yarmouth Curling Club; and

Whereas Jenna is devoted to curling and participates in it at least five times per week;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jenna Bishara on her selection to the junior star program and wish her well in all her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1202

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Hudson Grimshaw-Surette placed first in the 600m and 1,000m events at the Athletics Nova Scotia competitions; and

Whereas Hudson Grimshaw-Surette set new provincial records in both events; and

Whereas he won awards in numerous other track and field competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Hudson Grimshaw-Surette on his many accomplishments and wish him continued success in his chosen sport.

RESOLUTION NO. 1203

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas entries from the Yarmouth area won three of the seven Mobius Awards of Environmental Excellence for 2014; and

Whereas the Meadows Home for special Care and Beacon United Church were award-winning institutions; and

Whereas artist Holly Morton received the award for Individual Excellence in Waste Reduction;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate The Meadows Home for special Care, Beacon United Church and Holly Morton on achieving this recognition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1204

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Bruce Robbins has retired as dispatcher for the Yarmouth Fire Department; and

Whereas Bruce Robbins worked at the stressful job of dispatcher for 20 years; and

Whereas his early years as dispatcher predicated the convenience of the 911 service;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly thanks Bruce Robbins for his years of service and congratulates him on a well-earned retirement.

RESOLUTION NO. 1205

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Cecil Roy of Yarmouth has raised \$1,800 for the Christmas Daddies charity; and

Whereas Cecil Roy has raised about \$19,000 for this charity over a period of 17 years; and

Whereas he is still helping the Christmas Daddies program at the age of 83;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly thank Cecil Roy for his years of fundraising for this most important cause and congratulate him on his continuing success as a fundraiser.

RESOLUTION NO. 1206

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Chris Gray of Yarmouth placed second in the senior boys triple jump at the NSSAF Provincials; and

Whereas Chris Gray has been a competitor in Track and Field throughout his years in public school;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chris Gray on his fine showing at the NSSAF Provincials.

RESOLUTION NO. 1207

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Marco Albright has been named Male Athlete of the Year for Yarmouth County; and

Whereas Marco Albright participated in the 2014 Boston Marathon; and

Whereas he has been a competitive athlete since his high school years;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Marco Albright on his selection as Yarmouth County's Male Athlete of the Year.

RESOLUTION NO. 1208

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Torey Grimshaw has been named the 2014 Yarmouth County Female Sport Volunteer of the Year; and

Whereas Torey Grimshaw has been involved with many events and organizations, including 16 years as coach of the Yarmouth Clippers Soccer team; and

Whereas she is now involved in development of an athletics club for the south western Nova Scotia area;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Torey Grimshaw on her selection as 2014 Yarmouth County Female Sport Volunteer of the Year, and wish her well in her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1209

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Paul Legere has been named the 2014 Yarmouth County Male Coach of the Year; and

Whereas Paul Legere has been a coach of minor hockey for more than a decade; and

Whereas his team, the Yarmouth Female Bantam A Mariners, won the Provincial Bantam A Championship in 2014;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Paul Legere on his award, and wish him continued success in his coaching volunteerism.

RESOLUTION NO. 1210

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Treena Landry has earned the 2014 Yarmouth County Female Fair Play Award; and

Whereas Treena Landry has been involved with the Yarmouth Figure Skating Club since 1975; and

Whereas she has been volunteering as a program assistant with the CanSkate program since 1982;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Treena Landry on her receipt of the 2014 Yarmouth County Female Fair Play Award, and wish her continued success as she promotes figure skating in Yarmouth.

RESOLUTION NO. 1211

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Bobby Lou Reardon has been named the Yarmouth County Female Athlete of the Year; and

Whereas Bobby Lou Reardon has had a long and varied athletic career as swimmer, runner, and triathlete; and

Whereas she participated in the 2014 Boston Marathon;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bobby Lou Reardon on her many continuing athletic successes, and wish her a continuation of her winning ways.

RESOLUTION NO. 1212

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Brad Jones has been named the 2014 Yarmouth County Male Youth Athlete of the Year; and

Whereas Brad Jones has played on three consecutive baseball Atlantic championship teams; and

Whereas he also excels at hockey, basketball, and volleyball;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brad Jones on his selection as Youth Male Athlete of the Year and wish him continued success.

RESOLUTION NO. 1213

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Mr. Don MacLean has served the Province of Nova Scotia for 33 years as a hatchery technician, hatchery manager, assistant director, and most recently as director with the Inland Fisheries Division of the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture; and

Whereas Mr. MacLean is also an accomplished writer about all things related to sports fishing, with two books and numerous magazine and newspaper articles; and

Whereas Mr. MacLean's mediation expertise, guided by his passion for sports fishing in Nova Scotia, benefited the many regional, provincial, and national committees on which he participated;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. MacLean on his retirement and thank him for his strong sense of stewardship and immense contribution to the Nova Scotia Public Service.

RESOLUTION NO. 1214

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on February 21, 2015, at their annual general meeting in Truro, the Nova Scotia Cattle Producers awarded the first-ever Kings Mutual Cattle Producer of the Year Award; and

Whereas this award recognizes a Nova Scotia beef producer or dealer for outstanding contributions made to the provincial cattle industry; and

Whereas BML Meats was named the winner of this prestigious award for providing antibiotic-free beef products raised by local beef farmers in a fashion that is both environmentally friendly and sustainable;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate David Lavers, Blair Battist, and Danny MacDonald of BML Meats for winning this year's award and thank the Nova Scotia Cattle Producers for recognizing an exemplary meat producer in Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 1215

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on January 31, 2015, at their annual general meeting in Lower Onslow, the Sheep Producers Association of Nova Scotia named the recipient of the Producer of the Year Award; and

Whereas this award is given annually to a Nova Scotia sheep producer for their outstanding contributions to the industry; and

Whereas Breckrow Farm, a 7th-generation dairy and sheep farm in Goshen, was named the winner of this prestigious award for being instrumental in improving the Suffolk and North Country breeds in Atlantic Canada by participating in a number of genetic improvement practices;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bruce and Diane of Breckrow Farm for winning this year's award and thank the Sheep

Producers of Nova Scotia for recognizing an exemplary promoter of the sheep industry in Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 1216

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas in January 2015 the Nova Scotia Horticulture Congress named the recipient of the 2015 RBC Innovator of the Year Award in Wolfville; and

Whereas this award recognizes farmers in Nova Scotia who are committed to developing and introducing new practices to the agriculture sector; and

Whereas Andy Vermeulen, one of the biggest lettuce farmers in our province, was unanimously selected by his peers to be this year's RBC Innovator Award recipient for constantly looking for new methods and new opportunities to grow warm-weather crops in our colder climate;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Andy Vermeulen for winning this year's RBC Innovator of the Year Award and thank RBC for continuing to support and encourage innovation that strengthens the agriculture industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1217

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas in Wolfville on March 4, 2015, the Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia celebrated staff milestones; and

Whereas these awards recognize staff whose dedication and talents have exhibited a solid commitment to the farmer-run non-profit organization; and

Whereas Nancy Crouse received a 20-year milestone award, which celebrated her methodical, thorough work ethic and her success developing strong ties with producers, farmers, and their families;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Nancy Crouse for reaching this milestone with the Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia and acknowledge her commitment to support our agriculture industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1218

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas in Wolfville on March 4, 2015, the Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia celebrated staff milestones; and

Whereas these awards recognize staff whose dedication and talents have exhibited a solid commitment to the farmer-run non-profit organization; and

Whereas Melissa Taylor received a 10-year milestone award for her recordkeeping skills and attention to detail, which have enabled the farm food safety program to be in place in Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Melissa Taylor for reaching this milestone with the Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia and acknowledge her commitment to support our agriculture industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1219

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on February 19, 2015, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce held their annual Valley's Best Award ceremony to recognize outstanding valley businesses; and

Whereas 25 businesses were awarded with the prestigious title, as determined by local residents who vote for their favourite businesses; and

Whereas Luckett Vineyards won this year's Best Winery category for their picturesque vineyard overlooking the Minas Basin;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Luckett Vineyards for winning this year's Best Winery award from the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce and wish them continued success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1220

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on February 19, 2015, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce held their annual Valley's Best Award ceremony to recognize outstanding valley businesses; and

Whereas 25 businesses were awarded with the prestigious title, as determined by local residents who vote for their favourite businesses; and

Whereas Scotian Gold Country Store, a grower-owned tree fruit co-operative in the beautiful Annapolis Valley, won this year's Best Farm/Agriculture Business category for being the Valley's best farm store;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Scotian Gold Country Store for winning this year's Best Farm/Agriculture Business award and wish them continued success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1221

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on February 19, 2015, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce held their annual Valley's Best Award ceremony to recognize outstanding valley businesses; and

Whereas 25 businesses were awarded with the prestigious title, as determined by local residents who vote for their favourite businesses; and

Whereas Scotian Gold Garden Centre, which displays a sea of colours from an assortment of annuals and perennials, won this year's Best Garden Centre category;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Scotian Gold Garden Centre for winning this year's Best Garden Centre award and wish them continued success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1222

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on February 19, 2015, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce held their annual Valley's Best Award ceremony to recognize outstanding valley businesses; and

Whereas 25 businesses were awarded with the prestigious title, as determined by local residents who vote for their favourite businesses; and

Whereas Stirling's Farm Market, which grows and sells their own peaches, apples, plums, and cherries and an assortment of vegetables and flowers, won this year's Best Farm Market category;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Stirling's Farm Market for winning this year's Best Farm Market award and wish them continued success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1223

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their Annual General Meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean Layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety Program; and

Whereas BW Poultry Farm Ltd. was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate BW Poultry Farm Ltd. for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1224

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their Annual General Meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean Layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety Program; and

Whereas Biggs Farm Ltd. was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Biggs Farm Ltd. for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1225

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their Annual General Meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean Layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety Program; and

Whereas Bayview Poultry Farm Ltd. was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bayview Poultry Farm Ltd. for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1226

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their Annual General Meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean Layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety Program; and

Whereas APA Holdings Ltd. was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate APA Holdings Ltd. for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1227

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their Annual General Meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean Layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety Program; and

Whereas Ross Cox Poultry Inc. was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ross Cox Poultry Inc. for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1228

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their Annual General Meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean Layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety Program; and

Whereas Michael Porter was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Michael Porter for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1229

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their annual general meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety program; and

Whereas Maritime Pride Poultry was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Maritime Pride Poultry for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1230

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their annual general meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety program; and

Whereas Cornwallis Farms Ltd. was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Cornwallis Farms Ltd. for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1231

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their annual general meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety program; and

Whereas Christopher Eyking of Eyking Farms in Cape Breton was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Christopher Eyking for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1232

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their annual general meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety program; and

Whereas Scotia Poultry Farm Ltd. was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Scotia Poultry Farm Ltd. for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1233

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their annual general meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety program; and

Whereas Seaview Poultry Ltd. was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Seaview Poultry Ltd. for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1234

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their annual general meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety program; and

Whereas Southview Farms Ltd. was recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Southview Farms Ltd. for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1235

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their annual general meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipients of the Start Clean and Stay Clean Awards; and

Whereas this award is presented to those producers who achieve 100 per cent on the Start Clean Stay Clean layer program, which is the industry's On Farm Food Safety program; and

Whereas Theodore and John Eyking Sr. of Eyking Farms in Cape Breton were recognized for achieving a perfect score in the On Farm Food Safety program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Theodore and John Eyking Sr. for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's egg producing industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1236

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on March 3, 2015, at their annual general meeting, the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia named the recipient of the 2015 Farm of the Year Award; and

Whereas this award recognizes exemplary farmers in Nova Scotia who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in industry programs such as On Farm Food Safety and animal care; and

Whereas Scotia Poultry Farm Ltd. of Cole Harbour was selected to be this year's 2015 Farm of the Year for their achievements and involvement in industry and outreach activities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Scotia Poultry Farm for winning this year's Farm of the Year Award and thank the Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia for recognizing an exemplary egg producer in Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 1237

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Owen L. Blois is a dairy producer in picturesque Hants County; and

Whereas on January 7, 2015, Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia held its 14th Annual Banquet and Awards Night in Truro and presented Excellence Awards to Milestone Winners for achieving and maintaining high standards in dairy production; and

Whereas Owen L. Blois was honoured as a 25-year recipient of the Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia Excellence Award for adhering to a specific set of criteria in dairy production;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Blois for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's dairy industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1238

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on January 7, 2015, Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia held its 14th Annual Banquet and Awards Night in Truro and presented Excellence Awards to Milestone Winners for achieving and maintaining high standards in dairy production; and

Whereas farmer from 10 counties across the province received special recognition for ensuring bacterial counts are low, inspection scores are 94 or higher, appearance scores on farm inspection reports are five or higher and there are no freezing or antibiotic infractions during the dairy year; and

Whereas Mr. Lloyd Blois of Hants County received a standing ovation when he accepted a 25-Year Excellence Award from the Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Blois for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's dairy industry and thank him for his valuable contribution to the agriculture industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1239

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas on January 7, 2015, Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia held its 14th Annual Banquet and Awards Night in Truro and presented Excellence Awards to Milestone Winners for achieving and maintaining high standards in dairy production; and

Whereas farmer from 10 counties across the province received special recognition for ensuring bacterial counts are low, inspection scores are 94 or higher, appearance scores on farm inspection reports are five or higher and there are no freezing or antibiotic infractions during the dairy year; and

Whereas Donald and Karen MacDonald of Antigonish accepted a 10-Year Excellence Award from the Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Donald and Karen MacDonald for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's dairy industry and thank them for their valuable contribution to the agriculture industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1240

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Bonderosa Farms is a dairy producer in picturesque Hants County; and

Whereas on January 7, 2015, Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia held its 14th Annual Banquet and Awards Night in Truro and presented Excellence Awards to Milestone Winners for achieving and maintaining high standards in dairy production; and

Whereas Bonderosa Farms was honoured as a 10-year recipient of the Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia Excellence Award for adhering to a specific set of criteria in dairy production;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bonderosa Farms limited for demonstrating excellence within Nova Scotia's dairy industry.

RESOLUTION NO. 1241

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Kira Keddy is from Lantz and is a student at Maritime Varsity Academy; and

Whereas while playing as a forward with the Cole Harbour Peewee A Red Wings, Kira caught the attention of the head coach of the Atlantic Female Training Institute; and

Whereas in June 2015 at the Reebok Cup tournament in New Hampshire, Kira will be competing with her new team and hopes to catch the eyes of the scout from prep school Shattuck St. Mary's in Minnesota;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Kira Keddy on making the Atlantic Female Training Institute Atoms team and wish her well in her future hockey endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1242

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dave Totten of Hants East had coached boys hockey for over 25 years; and

Whereas over three years ago, when his daughter was interested in playing hockey, he started the non-profit Girls Rule Hockey School that had an enrollment of 103 girls this year; and

Whereas Dave received multiple nominations for the Canada's Top 100 Unsung Hockey Heroes contest sponsored by Draft and TSN;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Dave on winning \$2000 for female hockey with the East Hants Minor Hockey Association and thank him for his years of dedication to the young hockey players of Hants East.

RESOLUTION NO. 1243

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the hit teen drama television show *The Next Step* performed at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium on February 8, 2015; and

Whereas the choreographer for *The Next Step* had seen some of the dancers from Dance Zone Performing Arts Centre in Elmsdale perform at competitions; and

Whereas the Dance Zone was asked to have a group of four dancers perform in *The Next Step*'s show at the Rebecca Cohn;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Madi Hopewell on having the amazing opportunity to perform in a jazz routine on *The Next Step*.

RESOLUTION NO. 1244

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the hit teen drama television show *The Next Step* performed at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium on February 8, 2015; and

Whereas the choreographer for *The Next Step* had seen some of the dancers from Dance Zone Performing Arts Centre in Elmsdale perform at competitions; and

Whereas the Dance Zone was asked to have a group of four dancers perform in *The Next Step*'s show at the Rebecca Cohn;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Keni Hopewell on having the amazing opportunity to perform in a jazz routine on *The Next Step*.

RESOLUTION NO. 1245

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the hit teen drama television show *The Next Step* performed at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium on February 8, 2015; and

Whereas the choreographer for *The Next Step* had seen some of the dancers from Dance Zone Performing Arts Centre in Elmsdale perform at competitions; and

Whereas the Dance Zone was asked to have a group of four dancers perform in *The Next Step*'s show at the Rebecca Cohn;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Jessica Pertus on having the amazing opportunity to perform in a jazz routine on *The Next Step*.

RESOLUTION NO. 1246

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the hit teen drama television show *The Next Step* performed at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium on February 8, 2015; and

Whereas the choreographer for *The Next Step* had seen some of the dancers from Dance Zone Performing Arts Centre in Elmsdale perform at competitions; and

Whereas the Dance Zone was asked to have a group of four dancers perform in *The Next Step*'s show at the Rebecca Cohn;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Sydney MacNeil on having the amazing opportunity to perform in a jazz routine on *The Next Step*.

RESOLUTION NO. 1247

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Canada Winter Games were held in Prince George, British Columbia, from February 13 to March 1, 2015; and

Whereas since 1967 target shooting has been a part of the Canada Games; and

Whereas 16-year-old MacGillivray Smith of Enfield has been shooting the air rifle for three years and in October 2014 qualified for the 2015 Canada Games;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate MacGillivray Smith on having the skills and the amazing opportunity to represent Nova Scotia in the 2015 Canada Games, where she placed 10th individually with a score of 390.6 and 6th with the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1248

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Canada Winter Games were held in Prince George, British Columbia, from February 13 to March 1, 2015; and

Whereas since 1967 target shooting has been a part of the Canada Games; and

Whereas 18-year-old Teresa MacDonald of Lantz has been shooting the air pistol for three years and in 2014 qualified for the 2015 Canada Games;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Teresa MacDonald on having the skills and the amazing opportunity to represent Nova Scotia in the 2015 Canada Games, where she placed 18th individually with a score of 323 and 9th with the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1249

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Canada Winter Games were held in Prince George, British Columbia, from February 13 to March 1, 2015; and

Whereas Shaun Miller of Enfield plays right wing for the Cole Harbour Major Midget hockey team; and

Whereas Shaun has been playing hockey for 12 of his 15 years, and in 2014 qualified for the 2015 Canada Games;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Shaun Miller on having the skills and the amazing opportunity to represent Nova Scotia at the 2015 Canada Games, where his team placed 5th.

RESOLUTION NO. 1250

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Canada Winter Games were held in Prince George, British Columbia, from February 13 to March 1, 2015; and

Whereas Drew Hubley, a 19-year-old Dalhousie University engineering student from Elmsdale, N.S., started playing badminton in Grade 6 at Riverside Education Centre in Milford; and

Whereas Drew trained approximately 12 hours a week to qualify for Nova Scotia's 2015 Canada Games team;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Drew Hubley on having the skills and the amazing opportunity to represent Nova Scotia in the 2015 Canada Games.

RESOLUTION NO. 1251

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Environment)

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

Whereas *The Casket* won the Best Overall Newspaper Award in its circulation category at the Canadian Community Newspaper Awards; and

Whereas the paper was also recognized for Best Spot News Photo, Best Front Page, Best Editorial Page, and Best Website Design; and

Whereas these national awards celebrate the very best in community publishing, with newspapers competing against one another in similar circulation classes, and the entries are judged by a panel of industry experts;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate *The Casket* for its achievements and recognition at the 2015 Canadian Community Newspaper Awards.

RESOLUTION NO. 1252

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Environment)

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

Whereas the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education partners with 3M Canada to recognize exceptional contributions to teaching and learning at Canadian universities; and

Whereas Ann Bigelow, a psychology professor at St. FX, was one of 10 fellows named a 3M National Teaching Fellow for 2015; and

Whereas Ann was recognized specifically for founding the service learning program at St. FX which sparked a movement and resulted in service learning being offered in every province;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ann Bigelow for being recognized for her extraordinary contribution to the education of students across this country and transforming them into engaged citizens.

RESOLUTION NO. 1253

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Environment)

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

Whereas Theatre Antigonish wrapped up their 40th season this year with an awards ceremony; and

Whereas Briana Lynch was presented with the Alcorn Award by the board of directors for Theatre Antigonish; and

Whereas the award goes 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 a generous spirit of support and co-operation”;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Briana on receiving the Alcorn Award, and thank her for being an integral member of Theatre Antigonish.

RESOLUTION NO. 1254

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Environment)

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

Whereas Theatre Antigonish wrapped up their 40th season this year with an awards ceremony; and

Whereas Julianna Khoury received the Eleanor Mutimer Award; and

Whereas the award was created to “commemorate the tremendous contributions made by Mrs. Mutimer to theatre in the community during her tenure as a teacher at Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School”;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Julianna on receiving the Eleanor Mutimer Award, and thank her for being an integral member of Theatre Antigonish.

RESOLUTION NO. 1255

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Environment)

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

Whereas Theatre Antigonish wrapped up their 40th season this year with an awards ceremony; and

Whereas Lauren Nevin received the Dr. Hubert J. Spekkens Award; and

Whereas the award is given to a volunteer “demonstrating dedication to the excellence of the craft or technical theatre”;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Lauren on receiving the Dr. Hubert J. Spekkens Award, and thank her for being an integral member of Theatre Antigonish.

RESOLUTION NO. 1256

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Environment)

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

Whereas every year Special Olympics Nova Scotia recognizes and celebrates their athletes, coaches and volunteers with awards that are handed out at the Special Olympics Festival; and

Whereas Theresa Borden was one of those individuals winning the Dr. Frank Hayden Award; and

Whereas Theresa became an active participant with Special Olympics when it started in Antigonish in 1979 as a track and field athlete and has now competed in bowling, floor hockey, soccer, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and golf;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Theresa on winning the Dr. Frank Hayden Award and for being an exceptional ambassador for Special Olympics.

RESOLUTION NO. 1257

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Environment)

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

Whereas every year, Special Olympics Nova Scotia recognizes and celebrates their athletes, coaches, and volunteers with awards that are handed out at the Special Olympics Festival; and

Whereas the Female Coach of the Year Award went to Paula Kearney, who has been the head coach of the Eastern Highlands Celtics since 2008 and was the team's assistant coach for the eight years prior to that; and

Whereas Paula is described as being compassionate, dedicated, enthusiastic, and someone who sees the positive in every situation;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Paula winning the Female Coach of the Year Award and for being a role model worth imitating.

RESOLUTION NO. 1258

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Environment)

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

Whereas every year Special Olympics Nova Scotia recognizes and celebrates their athletes, coaches, and volunteers with awards that are handed out at the Special Olympics Festival; and

Whereas RJ Pitts was one of those individuals, winning Male Athlete of the Year; and

Whereas RJ is considered one of the best up-and-coming track stars in the province and has been involved with Special Olympics for over 15 years, participating in many events including track and field, bowling, floor hockey, swimming, and curling;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate RJ on being named Male Athlete of the Year.

RESOLUTION NO. 1259

By: Hon. Maureen MacDonald (Acting Leader of the NDP)

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

Whereas junior high school students from across the province compete in the annual African Heritage Month Youth Quiz for Junior High; and

Whereas Highland Park Junior High School students Lyndell Hibbert, Azisa Mantley, Tiona Emmerson, and Hana Salih Makawi worked hard to prepare for this quiz with the help of their principal and coach, Lisa Daniel; and

Whereas the Highland Park Trivia Team won the 2015 African Heritage Month Youth Quiz for Junior High;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate the Highland Park Trivia Team on winning the 2015 African Heritage Month Youth Quiz for Junior High and recognize their hard work and dedication to learning.

RESOLUTION NO. 1260

By: Hon. Maureen MacDonald (Acting Leader of the NDP)

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

Whereas Scott Macmillan is an extremely talented composer, conductor, and musician from the North End of Halifax; and

Whereas Scott Macmillan has been actively involved in the production and promotion of Atlantic Canadian music for many years; and

Whereas at the 2014 Creative Nova Scotia Awards, Scott Macmillan was awarded the Portia White Prize for cultural and artistic excellence;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate Scott Macmillan on receiving the 2014 Portia White Prize and thank him for his commitment to music in Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 1261

By: Hon. Maureen MacDonald (Acting Leader of the NDP)

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

Whereas Chris Cowper-Smith is both the CEO of Spring Loaded Technology, which makes bionic knee braces for active adults, and a Ph.D. candidate in neuroscience at Dalhousie University; and

Whereas Chris Cowper-Smith has been an avid Ultimate Frisbee player for 20 years and works to promote it and other sports; and

Whereas Chris Cowper-Smith travelled to Dubai to represent Canada in the 2015 World Championships of Beach Ultimate, where Canada won four silver medals;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly thank Chris Cowper-Smith and his teammates for representing Canada and Nova Scotia with pride at the 2015 World Championships of Beach Ultimate in Dubai and recognize his contributions to the promotion of sport and active lifestyle in Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 1262

By: Hon. Maureen MacDonald (Acting Leader of the NDP)

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

Whereas the 2015 Robert Merritt Awards, recognizing excellence in theatre in Nova Scotia, were awarded in Halifax on March 23rd; and

Whereas Linda Moore has directed for theatre companies across Canada, including 10 years as the Artistic Director for Neptune Theatre; and

Whereas Linda Moore received the 2015 Robert Merritt Award for Outstanding Direction for her work on KAZAN CO-OP's *His Greatness*;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulates Linda Moore on winning the 2015 Robert Merritt Award for Outstanding Direction and expresses its appreciation for her continuing contributions and commitment to Halifax's theatre community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1263

By: Hon. Maureen MacDonald (Acting Leader of the NDP)

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

Whereas the 2015 Robert Merritt Awards, recognizing excellence in theatre in Nova Scotia, were awarded in Halifax on March 23rd; and

Whereas Matthew Downey continues to excel at the top of his field as a lighting designer and theatre technician; and

Whereas Matthew Downey received the 2015 Wes Daniels Design Award for demonstrating a strong artistic sensibility in the field of theatre design;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulates Matthew Downey on being chosen as the 2015 winner of the Wes Daniels Design Award and expresses its appreciation for his continuing contributions and commitment to Halifax's theatre community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1264

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

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

Whereas on Thursday, January 29th, South Woodside Elementary held a spelling bee competition; and

Whereas Josie Franson won the spelling bee which gave her the opportunity to compete in the finals; and

Whereas on Saturday, March 7th, the Halifax Chronicle Herald hosted their province-wide spelling bee at the Spatz Theatre in Citadel High School, where Josie represented her school;

Therefore be it resolved that Members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Josie Franson on her successes at the South Woodside Elementary spelling bee and for making it to the finals and doing such a great job.

RESOLUTION NO. 1265

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

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

Whereas Jeff Wakeham grew up in Eastern Passage and attended Tallahassee, Seaside and Eastern Passage Education Centre community schools; and

Whereas he saved a 19-year old female who was unconscious in a burning building on Valleyfield Road in Dartmouth on April 24, 2014; and

Whereas he received the Decoration of Bravery Award presented by Governor General David Johnson, as well as the City of Halifax Mayor's Award for Bravery;

Therefore be it resolved that Members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jeff Wakeham for receiving such high honours and show appreciation for his selfless bravery that saved another being's life.

RESOLUTION NO. 1266

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

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

Whereas Lt. (N) John Phillips joined the Canadian military as a regular force member in October 1967 and the reserve force in January 1999, serving a total of 44.5 years in uniform; and

Whereas he is a totally committed community volunteer with the Philae Shriners, the International Clown Association, the Masons, and Community Watch; and

Whereas he has been actively involved with the Sea Cadet program, which is the largest youth program in Canada, since September 1997 until present;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Lt. (N) John Phillips for his outstanding military service and as an extraordinary community volunteer, wishing him the best of health and happiness in his future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1267

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

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

Whereas the Eastern Passage Lions Club provide exceptional community support and tireless work in hosting their monthly breakfast as well as many other community events; and

Whereas through their highly dedicated and continued fundraising they have raised over \$8,000 that has been donated to the Lions Club Guide Dogs; and

Whereas the Eastern Passage Lions Club have been awarded the District Trophy from the Lions Foundation of Canada, along with the Silver Patch for their club banner;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Eastern Passage Lions Club on their successes in winning the District Trophy, along with a big heartfelt thank you for all their ongoing community support.

RESOLUTION NO. 1268

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

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

Whereas Caleb Purdy, a young local resident of Eastern Passage, competed in the 2015 Canada Winter Games in team and individual shooting; and

Whereas Caleb first began his aspirations of competing in the 2015 Winter Games in late 2009, and then shot regularly at the Atlantic Marksmanship Association, where he continued competing and developing his skills, and along the way he competed in numerous local and interprovincial competitions; and

Whereas at the Winter Games that were hosted in Prince George, British Columbia, Caleb finished 8th in the team competition and 16th in the individual competition;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Caleb on his hard work and dedication to his sport, and may he have many more successes.