



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2015

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2015

Sixty-second General Assembly

Second Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Ms. Margaret Miller

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Before we begin the daily routine, I just want to remind everybody of the new rotation of Question Period, given the realignment of the numbers on the Opposition side. I want to make sure everybody has new question sheets. If you didn't get those sheets, please slip up and see the Assistant Clerk.

Also, a friendly reminder one last time of the 45-second rule, which will be strictly enforced today, for questions and answers in QP.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

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

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to take one second - we don't have bills first, do we? We definitely get to this?

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we could come back to this in just a moment. I know that the members opposite - I believe you have a statement. You don't have a copy of the minister's statement? Could we just do a couple of other things and come back to it?

MR. SPEAKER: Sure. Is there another minister who has a statement?

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1291

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

Whereas Shell Canada Limited is continuing its investment in Dalhousie University with a renewed pledge of \$600,000, bringing its total investment in Dalhousie to \$1.6 million since 2006; and

Whereas this investment will be used to provide hands-on learning opportunities to Dal students in the faculties of Engineering, Science, and Management - opportunities we know are critical in helping students make the transition from school to work; and

Whereas strong partnerships between universities and business are more important than ever before, and bringing industry into the classroom gives students opportunities to enter the workforce with valuable insights and experiences;

Therefore be it resolved that we congratulate Dalhousie and Shell Canada Limited on a successful partnership that benefits students, industry, the university, and Nova Scotia, and that we encourage similar partnerships in universities across the province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 80 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 1 (1992 Supplement) of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The House of Assembly Act. (Hon. Diana Whalen)

Bill No. 81 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 380 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Public Utilities Act, to Eliminate the Guarantee on Nova Scotia Power's Profit. (Mr. Tim Houston)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

PARKVIEW NEWS: NEW MEMBERS/TEAM - CONGRATS.

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, The Parkview News is a community-driven newspaper that strives to connect people with local events, services, and programs. The publisher, Bruce Holland and his team work tirelessly to ensure that the free newspaper produces quality journalism and is accessible to everyone in the community. The information included in this newspaper is a huge asset to our constituents and to the overall area as a whole.

The Parkview News has recently hired two new staff to their fabulous team: Susan Wolf is an arts columnist and Alex Archibald is a layout and design specialist. Please join me in congratulating these newest members of The Parkview News and wishing the entire Parkview News team continued success in the future.

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

SNOW REMOVAL CREWS/CUPE LOC. 108 - THANK

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, today's weather reminds us that winter is not over yet. Today's weather also means that our snow-removal crews are back at work so I wanted to take this opportunity to thank them for all their efforts this season. Their early morning starts, long shifts, and manoeuvring in challenging weather means safer roads for the rest of us. In my constituency, and indeed in many HRM constituencies,

CUPE Local 108 is responsible for much of the snow clearing so I want to personally extend my thanks to them for their hard work this winter. Hopefully Spring is just around the corner.

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

WALSH, DAVE: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, the community of North Sydney is mourning today as they learn that Dave Walsh, a long-time volunteer firefighter, tragically died Saturday, on his 66th birthday. At the time of his death Dave was assisting first responders tending to an injured child. Like most people in North Sydney, I knew Dave as a friendly, easygoing, community-minded guy. He recently retired after 20 years of service as a North Sydney volunteer firefighter where he distinguished himself as a tireless supporter of the Atlantic Burn Camp for children. He was one of the driving forces behind the annual carnival night for campers.

Today I know all of our thoughts are with Dave's wife, Susan, his daughter, Summer, son-in-law Jamie, and his grandson, Jagger; his many friends, especially members of the North Sydney Volunteer Fire Department; and all those who loved and admired Dave.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

***THE CASKET* - CDN. COMMUN. NEWSPAPER AWARD**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise the House that the local weekly newspaper in my riding of Antigonish, *The Casket*, has recently won the Best Overall Newspaper award in its circulation category at the Canadian Community Newspaper Awards. These national awards celebrate the very best in community publishing. Newspapers compete against one another in similar circulation classes and the entries are judged by a panel of industry experts. Besides being named Best Overall Newspaper, *The Casket* was also recognized for Best Spot News Photo, Best Front Page, best editorial page, and best website design.

Mr. Speaker, *The Casket* has been in circulation since 1852, and its first copy was four pages long, two in English and two in Gaelic. The name of the paper was suggested by a local doctor, William Currie. The word "casket" at that time meant a treasure box or a container of precious things, as opposed to what people today usually think of first with the name.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge *The Casket* as a tremendous asset to the community of Antigonish. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

PARSONS, REHTAEH: DEATH - ANNIV.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, today marks the sad anniversary of the tragic death of Rehtaeh Parsons. Rehtaeh's story is well-known to Nova Scotians and now to people all over the world. As they mark this day, our thoughts are with Rehtaeh's loving family and many friends.

While they grieve, I hope they find comfort in knowing that Rehtaeh was the catalyst for new laws to control cyberbullying, both here in Nova Scotia and in our country. Rehtaeh's story also brought a widespread change in attitude that we all hope will prevent other young people from suffering as she did.

Rehtaeh's legacy is already far-reaching. Because of her, the justice system now has some of the tools it needs to combat bullying and cyberbullying in all its forms. Thank you.

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

LAHAVE FERRY: TAXATION - RESIDENTS' PROTEST

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, residents in LaHave are trying to get through to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, but aren't having much luck. Yesterday people in that community organized a rally to try and convey their frustration that disproportionately taxing people who use provincial ferries isn't fair. We are a province dotted with islands and inter-coastal waterways traditionally linked by boat.

The residents of LaHave are beginning to organize, trying to tell the minister that taxing them more than anyone else in this province isn't fair. I hope the minister understands that we cannot always use a government-built causeway to get home. Thank you.

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, if I could revert to the order of business, Government Notices of Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1292

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

Whereas on World Health Day the World Health Organization aims to raise awareness of the global challenges and opportunities associated with food safety under the slogan “From Farm to Plate, Make Food Safe”; and

Whereas we are fortunate to live in a part of the world that has extensive systems to help avoid food-borne illness and also has the capacity to quickly contain and investigate the occasional outbreak; and

Whereas in Nova Scotia, the Department of Health and Wellness works closely with the Department of Agriculture and our federal partners to help ensure that the food we eat is grown or raised, processed, packaged, sold and prepared safely;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House keep food safety in mind as they recognize today, April 7th, as World Health Day.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1293

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

Whereas caregivers are people of all ages who give unpaid care to family members, friends, and neighbours; and

Whereas family caregivers selflessly devote their time and energy to the well-being of those they look after; and

Whereas family caregivers are an integral part of the support network of our communities and make a vital contribution to family, friends, and the Nova Scotia health care system;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly do hereby recognize April 7th as National Caregiver Day and recognize those who are caring for their family members, friends and neighbours.

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.

We will revert to Members' Statements.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

SCOTT, ROBB: HEALTH/CAREER - WELL WISHES

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring notice to a positive role model and businessman, Robb Scott. Robb is an amazing artist and, in the midst of a burgeoning career, he identified that something was wrong and he made the daunting decision to take time off from his career to focus on his health. Diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, he not only made the appropriate changes to get his career back but publicly told his story to bring awareness to the challenges faced when living with this disorder.

Mr. Scott demonstrated that with determination, successes can be made. I salute Robb's courage, thank him for being a positive role model, and wish him all the best in his health and in his career.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: TRAVEL NURSES - CONTRACT PROVIDE

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, last week in Question Period, the Minister of Health and Wellness was asked to provide a contract for the travel nurses who are coming from outside the province due to the shortage in critical care units. The minister has yet to provide the House of Assembly with a copy of this contract. The McNeil Government promised to be the most transparent government in Canada, yet it seems as though they are always hiding behind tinted windshields.

I call on the Minister of Health and Wellness to produce the travel nurses' contract to allow the press, the public, and the members of the House of Assembly to see exactly what the government has been hiding.

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

MACMILLAN, SCOTT: PORTIA WHITE PRIZE - CONGRATS.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Scott Macmillan on receiving the Portia White Prize at the Creative Nova Scotia Awards. The Portia White Prize recognizes cultural and artistic excellence on the part of a Nova Scotian artist who has attained mastery in their discipline.

Born in Halifax, Mr. Macmillan is a leading Canadian musician who has played a key role in bringing the music of Atlantic Canada to audiences across North America and the world. Known for his work with Rita MacNeil and Symphony Nova Scotia, among others, this East Coast Music Award recipient has received numerous awards from the Canada Council for the Arts and Nova Scotia Arts Council.

Mr. Macmillan is an outstanding ambassador for Nova Scotia and a wonderful cultural resource for our community. I would like to thank him sincerely for his contributions to music and culture throughout Atlantic Canada. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

PAUL, GRACE: WALKING ACHIEVEMENT - ACKNOWLEDGE

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, Grace Paul of Waycobah, a 59-year-old mother of four, decided to walk for two to three hours each day in order to reach her

goal of walking six million steps. On November 4th she reached her goal, having walked more than 4,000 kilometres. Her health has improved, she has lost weight, she has more energy, and she says she feels great. More importantly, she has inspired other people in her community to actively pursue a healthier lifestyle. Let us acknowledge Grace's achievement and thank her for the example she provides to us all to live an active lifestyle.

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

FILM TAX CREDIT: PROTECTION - INDUSTRY EFFORTS APPLAUD

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, the Trailer Park Boys - Robb Wells, Mike Smith, and John Paul Tremblay - posted a public service announcement on YouTube as their characters, Ricky, Bubbles, and Julian, asking the government to not make changes to the Film Industry Tax Credit without consultation. Bubbles told the McNeil Government that he "cannot just pack up 116 kitties and move," and Ricky called the government - well, Mr. Speaker, that would be unparliamentary language.

Nova Scotians have been impressed with how united and proud the workers in the culture industry have been this past week. I ask that all members of the House applaud the industry's efforts to ensure no changes are made to the Film Industry Tax Credit without any consultation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: With the unanimous consent of the House, can we revert to Statements by Ministers?

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

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

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the indulgence of the members to revert to this in the Orders of the Day.

I'm pleased to rise today to speak to the amendments which I tabled earlier here to the House of Assembly Act. These amendments will freeze the salaries of Members of the Legislative Assembly for three years. The amendments will also eliminate transitional payments to fully pension-eligible MLAs.

The Premier has been clear that all Nova Scotians need to make tough decisions in order to get our province back on track financially, and as elected officials, the Premier believes, and I believe, that we must lead by example.

Our budget deficit is making it harder for new jobs to be created in Nova Scotia and if we want to make sustainable investments in health care and education, we need to make the right choices that will allow us to do so. The wage freeze will also apply to excluded classification employees.

However, Mr. Speaker, the amendments to the House of Assembly Act will cover elected officials only. In addition the Public Service Award, which goes to employees who are retiring and immediately accepting a pension, will be frozen for excluded classification employees at their current value. The Public Service Award currently amounts to one week's salary for each year of full-time work.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. It is my interpretation of your remarks, honourable minister, that this is the introduction of the bill.

MS. WHALEN: No, bills have already been done. I am also mentioning, Mr. Speaker, the change to the excluded employees, which is not in the bill. It's an additional piece of information and I expect to hear from the members opposite as well so that they can speak to this. There is nothing in the bill that relates to the excluded employees and their Public Service Award.

MR. SPEAKER: I'll allow it for now. I'll take it under advisement and review the written transcript, but please proceed.

MS. WHALEN: Okay, thank you. So in addition, Mr. Speaker, the Public Service Award, which goes to employees who are retiring and immediately accepting a pension, will be frozen for excluded classification employees only, at its current value. The Public Service Award currently amounts to one week's salary for each year of full-time work up to 26 weeks. The calculation is based on the employee salary at the time that they finish work.

Together these measures, along with others that will be introduced in our budget, will help to protect the programs and services that are most important to Nova Scotians. Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to working towards a better future for everyone in Nova Scotia. Thank you.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: I wish to respond to the statement made by the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board. Mr. Speaker, there is no reason for the government to pat itself on the back today. This is not a big announcement. The government may wish to engage in spin and pre-budget communication planning but the fact of the matter is that when it comes to MLA salaries, they have been frozen, in effect, for the past two years. It has been the convention of this House for some time, in troubled times, like Nova Scotians

know that we are in, to delay or defer or just outright reject recommended salary increases when they have come.

So to stand in this House and to pat themselves on the back and proclaim they've done something new, when in fact nothing has changed from yesterday with the way these things are dealt with, Mr. Speaker, is not at all an example of leadership. It may be spin; it may be good politics, but it is not leadership. (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. BAILLIE: For the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board to stand in this House and claim this is leadership but have no idea whether it will actually save any money for the taxpayers of the province or not, or even to quantify how much it is, shows that this is nothing more than some kind of political communications exercise.

I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, times are tough out there. They are tough on Nova Scotia families and they are tough on Nova Scotia taxpayers, but what the minister has missed is that they are looking for real actions and real decisions that we're all in this together. So to stand in this House and say we're going to do something that always happens anyway is nothing new. It is more of the same, and the time has come to be straight up with Nova Scotians. They need to see real sacrifice at the top.

I'll tell you Mr. Speaker, there are other provinces - we are all MLAs in this House but there are also Ministers of the Crown, there are Cabinet Ministers and others who make extra pay. There are places across this country where they are actually trying to show leadership by feeling some pain themselves, not just a freeze, but that has been rejected by this government. So we'll see what the budget says in a couple of days but for all those Nova Scotians who want real change, that did not happen today.

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

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to take a great deal of time speaking on this because there is now a bill in front of the House, Bill No. 80, and we'll have ample opportunity in second and third readings to speak to this.

Mr. Speaker, as my learned colleague the Leader of the Official Opposition has indicated, this is more symbolic than real. There has been a wage freeze for elected officials over a number of different administrations. There was a wage freeze for MLAs under the NDP Government. There was a wage freeze for elected officials under the previous Progressive Conservative Government as well.

As the Leader of the Official Opposition indicated, this may be good politics, but realistically, in terms of what it does for the bottom line of the province, it's little to nothing. However, this signifies - and I think it signals - other things that are on the minds of the

Finance and Treasury Board Minister and the Premier with respect to hard-working people throughout our public sector.

The real debate in this Legislature, which we will get to in the not-too-distant future, will not be about us and our salaries. It will be about the hard-working employees of the government and the public in this province. It's a debate I am very much looking forward to participating in. Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

NIELSEN, MADALYN - N.S. CAMPECHE INTL. LEADERSHIP CAMP

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, International Baccalaureate student Madalyn Nielsen travelled to Mexico to attend the Nova Scotia Campeche International Leadership Camp during March Break. During her stay, she took leadership training, studied the rich Mexican culture, and learned a third language.

Representatives were selected on outstanding leadership skills, a written essay, and recommendations of teachers. As school ambassador for Northumberland Regional High School, Madalyn volunteers with the 18 international students, one of whom is from Campeche.

In Mexico, she worked with underprivileged youth dealing with cancer and, in advance of her trip, fundraised and gathered items for these young patients. This remarkable young lady is one more reason I am proud to represent Pictou East. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: DHAs - AMALGAMATION

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, in 2013, the newly-elected Health and Wellness Minister told Nova Scotians that amalgamating our district health authorities would save the province \$13 million. In 2014, the Minister of Health and Wellness told us that the savings would be more like \$5 million, less than half of what he had promised the year prior.

Now, in 2015, and thanks to the *Chronicle Herald*, we have learned that staff in the former district health authorities are expected to receive \$4.8 million in severance, which essentially means there will be no savings at all.

I would hope the minister stops making promises he can't keep and starts focusing on improving front-line care in our province, Mr. Speaker.

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

POSEIDON PRINCESS: RESCUERS - THANK

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: In the early morning hours of Saturday, January 31, 2015, Captain Martin d'Entremont, crew members Lee and Oscar d'Entremont, and fishery observer Dave Murphy were aboard the *Poseidon Princess* on their way home from a fishing trip off Georges Bank when the fish dragger went into distress.

After putting out a mayday call, the captain and crew managed to get into the life raft, but the observer was knocked into the water. Hearing the call, the *Atlantic Destiny* and the *Atlantic Protector* were first on scene and assisted the captain and crew on board. Captain Brian Belliveau and crew aboard the *Chief Blair Francis* managed to pull the observer from the water at the very minute. A Cormorant and Hercules from 413 Squadron, along with two coast guard vessels, supported the rescue.

Although everyone was very shaken by the incident, they are very thankful that they were all safely rescued and grateful to all those who came to their aid. Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my personal thanks to everyone who played a role in bringing these fishermen and observer home to their families.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Portland Valley.

SANDERSON, RYAN ET AL/TEACHER: COMMUN. - SERV. THANK

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to express my gratitude towards some students and their teacher in my constituency. This winter, as all members of the House of Assembly can appreciate, has been difficult to say the least, especially for seniors and citizens with mobility issues. That is why it means so much to me today to recognize students Ryan Sanderson, Daniel Harris-Sampson, Zach Skerry, Kolton Jardine, Nathan Philips, and their teacher Dean Stevenson, who took some time on March 3rd to shovel out the driveway of a senior couple in my constituency. The teacher even donated salt and sand that they used.

I would like to quote a British poet, William Blake, who once said, "The most sublime act is to set another before you." I think these students and the teacher from Cole Harbour High have done that, and they are an example of that particular quote.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**NEW MINAS ELEM.:
MAJESTA TREES OF KNOWLEDGE COMP. - SHORTLIST**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate New Minas Elementary on their submission for the Majesta Trees of Knowledge Competition. Principal Eric Trahan said the school has a great green space adjacent to the playground that has the potential to be a wonderful outdoor learning space. That's where the Trees of Knowledge project can make a big impact.

The school has been shortlisted in the Canada-wide competition and is now one of ten finalists in the running for the \$20,000 outdoor classroom. The winner will be decided by popular vote, so the school is looking for support from the entire community. Voting is open today from 1:00 p.m. until May 4th and individuals are urged to vote every day and share the link with everyone they know: www.majestatreesofknowledge.ca. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

FIN. & TREASURY BD.: FILM TAX CREDIT - IND. CONSULTATION

MS. LENORE ZANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Finance and Treasury Board's ambiguous comments about our province's Film Tax Credit have certainly caused a stir. I'm sure the minister had no idea that her name would be flown all around the world in a matter of three days with the hashtag #SaveSunnyvale.

The film industry contributes over \$130 million to our local economy every year. The industry's value to our society, however, is greater still. I want to once again urge the minister not to make any changes to the important credit without proper industry consultation. In this province, the creative economy and our arts community feel that they are in jeopardy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

EMPATHY FACTORY - RECOGNIZE

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize The Empathy Factory. The Empathy Factory is a volunteer-led and volunteer-run organization that works tirelessly to empower youth to take action and make the world a better place by extending their empathy. It started in 2011 with the two founding members and their children and has turned into a national movement.

The Empathy Factory visits schools throughout Nova Scotia and delivers workshops on the value of volunteering, philanthropy, and related topics to children aged

eight to 15. They then challenge students to submit ideas that will better their communities in the categories of health, environment, social justice, and education. The top one or two ideas at each school receive the full support and mentorship of The Empathy Factory's staff and volunteers throughout the execution of their ideas. The Empathy Factory's programs have been developed to foster learning in areas deemed to be desirable curriculum outcomes by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development such as citizenship, communication, personal development, and problem solving.

I would like to say congratulations on behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to all volunteers that work to make The Empathy Factory's projects meaningful and successful. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

ELMS, FOSTER & VERNA: COMMUN. - SERV. THANK

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about two senior residents of New Glasgow, Foster and Verna Elms. Their philosophy has always been that parents are their children's strongest role models and greatest influence. They believe that children notice and respond to the way parents deal with life's problems, expressing feelings, and celebrating special occasions.

Foster and Verna have been involved with their family and the community throughout their entire lives. They continue to assist others in the community, at their church, and at neighbourhood functions. They promote positive values such as responsibility to promote a caring and supportive community.

Thank you to Foster and Verna for freely giving of their time and talents to benefit residents, reaching out to neighbours in need, and being very active members of community organizations. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: LONG-TERM CARE BEDS - MORATORIUM

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health and Wellness has put a moratorium on new long-term care beds and communities across the province are concerned. There is a troubling number of people waiting in hospital beds for long-term care, particularly in Cape Breton. Of the more than 250 people waiting in hospital beds for long-term care, almost one-third are located in Cape Breton. Not only is it unfair to make someone wait for weeks in a hospital bed for the long-term care, but these are beds that otherwise could be used to free up space and take the burden off our overcrowded emergency rooms.

I hope the Cape Breton members of the McNeil Government in Victoria-The Lakes, Glace Bay, and Richmond will join me in calling for an end to the moratorium on long-term care beds. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

BRIDGEWATER HS DIV. 1 GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAM - ACKNOWLEDGE

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to acknowledge the Division 1 Girls Volleyball team from Bridgewater High School. Successfully competing against a region in regular season play, the Division 1 Volleyball team competed against other teams from across the province to take home third place at the provincial championships. Bridgewater High School has become well-known for their volleyball program and has competed well on the provincial stage for the last number of years, being former provincial champions on many occasions.

The members of this team have worked hard and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them on another successful season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

KENNEDY, LORI/KA'LE BAY SEAFOODS LTD. - LT.-GOV.'S EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIP AWARD

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Laurie Kennedy of Ka'le Bay Seafoods Limited, a Glace Bay company. Ka'le Bay Seafoods was one of the recipients of the Lieutenant Governor's Employer Partnership Award. This award recognizes employers who champion the cause of persons with disabilities at work. The award was presented to Laurie by the Lieutenant Governor in Halifax in December.

It is a pleasure for me to thank Laurie Kennedy of Ka'le Bay Seafoods Limited for the opportunities given to persons with disabilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: NURSING SHORTAGE - ACTION

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the signs have been there for months now, but the government has refused to listen. Yesterday the President of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union confirmed to CBC that there is, in fact, a shortage of nurses in our province. There are at least 135 vacant positions right now, with many nurses retiring soon. As they are eligible, that number may increase.

This shortage of experienced nurses is putting a strain on our health care system. It is causing ERs like Roseway Hospital in Shelburne to close, denying people access to emergency care. The minister's response is to "hope new grads will move home to Nova Scotia." But that hasn't been working, Mr. Speaker. We need action now. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

BEDFORD PLAYERS COMMUN. THEATRE: ALICE HOUSING - DONATION

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to tell you about a terrific organization in my riding. The Bedford Players Community Theatre allows local residents with a love of theatre to indulge their passion. Every year the players put on several plays at their venue at All Saints Church. The show is always lively and entertaining. What many don't know is that while the Bedford Players are delighting audiences, they are also raising money from ticket sales, et cetera.

Earlier this year the players presented Alice Housing with a cheque for over \$1,900 - how terrific is that? Alice Housing has been providing safe and affordable housing for women and their children leaving domestic violence for more than 30 years. Under the leadership of the woman who is now our Minister of Community Services, Alice Housing won many awards for its ethics and management.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Bedford Players Community Theatre for the entertainment and for raising money for worthy causes like Alice Housing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

STARTING POINT PROG.: GRADS (2015) - CONGRATS.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the nine women who graduated from the Starting Point program on March 13, 2015: Ramzia Akhmetova, Lydia Watson, Ally Davidson, Melinda Roddick, Stacie Volmer, Emily Walsh, Janina MaGillivray, Jamie Carrigan, and Krista Quinn, graduated in a ceremony held at the Museum of Industry in Stellarton. Previous graduate Danielle DeCoff was the guest speaker.

The Starting Point program is a 12-week course that operates with funding from the Pictou County Women's Resources and Sexual Assault Centre. It is in high demand and widely respected for instilling a new-found confidence in the graduates.

Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to stand here and congratulate the graduates, and I wish them all the best in the future. Thank you.

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

CIRCLE OF CARE SOC.: SUPPORT - THANK

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Circle of Care Society for their active support of individuals and families to achieve a better quality of life. The Circle of Care Society is in Dartmouth's Furniture Bank, serving Dartmouth, Cole Harbour, and Eastern Passage. The mission of the Circle of Care Society is to provide families with essential household furnishings and other necessities. The Circle of Care Society receives referrals for support from Community Services, churches, and families. A group of dedicated volunteers give freely of their time delivering furniture and other necessities to members of the community free of charge. The furniture is donated from families and organizations throughout the community.

I applaud and encourage them to continue with their life-altering work serving the needs of individuals and families in our communities. Thank you.

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

HAMILTON, NICOLE: N.S. SKILLS COMP. - GOLD MEDAL

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate a Middle Stewiacke student, Nicole Hamilton, on her recent gold medal win at the 2015 Nova Scotia Skills Competition in the car painting division. A recent graduate of the Nova Scotia Community College Automotive Collision Repair and Refinishing program, Ms. Hamilton put her skills to the test in order to display safe working practices while repairing a dent and priming and refinishing the surface.

Nicole will now be moving on to represent Team Nova Scotia at the Skills Canada National Competition in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, in May 2015. Congratulations to Nicole and good luck to her and all other representatives of Team Nova Scotia in next month's Skills Canada National Competition.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

UNIACKE ESTATE MUSEUM PARK - ANNIV. (200TH)

MS. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, in the 1770s, lawyer Richard John Uniacke emigrated from Ireland to Nova Scotia. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, he held many positions in the Nova Scotia Government. In 1830, following in his father's political footsteps, James Boyle Uniacke entered politics, and from 1848 to 1854 he was the first Premier of Nova Scotia.

In 1816, Richard completed his elaborate summer country home on the banks of Martha Lake in Mount Uniacke. With a 3.5-storey Georgian-style house, a three-storey

barn, coach house, numerous outbuildings, and English-landscaped gardening, Uniacke House certainly made a statement in that small community.

I recently had the opportunity to tour this beautiful property. It is now owned by the Nova Scotia Government and known as the Uniacke Estate Museum Park, and 2016 marks the 200th Anniversary of this museum, still imposing after all this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

ALVVAYS/THE DECEMBERISTS TOUR - CONGRATS.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the band Alvveys for being nominated for two CBC Music Awards: Artist of the Year and Song of the Year. Lead singer and guitarist Molly Rankin of Judique has obviously inherited some of her father John Morris Rankin's musical talent. Another Judique native, Kerri MacLellan, plays keyboard for the band. The Toronto-based band have just released their debut recording, which hit No. 1 on U.S. college radio charts and put the recording on the CBC's Best 30 Albums of 2014 list.

The band has toured western Canada and are touring the United Kingdom and Europe. They are planning to embark on a tour with the Decemberists, which will include a show at the famous Ryman Auditorium in Nashville. Join me in wishing these talented young Nova Scotians continued success.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

DEMPSEY, BRIAN: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to recognize the passing of Brian Dempsey at age 83; I just attended his funeral this morning. Brian lived a long, full life, married for 63 years to his love, Rose. Brian helped the community of Herring Cove, and for his contributions, whether with his volunteer work, politics, or to his family, I want to send a big thank you out to Brian.

This is the fourth funeral I have attended in the last little while - Brian Dempsey, Joe LaPierre, Fred Martin and Harold Henneberry. An amazing amount of experience in community building has left our province. I want to thank that generation for all they have done for our communities and province. You are appreciated. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**CREATE TOMORROW TODAY FAIR:
NSCC TOURISM/BUS. ADMIN STUDENTS - CONGRATS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, congratulations to Nova Scotia Community College students from tourism management and business administration who organized Create Tomorrow Today, a successful fair that brought together local businesses, students, and entrepreneurs to market, sell, and network.

Along with booths from local entrepreneurs were representatives from home-based businesses, a guest speaker, and a creator of StashBelt, a local company recently featured on Dragons' Den. Also represented were a recently opened distillery, a soon-to-be-opened bar and grill, an Internet entrepreneur, and a franchise owner.

Special thanks to the students for your initiative in promoting small business, to keep our young people in Nova Scotia by putting the tools of your trades to work before graduation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

OAKE, BAILEY: CROSSWALK SAFETY - ADVOCACY

MS. PAMEYKING: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge Bailey Oake, a Big Bras d'Or resident, for her dedication to crosswalk safety and her advocacy and awareness initiatives. Ms. Oake was seriously injured in a pedestrian-motor vehicle accident in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, several years ago and has used that tragedy as a catalyst to keep others safe.

The message Ms. Oake shares is that crosswalk safety is a shared responsibility of drivers and of the walkers. Ms. Oake should be commended for her dedication to this cause and for calling for the increased awareness of motorists and pedestrians around crosswalk safety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

BAUER, SAM & ESTHER: CAFÉ BRIOCHE D'OR - OPENING CONGRATS.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, Sam and Esther Bauer opened Café Brioche d'Or in October 2014 in the rural Acadian fishing village of Wedgeport. Sam is not only the co-owner but he is also the baker, preparing his products daily in the European tradition, using unbleached flour, organic sugar, organic eggs, and real butter, with no artificial additives and preservatives.

The decor is modern, beautiful, with a real European flair. Their menu includes fair trade organic coffee, specialty coffee, freshly brewed, along with premium and organic

teas, freshly baked pastries and breakfast sandwiches served on croissants or brioche. Their desserts consist of a large variety of European pastries. They also offer gluten-free and dairy-free options and can also accommodate food allergies and sensitivities.

We welcome Café Brioche d'Or to our community, and wish them much success in their future endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

FLEUR DE SEL - CONTINUED SUCCESS WISH

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: The Town of Lunenburg has worked very hard over the years to transform itself from a quaint little fishing town to a town waiting to be seen by the entire world. The scenery is second to none, the heritage is historic, and the food is amazing.

Fleur De Sel, a restaurant owned and operated by Chef Martin Ruiz Salvador and his wife, Sylvie, was recently rated 22nd in the national poll of top 100 Canadian eating establishments compiled by food writer Jacob Richler. The Montague Street eatery is one of only two restaurants east of Quebec to make the top 25.

Despite this more recent recognition, Fleur De Sel is no stranger to acclaim; it has won numerous national awards, including a top 10 national ranking in *enRoute* magazine. Closer to home, it recently won Taste of Nova Scotia's Fine Dining Restaurant of the Year in 2014.

I ask all members of the House to join me in wishing Fleur De Sel continued success.

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

SEASIDE FM 105.9: RADIOTHON FUNDRAISER - KUDOS

MS. JOYCE TREEN: Mr. Speaker, Seaside FM, 105.9 on the dial, has just hosted its eighth annual Radio-Thon fundraiser. It ran from Friday, March 20th, until Sunday, March 29th. Seaside is a community-based, not-for-profit radio station located in Eastern Passage. The local station has a large loyal listening population. Seaside relies heavily on sponsors and donations to continue full operation of the station.

The event was a huge success with lots of donations from as far away as Texas. The station's goal was to fundraise enough money to secure their new position on the CBC tower so they could reach more listeners. Kudos to Wayne Harrett and the Seaside FM team for their great success. Thank you.

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

MOONEY, DAVID & KATHLEEN - ALTRUISM AWARD

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Murdock Moore from Howie Centre. Murdock recently won the David and Kathleen Mooney Altruism Award, an honour given to volunteers who find only the good in what life offers and who possess an unselfish regard and devotion to the welfare of others. This award is given out by the Collaborative Partnership Network of Nova Scotia. It is my privilege to recognize Murdock Moore for his dedication and hard work that he gives to his community on an ongoing and everyday basis. Thank you.

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

MILLWOOD HS: ARTS FOR HEARTS FUNDRAISING EVENT - APPLAUD

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the students of Millwood High for their volunteer spirit and sense of community. On March 7th, some 200 students from Millwood High held the Arts for Hearts fundraising event at the new library. The entire event was organized and planned by the students of Millwood High, including the recruiting of sponsors. The Arts for Hearts silent auction featured art pieces by Millwood High, NSCAD, and other students in the area. The event raised \$1,000, with all proceeds from the art sales going to the Heart & Stroke Foundation.

I applaud the students of Millwood High, who volunteered their time and talents to organize fundraisers to benefit those less fortunate, for lessons learned through such activities will provide a foundation for their future success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

SEVIGNY, ROGER & SUZANNE - FOSTER CHILDREN: CARE - THANK

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, it's truly an amazing gift to decide to be a caregiver to a child who is alone in the world. Suzanne and Roger Sevigny of Coldbrook have been parents to over 100 young Nova Scotians. They also care for children with disabilities and medical challenges. The Sevigyns have opened their doors and hearts to children in need for most of their lives together. Last year they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They took in their first foster child, a baby girl, 46 years ago in 1969. Remarkably, the Sevigny's plan is to continue fostering children as long as they are able.

On behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia I would like to extend our great thanks to Roger and Suzanne for supporting so many of the young and vulnerable citizens in our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

TIR: TIR/WINDSOR/HANTSPORT - ROAD CLEARING

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize specifically the good people working in the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal this past winter. As we know, the winter of 2015 has been the gift that keeps on giving. These fine folks - and I want to specifically speak to the good people of Hants West who have worked hard through the days and nights in some challenging conditions. As well, I would be remiss if I didn't recognize my two other public works entities - the Town of Hantsport and the Town of Windsor - who also do a great job keeping our roads clear in such horrible conditions as we've had in the last few months. So with that, thank you.

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

MATTERA, KASSIDY: YOUNG ARTIST AWARD - NOMINATION

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kassidy Mattera of Fall River on her nomination for the prestigious Young Artist Awards. Along with other young actors and actresses from across North America, Kassidy travelled to California for the awards ceremony.

Kassidy is an actress on the TV show Mr. D and was one of five nominees for Best Performance in a TV Series, 11- to 13-year-olds. This experience has strengthened her motivation to continue acting and take her acting career further. Congratulations, Kassidy, on your nomination. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

RCL: EFFORTS - THANK

MR. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, the Royal Canadian Legion is Canada's largest veteran and community support organization, formed in 1926 following the unity of various WWI veteran organizations. The eight Royal Canadian Legions throughout my constituency were established with a clear purpose of caring for veterans, keeping alive the public memory of the sacrifices of Canadians in the cause of world peace, and the promotion of unity, thought, and of effort among all Canadians leading to the development of a greater nation. These eight branches are run by a small, dedicated group of members and volunteers.

I am proud to have such committed groups in our communities and I would like to thank them for their continued efforts to ensure the continuance of these great organizations

for the betterment of our veterans, both old and new, and to our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

CRAIG, WILLIAM (BILL) - INTL. FRUIT TREE ASSOC. AWARD

MR. JOHN LOHR: The International Fruit Tree Association recently held its 58th annual conference and tours in Nova Scotia. Halifax hosted the world and at the awards banquet one of Kings North's long-time tree fruit horticulturalists was recognized for his achievements. The Outstanding Extension Worker award went to Bill Craig, a tree fruit horticulturist who recently . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for Members' Statements has expired. We will now move on to Orders of the Day with Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: OBSTETRICIANS - MALPRACTICE INSURANCE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Thank you, Mr. Official Speaker. My question is for the official Acting Premier here this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Wellness's own Physician Resource Plan describes obstetrics and gynecology as a core service, and actually calls for more obstetricians and gynecologists in the province, as we are 8 per cent below the national average. There are places in rural Nova Scotia where we are down to one obstetrician/gynecologist providing services to young women and women of all ages in their area.

I'll give an example from Cumberland County: Dr. Robyn MacQuarrie says that she and her colleagues are considering leaving the province, which would decimate this service in that area, because the government is renegeing on its deal to help obstetricians with the cost of their malpractice insurance.

I would like to ask the Acting Premier, will the government follow through on this plan to actually back out of the agreement to help obstetricians with their malpractice insurance, ensuring that our service gets worse instead of better?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: I appreciate the question. Because of the level of detail in that question I'm going to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness to answer, thank you.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'll do my best to be within 45 seconds. To the member opposite this notification comes at a very difficult and challenging time because we are in the midst of negotiations with Doctors Nova Scotia. What I can assure the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party is that our obstetrician/gynecologist and their fees will be looked after.

MR. BAILLIE: I do appreciate that answer but Dr. MacQuarrie herself, I think, says it best when she says, "I am very dismayed that the obstetricians and women's health care in the province are being held hostage as part of the contract negotiation," and the minister referred to contract negotiations that are ongoing. Mr. Speaker, Cumberland County is down to one obstetrician. Cape Breton has half the number of obstetricians that they need to service the women of Cape Breton Island. This is not something that should be settled by a negotiation. It is a core service as the minister's own department describes it. I would like to ask the minister how he intends to make sure outside of contract negotiations that women get the obstetrician services they need if he's going to make them pay more, and more than they would pay in other provinces.

MR. GLAVINE: Really the obstetrician/gynecologist's issue is with CMPA and that's who they really need to be challenging in terms of the dramatic rise in fees. It's interesting, I didn't hear about this issue until negotiations got underway and it will be one of those issues addressed through the normal process of negotiations.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, their issue is not with CMPA. Their issue is with the government. Their issue is with a government that promised Nova Scotians, in the last election, that every family would have a doctor in this province. Now we know that we are far short of the needed number of obstetricians to provide a core health care service and instead of addressing that, instead of even working with obstetricians and gynecologists and finding solutions to this issue, the government says they are going to negotiate having them pay far more for their insurance here than they pay in other places. Doctors like Dr. MacQuarrie are saying - and I'll table this - that they're looking at going elsewhere.

So I'm going to ask the government to set aside the answer of contract negotiations and assure the women of Nova Scotia, including Cumberland County, that the government will work with obstetricians to solve this problem and not negotiate it away.

MR. GLAVINE: I can assure the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party that women's health is of the greatest concern to our government. We know that during negotiations it is difficult to take one aspect, one small part and start to negotiate outside of the larger master agreement. What I can assure the gynecologists across Nova Scotia

today is that we will work for a satisfactory agreement so that we have that historical arrangement kept into the future.

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

**FIN. & TREASURY BD. - FILM TAX CREDIT:
IMPACTS - IND. CONSULTATIONS**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, we've all been hearing a lot in the past few days from the creative sector in our province. They are really afraid of the negative changes that could be coming to the Film Tax Credit. Members of the industry are circulating a petition that now has more than 15,000 signatures. The title of that petition is "Preserve the NS Film and Digital Media Tax Credits. No change without consultation!"

My question to the Acting Premier is, why hasn't the industry been fully consulted about negative impacts that possible changes to this tax credit could have?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I think it's something that's very topical, absolutely. We have had discussions, I know, over many years with the industry. I had the privilege to meet with them very recently, just a week ago, to hear directly from their concerns. I know they've done some very thoughtful submissions to the tax review and also to the consultations that we held after the tax review was received.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, all of those were after the minister started talking negatively about this Film Tax Credit. Veteran Nova Scotia filmmaker Paul Donovan told allNovaScotia.com, "Essentially, prior to the tax credit there was no film business - today it is one of our province's few thriving industries."

The former government knew this. In fact, on November 30, 2012, the NDP established Film and Creative Industries Nova Scotia and moved it from Finance into ERDT. This was to put more focus on a growing sector and, Mr. Speaker, it's working.

My question to the minister is, why isn't the minister recognizing the importance of the thriving industry in film and what its impact is on the Nova Scotia economy?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I can honestly say that we do see value in the industry, absolutely. I know that I've received many letters from people from around the province who speak about the value of the industry. But I've said here before that we do need to talk about the value of our tax dollars, how tax dollars are spent, and the value that we get back as a province - and making choices that are often difficult choices. At this point in time, the industry is speculating, and so is the Opposition.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, it has been almost a week since the minister caused havoc in this industry by her comments at the chamber of commerce. She could end the speculation right here and now. When the firefighters confronted the minister about the volunteer firefighter tax credit, she shot that down very quickly. She has done the same with booksellers about the tax credit for books. Why hasn't the minister revealed her plans for the Film Tax Credit instead of causing all of this grief and speculation?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I know there have been a number of questions in the House about other tax credits as well and other benefits; we had questions last week about them. All of those questions are premature because the budget is being released here on Thursday this week.

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

FIN. & TREASURY BD.: FILM TAX CREDIT - LOCAL COMPANIES

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Premier. The Minister of Finance and Treasury Board last week told the Halifax Chamber of Commerce that 99 per cent of the money from the Film Tax Credit is being paid to companies that don't pay taxes here in Nova Scotia. That is just simply not the case. For example, DHX Media is a Halifax-based film company that does take advantage of the Film Tax Credit, and I have their financial statements here for the year that just ended. In fact, they paid \$3,700,000 in combined federal and provincial corporate taxes last year alone.

I'll give the minister a chance to correct the record. Does she really believe that 99 per cent of our homegrown companies don't pay taxes here, or is DHX Media wrong?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. One of the difficulties in talking about the Film Tax Credit is a lack of transparency, quite frankly. Because it's related to taxes, we are not able to talk about the individual companies. In fact, as minister, I myself am not to know - I shouldn't know the individual tax situation of each of those companies. Unless those choose to make them public, we have no way to double-check them.

I just make that point. We can't be as transparent as we are with, for example, other businesses under NSBI or Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, so much for the most transparent government in our history. DHX Media is a public company. I am quoting public financial statements. They came from the World Wide Web.

If she is going to make decisions about an industry that employs 2,000 people, that actually drives jobs in the province, I would hope that she would know that they all pay taxes here in Nova Scotia in order to attract the tax credit.

I'll give you another example, Mr. Speaker. Magic Rock Productions employs hundreds of people, every single one of them a Nova Scotian who pays taxes here in the Province of Nova Scotia. Last year alone they brought \$26 million in new investment to our province. All of that is at risk right now.

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

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

FIN. & TREASURY BD. - FILM TAX CREDIT: CHANGES - EFFECTS

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, young professionals in the culture sector were already hit once by the McNeil Government when the Graduate Retention Rebate was eliminated with nothing done to replace it. After comments made by the Finance and Treasury Board Minister about people working in the creative industry, I'm hearing from these same young people again this Spring. Many talented Nova Scotians have often had to go down the road to find careers that will pay well, as I once had to do.

Now, with the Film Tax Credit, which was renewed and strengthened under our NDP Government, many young people can build a career here at home. Will the Finance and Treasury Board Minister please explain why she is causing young people working in the creative economy to once more have to consider going down the road?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, again the member opposite is definitely speculating about items that will be in the budget this year. The statement I can make is that we are, as a government, working very diligently to look at the issues of demographics and the concern that that creates to our taxpaying base and to our vitality as a province. Thank you.

MS. ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I have to say that sounds like a bunch of government-speak to me. I don't think people in the industry are going to appreciate an answer like that, and they haven't appreciated most of the answers they have received from this government in this regard.

The NDP Government, on the other, improved the tax credit after consultation with the industry. We removed the total production cap, which led to a boost in film, TV, and animation jobs in our province.

My question, Mr. Speaker - the industry has been advised by the Finance and Treasury Board Minister that changes are coming, but without consultation, everyone from the Trailer Park Boys in Truro to the cast and crew of Haven on the South Shore, here with my friend beside me, will be affected.

Will the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board assure the casts and crews especially of Trailer Park Boys, who have been speaking to her directly, and Haven that her changes to the Film Tax Credit will not cause their productions to have to leave this province for pastures greener further on?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, there are just a few things that I said at the chamber speech, and they remain true. The value of a payroll rebate is 7 to 10 per cent maximum for any other company, any industry in this province. The value for the film industry is up to 65 per cent of their eligible labour costs paid by taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, those are kind of stark figures, and they deserve to be looked at. I think Nova Scotians need to know how we spend our money, what credits are out there, and they need to be considered.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition. (Interruptions)

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition has the floor.

**FIN. & TREASURY BD.: BLACK ROCK PRODUCTIONS
- N.S. TAX PAYMENTS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, Black Rock Productions is a Nova Scotia film production company that brought in \$26 million in direct investment in our province last year - the most notable being *The Lizzie Borden Chronicles*, which, by the way, employed 160 Nova Scotians. Every single one of them pays taxes in the Province of Nova Scotia and the company pays taxes in Nova Scotia. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, does she still stand by her statement that 99 per cent of film companies do not pay tax in Nova Scotia?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm really glad the member opposite and Leader of the Official Opposition has rephrased his question because it is something that is important to note. One thing that could be leading to the misunderstanding between us, between the two members here, is that the production industry for film is set up so that they create one company for the production. They may have a parent company but they set up separate companies for each production and that production company only has expenses. It has no revenue. It does not market the product. It doesn't export the product so it has no revenue.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, although we do appreciate the accounting lesson from the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, it makes it even more egregious that she stood in front of the chamber and said 99 per cent of companies don't pay tax, when every single one of those parent companies are taxpayers in the Province of Nova Scotia. It was at best a misleading statement if not a misinformed one and it has caused real turmoil in the film industry where 2,000 Nova Scotians currently work.

I would like to ask the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, on their behalf, to end the turmoil now, while they have a chance, while they are booking new work, and assure them the Film Tax Credit will be there for them next year.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, it is very important to look at the accounting of this. The structure of the industry is such that the production companies will never show profit and therefore it's not really a tax credit because the companies receive the funds irrespective of whether or not there's any profit in the company. That's the point: a difference between a refundable and a non-refundable tax credit and I would expect the members opposite, particularly the Leader of the Official Opposition, would know that.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

ENERGY: NSP - SERVICE STANDARDS

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Energy. Under the former Minister of Energy, there was a lot of talk of imposing service standards on Nova Scotia Power. Following his resignation, we haven't heard too much about service standards and we do not see it on the legislative agenda for the Spring sitting. This means that Nova Scotians will go into another storm season without any hope of standards that hold Nova Scotia Power to account. My question for the minister is, is the government looking at service standards for Nova Scotia Power?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, our government undertook a review of the electricity system in this province, probably the most comprehensive review that has ever been undertaken. We have just recently released what we heard from Nova Scotians regarding that review, to allow them to once again have input into those discussions.

Following that our staff will look at what we have heard and we fully intend to bring forward a comprehensive legislative package, based on the electricity review, in the Fall sitting.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the minister referred to the electricity review because the government's own electricity review noted that those who participated in the process were largely supportive of legislative performance standards. This is the simple action that the government could take to provide relief to Nova Scotians.

This government came to power talking about changing our electricity system and this Fall will mark two years without any meaningful changes on rate relief. My question for the minister is, how much longer will Nova Scotians expect to wait before Nova Scotia Power is held responsible for service standards and electricity rates are reduced?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, it's almost amusing. On the one hand we have the Opposition saying our government has not consulted enough on certain matters and yet on this one they would argue we've consulted too much.

We have undertaken the most comprehensive review of our electrical system here in Nova Scotia. We've allowed Nova Scotians to have their say on that, we have looked at their input; we have shared that with them again so that they could see what we've heard. We will take that package back together, and as I've indicated, the member will have the opportunity - as will all Nova Scotians - to see the legislative package this Fall, which I am sure will bring with it very rigorous and fruitful debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: DIALYSIS TREATMENT - VALLEY REG. HOSP.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. After much lobbying in this House for dialysis to be set up at Hants Community Hospital in Windsor, our understanding is that it will in fact go to the Valley Regional in Kentville. I wonder if the minister could confirm that, number one, but number two, most importantly, the time frame for that to be set up and in place.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Hants West for bringing this question to the floor of the Legislature. First of all, I want to say that he has been a very long-time proponent and ardent advocate of getting some dialysis for his area.

We know that we have a provincial renal program and Kentville is the next site that will be developed. Within a matter of days, I think, we'll have some information about that fact.

MR. PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that answer. I would then ask, given that the move will be in Kentville, where the majority will travel and there are some 35 to 40 consistently travelling for dialysis treatment, unfortunately, out of the Hants West area. Their biggest concern is always travel - how am I going to get there?

Will the government or the minister and his department consider an option for travel and maybe work through some logistics to make that happen to ease the burdens in the minds of these folks and their families in receiving their dialysis treatment?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I want to convey to the member opposite that I am prepared to provide him with a copy of the detailed analysis that was done for his area and also to speak to some of the recommendations that were brought forward. I will do that for the member within the next two weeks.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: DIST. HEALTH AUTHORITIES EXEC. (FMR.)
- SEVERANCE COSTS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. The *Chronicle Herald* is reporting the cost of severance for the laid-off executives of the former district health authorities is going to be around \$4.8 million. However, the minister's office can't tell us how many of those executives will be taking severance - in fact, it says that they won't know for months. I'll table that.

The \$4.8 million is a very exact number. If the minister doesn't know how many executives are taking severance, can he tell us how he arrived at that number?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the \$4.8 million that has been presented by the department is the maximum, the upper figure that it would cost for those severances.

MR. DAVID WILSON: How do you get that number? You must anticipate some people leaving.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians deserve to know the true cost of the reorganization of the health care system. During the election, the Premier said his plan would save \$13 million a year. However, with the severance costs the government is paying out or going to pay out - almost \$5 million to those laid-off executives - I'd like to ask the minister, can the minister tell us why the McNeil Government hasn't saved \$13 million as promised in the election, but instead has spent an additional \$4.8 million on severance?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, in this first year of the start-up of the one Provincial Health Authority, we knew we would have a one-time cost. What I am most pleased about is the savings that will be going forward.

We decided to just work with the CEOs. We have eight less; VPs, we have about 35 less currently. That is just, as we know, one level of management in the health care system. Further savings will be realized as we move to the next level of management.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

PSC: WORKPLACE - SAFETY ENSURE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of the Public Service Commission. A 2011 employee survey for the Public Service Commission showed that 21 per cent of Public Service Commission employees had experienced bullying behaviour in the last 12 months. In the same survey, four per cent of the PSC employees reported racism and/or discrimination in the last 12 months.

As we get ready for belt tightening across the public sector it's possible that we will see tensions rise - what action has the minister taken to ensure the Public Service Commission is a safe workplace?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the member for that question. When our government took office, myself and the Premier went through many various departments, we engaged the Public Service Commission, we have gone through the province right up to Sydney in Cape Breton, met with our public servants who do an excellent job every day.

With engaging them we have opened up the communications with them; the Premier has an email that any public servant can speak to him directly with any suggestions they have for making government better, and this has shown to have been paying back extreme dividends as the Public Service is actually a lot more efficient and they are a lot happier.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, the department's own website says it is working to provide best practices in human resource management in order to establish the Government of Nova Scotia as a preferred employer. However in the 2013 survey 31 per cent of the department's employees reported having been bullied, and five per cent reported racism and/or discrimination. They spent \$108,000 on soul spaces and truth telling instead of on real issues in the workplace.

I'm wondering, can the minister tell me, instead of spending money on feel good nonsense like creating soul spaces, why the minister is not cracking down on bullies in his own department?

MR. KOUSOULIS: We didn't spend one red cent. What the member opposite meant to say is that we invested money in the Public Service Commission. The amount is (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission has the floor.

MR. KOUSOULIS: The amount is also misleading, and with two CAs on that side I figured they'd understand that the Province of Nova Scotia doesn't pay HST. So with that I would like to thank the work that was done by this consultant. The consultant came into the Public Service Commission and actually worked every single day and the contract was for six to twelve months.

Mr. Speaker, I will be tabling my department's budget - the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board will be tabling the budget and my department will show the great work that it has done in terms of streamlining what we do in the Public Service Commission and saving the taxpayer money.

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

TIR: BRIDGE CLOSURES - REPAIR LIST

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Last week the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal put out its weekly traffic update. It listed the Melanson Mills Bridge in Digby County, the Crowdis Bridge in Inverness County, the Whitman Bridge in Kings County, and the Gillis Bridge in Victoria County as all being closed - and I'll table that document.

My question to the minister, how can none of these closed bridges in the province last week be on the list for repair or rehabilitation for 2015-16, especially the Whitman Bridge in Kings County that was scheduled for repairs for 2015-16 just in last year's five year plan?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I thank the honourable member for the question. Obviously, with these bridges we do have a number, several thousand bridges, in our inventory in this province, and the reality is that as these bridges come due for very expensive repairs or, in fact, complete replacement, we look at each case individually to see what has to be done. There is obviously a range from that full-scale replacement to the repairs that can now solidify the bridge and keep it going for some time, and obviously it's across the entire province, Mr. Speaker.

So there are options for our department when we look at the bridges and those that are closed that are due for repairs. There are ways we can do that outside the capital plan and having that long-term plan we can look at some of the short-term measures. I can assure the member that with all those bridges mentioned we are looking at what options are available and we'll make sure we consult the community before doing anything.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, in the 5-year Highway Improvement Plan for this year, it says a new bridge will be built in Annapolis County called the Leonard Bridge: Shore Road West. This project has been identified as a multi-year project. This project has never been on any of the five-year highway improvement plans prior to this year, while many other projects that were listed for this year will not be done.

My question for the Deputy Premier is, what is the cost of this multi-year bridge project, and why has it moved up the list of priorities so quickly?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, again, that has a level of detail that I think the Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister should answer.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, obviously when we identify bridges and highways and repaving plans for the five-year capital plan, there are a number of variables in the equation. I can certainly get specifics on the bridge that the member refers to, but I will assure the member and all members of this House and all Nova Scotians that when it comes to transportation infrastructure, we don't apply politics at any point. We're not jumping bridges depending on their location. This is about Nova Scotians and keeping things safe.

The bridges that are under review are in ridings of all members of this House, under all Parties. This is not about politics. Nothing is jumping the list because of the political stripe. We're doing this for the betterment of the people of the province. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - NURSING STRATEGY: DELAY - EXPLAIN

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians are worried about the state of their health care system. As they see an unprecedented number of nurses retire, long wait times, and ER closures across the province, the Minister of Health and Wellness keeps telling Nova Scotians to wait until May, when he introduces a nursing strategy. Yesterday, the CBC disclosed that there are 135 vacancies across Nova Scotia and quoted Janet Hazelton, president of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union, as saying that too many nurses are coming up for retirement and there aren't enough new grads to fill their shoes.

I would like to ask the minister, why do Nova Scotians have to wait until May to learn about what the McNeil Government is going to do to fix the nursing shortage?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, as the former Health and Wellness Minister knows, we now have a large cohort of nurses who are 55 years and over and eligible for retirement in the province. One of the areas that we had a challenge with in our first year was when the previous government cut half a million dollars from the nursing strategy. So it took us a little longer to roll out the nursing strategy, but I think he and his caucus and all Nova Scotians will be very pleased with what we bring forth in May.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, communities are feeling the nursing shortage today, in April. The problem of nursing shortages isn't news to the Minister of Health and Wellness, but I understand why he hasn't been able to focus on it, as he has been distracted over the last year and a half with picking fights with those nurses rather than improving their working conditions and giving them the resources they need to do their jobs. The Minister of Health and Wellness says he's going to solve the problem by hoping that new graduates will move back to Nova Scotia.

Given the late timing of the nursing strategy, can the minister explain why he has spent the last year picking fights with nurses and not addressing the issues that are causing nurses to leave?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, overall in Nova Scotia we're at a very good place. We have the most nurses currently registered in the province. We know that we have a question with mobility because of past arrangements. We're hoping that we will see that open up in the future to allow a nurse to work anywhere in the province. That would very quickly solve our problems.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: INSULIN PUMPS - PROVISION ENSURE

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Health and Wellness, presently the government is helping young Nova Scotians who are less than 19 years of age with the cost of an insulin pump and pump supplies. Young adults under the age of 25 are helped with the cost of insulin pumps. When the NDP shut the door on additional insulin pump coverage in 2011, the now-Finance and Treasury Board Minister said that insulin pumps can make a huge difference in the lifestyle of patients, most of whom are young people. I will table a copy of that statement in *The Chronicle Herald* that day in 2011.

My question to the minister is, the promise was made to provide all Nova Scotians with an insulin pump by the second year of their mandate. Will the minister ensure that 1,400 Nova Scotians who either do not have a pump or are forced to find their own financing have one this fiscal year?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, as the member knows very well, thanks to the previous government and to all members of this House advocating for the insulin pump, which can be a wonderful means of providing consistent insulin and deriving much better health outcomes, that program going up to 25 years of age is now well advanced and continues to pick up each and every week in our province.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I do thank the minister for that answer but it really didn't go to what the expansion of this program is, what it is going to be, because in the last election the Liberals did promise that every Nova Scotian who needed an insulin pump would get an insulin pump. That is an extra \$4.1 million. We have a budget coming up, so can the minister confirm today whether there will be an expansion of that program so that those people who need an insulin pump will be able to get it?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, we know that to make all Nova Scotians informed about what programs are there for them, in fact, just getting up to age 18, as the former government knows, took quite some time and had a low level of pickup. As we move up

to 25 years of age, it is very important that we make sure that the program is implemented in the strongest manner and made known to Nova Scotians, and that is what we're presently doing.

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

TIR: BRIDGE CLOSURES/REPAIR LIST - RATIONALE PROVIDE

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question through you is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Having heard the minister in his last answer say that this was not a political decision, my question to him would simply be, could he provide the rationale behind the reason why this bridge has been moved ahead and supply it to this House by the end of the week?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that question. When it comes to these capital projects or any projects under the auspices of TIR, there's always exact engineering. The work that's done on the ground by our officials is second to none so I have absolutely the greatest confidence in our staff. I would be happy to get the member and House that information and I can table it by the end of the week.

MR. MACLEOD: Certainly I want to thank the minister for that answer and there is no question that we have some of the finest engineers in the country working for TIR and we are very proud of the work that they do. The reason that questions are asked, Mr. Speaker, is to make sure that the ministers have a chance to excel in their answers and to tell people what a great job that their employees are doing. With that in mind, I was wondering, could the minister allow and also supply us with the information on the four bridges that are closed, as to what will be happening to those bridges, seeing that there is nothing in the five-year plan for them?

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, again I thank the member for the question. Those bridges - and I have had many conversations about all four with the respective members who have those bridges in their community - certainly, there truly is a range between the full replacement and what would be required to make quick repairs that could get the bridges reopened, given volume, the weight of the trucks that pass by those roads. They are case by case but I can certainly look at the details from each one and get back to the member. Thank you very much.

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

TIR - PROV. FERRIES: COST INCREASE - RIDERSHIP EFFECTS

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is also to the Minister of TIR. People who use our provincial ferries are trying to tell the McNeil Government that driving up costs for this transportation link will have unintended

consequences. Today on the radio we heard Phyllis Price, a resident of the South Shore, publicly worrying that driving prices up will mean ridership will go down. If that happens, Ms. Price worries lower ridership could be the first step in justifying an end to these vital links. My question is, can the minister tell us exactly what analysis he has done on how increased costs will affect ridership on our provincial ferries?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, look, these decisions are tough. We made the decisions on ferries based on the cost it takes to operate our seven runs, three of those being island ferries - the \$9 million for costs versus the \$1 million in revenue that we are at.

These are tough choices, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, the alternative is ending those services. We heard loud and clear from Nova Scotians, from end to end of this province, that that was not something that was viable. That's why we had to try to close the gap.

We're certainly not in a cost-recoverable mode with the increases, but we picked numbers that were modest, based on the current system and what people really could absorb. That was the decision, Mr. Speaker. We know it's tough and we're working with local officials, representatives, and stakeholders to have these conversations. We are getting feedback for sure, but at the end of the day, we have to look at the cost of services and do our best to bring up the revenues to pay for those services. Thank you.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I know that the minister, coming from rural Nova Scotia, realizes just how hard-hitting this is for those people who need these linkages to get to work. The McNeil Government has said that everybody has to be ready to feel some pain, but they forgot to mention that the people affected by the McNeil tax hikes and program cuts would have to have no say in how these changes affect their lives.

Mr. Speaker, why does this government think it's okay to ignore ferry passengers in Little Narrows, LaHave, Englishtown, Country Harbour, Tancook and Petit Passage?

MR. MACLELLAN: Certainly, our government is not ignoring the people of those areas. We understand the impact on the community, but again, the reality is that we want to protect those services, Mr. Speaker.

If you look at - all Nova Scotians, and certainly the Opposition, talk about fiscal prudence and being responsible with taxpayers' dollars. We had to look at what the costs of these services were collectively, look at the revenues that were collected, and try to find somewhat of a balance. Again, we're certainly not covering these costs by way of the price increases.

Mr. Speaker, specifically with the 10-packs, you're talking about a system that has subsidized eight of every 10 trips. I don't think that would be reasonable. We thought that

the focus would be on the annual passes for the island ferries and for those that have alternative routes as well.

We tried to be fair, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue the discussions with the communities to make sure that we're doing the best interests for all Nova Scotians. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

AGRIC.: FARM LAND DRAINAGE PROG. - BUDGET INCLUSION

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. The Liberal campaign platform promised to re-establish the land drainage program to improve land productivity and put new land into production. It was scheduled to be re-established this fiscal year. The platform says the program will cost \$600,000. I will table that document out of the Liberal campaign platform.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is, will the farmland drainage program be introduced in this year's budget?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, this is an important program. As the Premier has said on many occasions, all the platform promises made by this government will be carried out.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the minister for the answer to that question. I'm wondering if the minister could not be more specific. The question was, will it be in this year's budget, as promised in the platform?

MR. COLWELL: The honourable member will have to wait until the budget is presented on Thursday.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

FISH. & AQUACULTURE: STANBURNE RD. (LUN. CO.) - CHANGE

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. Nova Scotia's Christmas tree industry is vital to the economic health of our province. These producers generate roughly \$52 million in revenue each year.

In order for this business to remain viable, proper infrastructure must be in place. In Lunenburg County, one Christmas tree lot is accessed from the Stanburne Road, which is a K-class road, an unmaintained and unlisted road. This road is often in terrible condition and does not receive maintenance or upkeep. The costs incurred by vehicles and trailers as a result of damage from the terrible conditions is well into the tens of thousands.

My question to the minister is, will the minister urge his Cabinet colleagues to change the destination of the Stanburne Road so that such an important economic driver does not suffer due to lack of access?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: I would like to thank the member of the Official Opposition for bringing this forward. I have indeed spoken to the individuals, or at least one of the individuals who has a problem in that area, and we are looking into this. It is an issue that really is through the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, economic benefit and impact should be considered when choosing a road to be unlisted or unmaintained. We cannot afford to let rural industries like this suffer because of something as easily remedied as the state of the road. My question is, will the Minister of Agriculture insist that his Cabinet colleague take economic benefit into consideration when designating a road as K-class?

MR. COLWELL: The economic benefit of agriculture in this province is very important to all of us and indeed we will be working on that and we will work with the community to see what we can do.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: SPECIALIST MALPRACTICE INSURANCE - GOV'T. COVERAGE

HON. DAVID WILSON: The provincial government usually covers about 90 per cent of the medical malpractice insurance fees for specialists like obstetricians who support women's pregnancy, child birth, and postpartum period. But, Mr. Speaker, just a few days ago someone within the McNeil Government told Doctors Nova Scotia that they were refusing to do that this year and that caused some concerns for obstetricians like Robyn MacQuarrie, as we have heard already in a previous question, and some of her colleagues, to worry about a reduction in services throughout our provinces, especially in rural Nova Scotia.

I would like to ask the minister why was that information relayed to Doctors Nova Scotia, if the government has changed their mind just in a short three days?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I am pleased to speak to this issue but we know that historically those fees and coverage for many physician fees are done within the master agreement that is currently going on in the province. Those negotiations are proceeding and I can assure the member opposite that we are very, very cognizant of the fact that these fees by CMPA have almost doubled this year.

MR. DAVID WILSON: That still didn't answer the question, Mr. Speaker. Somebody told Doctors Nova Scotia that the government was not going to cover that this

year. These fees are going from about \$20,000 to about \$51,000. Here is another example of the government creating chaos in a sector, one that is extremely important to rural Nova Scotia. CBC did a report on this on April 2nd. No one was available from the Department of Health and Wellness to make comments. Why wouldn't they make themselves available to clear the air and ensure Nova Scotians that they have access to obstetrics in rural Nova Scotia?

MR. GLAVINE: I certainly made myself available to the media and explained that we were concerned about the rate increase. I believe it is an area where we need some feedback and justification from CMPA. Right across Canada these fees are covered to a percentage of the total and the obstetricians/gynecologists will see exactly how that unfolds in the very near future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

EECD: MATH ENROLMENT SOFT CAP - CONFIRM

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. We can all agree that many doors can close for graduates without a solid foundation in Math. Grade 11 Academic Math will be extended to a full year, two credit course, while Academic Math 10 and Academic Math 11 class size enrolment will be capped at 24. My question to the minister, will other high school classes increase in size due to this cap and is the total cap of 24 a soft cap?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the question and I will attempt to answer that. We understand that the math scores in this province are not as good as any of us would like them to be and so our focus is certainly going to be on how we can bring about improvement in that particular subject, starting in Primary and working our way up. But we also recognize that at the high . . .

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

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During Question Period today, the Minister of Health and Wellness indicated that the previous government had taken a cut of half a million dollars out of the nursing strategy.

Mr. Speaker, half a million dollars was moved from the Department of Health and Wellness to the Department of Labour and Advanced Education for the nursing strategy under the previous administration. I just want to correct that misinformation that was put on the record by the Minister of Health and Wellness.

MR. SPEAKER: It's not a point of order. It's a disagreement of facts.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 76.

Bill No. 76 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 76 - an Act to Amend Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008, the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter - be read for a second time.

Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to rise in the House to speak to the amendments of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter to support a request from the municipality regarding the disclosure of compensation. The measures contained in this bill will improve the openness and transparency of governance in the province's largest municipality.

These measures will amend the HRM Charter to include disclosure provisions that are similar to those that are now contained in the province's Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act. These changes will help to make governance in Halifax even more open and accountable to residents.

Mr. Speaker, Halifax Council sought these changes and passed a resolution to that effect on December 2, 2014. Our government is pleased to support any measure that brings more transparency and an increased level of accountability to municipal government.

After passage of the legislation, Halifax will be enabled to make public the compensation paid to any person if it exceeds a certain threshold. Council will have the authority to set that threshold, Mr. Speaker. Halifax will also have the opportunity to define what constitutes "compensation" and to determine what municipal agencies, boards, and commissions will be subject to the rules.

If enacted, these provisions will improve access to information for all Halifax residents and Nova Scotians. It will give citizens the information they need to know how their tax dollars are spent and to have confidence that their money is wisely spent.

Mr. Speaker, I want to add that these amendments are consistent with the practice in many other provinces and municipalities. Five other provinces have now enacted rules that enable the disclosure of municipal compensation information. As I have said, this will make the rules in Halifax consistent with the rules that govern the Government of Nova Scotia and the provincial Public Service.

Before I conclude, I will acknowledge that these amendments affect only the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. They do not affect the province's other municipalities. That is a conversation that we have already begun with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities. The union has voiced its support for measures that increase openness and transparency in government, and I expect that the UNSM will continue those discussions and dialogue with the 51 municipalities amongst their membership. Our government is prepared to support any measure that improves the accountability of municipalities to their residents.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks. I look forward to hearing the comments of my colleagues.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill No. 76. This bill is a step toward increasing transparency and accountability in the province's largest municipality, and that is a good thing. This bill is in line with the province's Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act and similar legislation in Ontario, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Alberta.

The benefits of this kind of legislation are twofold. First, if HRM chooses to adopt it, municipal taxpayers will have a better idea of how their tax dollars are spent. Secondly, it will ensure that respect for taxpayers' dollars is always part of the equation when salary and other forms of compensation are being considered. We will watch with interest to see if HRM adopts this policy and at what level they set the disclosure threshold.

In 2010, during debate on the Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act, the member for Dartmouth East questioned what the threshold should be. One of the reasons for that is because by putting the amount at \$100,000, does that inadvertently say that we think that \$100,000 is too high a salary or an obscene salary just by virtue of it being that magical six figure salary, whereas by having it as the Civil Service Act at \$25,000 or some other number, then really we're saying in principle if it is public money then there should be public disclosure. It will be interesting to see which philosophy the HRM adopts.

We are pleased this bill is allowing and encouraging greater transparency in HRM. At a time when taxpayers are being asked to contribute more it is only fitting that they have more knowledge about where their money is being used. Thank you.

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

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I too am pleased to rise in my place for a few minutes and speak to this bill.

As the minister indicated, this makes amendments to the HRM Charter, allowing HRM to essentially adopt the practices that our provincial government have had in place for several years now. In fact I had the pleasure of being the minister to preside over the first time that public sector compensation was disclosed in a systematic way for the Province of Nova Scotia, an initiative of the previous government.

While I was in the Department of Finance, HRM in fact began the process, initiated the process to see that these amendments would come forward. At that time I remember having a conversation with one of the staff at HRM advising the process would be to have a resolution of council to formalize their request and then start the process. So I'm very pleased to see these amendments come forward.

As the minister has said, this will allow HRM to make certain determinations before they establish what the ground rules are around the disclosure of public compensation for the staff of the Halifax Regional Municipality. Here in the province we've set a floor of anybody who makes \$100,000 who works for government or those business entities that are government entities, like the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation or the Waterfront Development Corporation, the school boards, the health authority for the province, that on the first of August - I believe they have until the first of August to disclose people who are earning these rates of pay.

I think this does offer better transparency and, therefore, accountability to the citizens of the province who, after all, are the people who are footing the bill quite often for the compensation that people receive.

This is a good piece of legislation; this is a good amendment. It's one that has the support of the council and the elected officials on council, and we will be interested to hear what interventions may come in front of the Committee on Law Amendments, and see this bill proceed through our Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. MARK FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I wish to thank my colleagues on the opposite side of the House for their comments. I rise to close debate on Bill No. 76.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 76. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 79.

Bill No. 79 - Civil Service Act.

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

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 79, An Act to Amend Chapter 70 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Civil Service Act, be now read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians expect to have an efficient Public Service that delivers the programs and services they depend on. The Public Service Commission is introducing amendments to the Civil Service Act to enable better human resource management and remove barriers from hiring employees into the civil service. The Civil Service Act is being mandated to simplify procedure and clarify that deputy heads may delegate in writing those powers and duties that have been delegated to them by the Public Service Commission, remove unclear and redundant sections on citizenship and eligibility to work in Canada, and make some general housekeeping changes. By getting rid of red tape, hiring barriers, and confusing language, we will create a civil service that is better able to deliver services to Nova Scotians.

Under the Civil Service Act, the deputy heads' powers related to human resource management are delegated to him or her by the Public Service Commission. The Act provides a mechanism for deputy heads to sub-delegate authority to manage aspects of the day-to-day operation to his or her department. By simplifying and clarifying the authorities of deputy heads, they will be able to administer their departments more effectively, improving day-to-day operations and facilitating efficient human resource management.

The amendments to the Civil Service Act will also remove perceived barriers to hiring by removing outdated language and redundant clauses. This includes removing a hiring preference for residents of Canada and removing the requirements for immigrants to have permanent residence or citizenship to work for the civil service. They will only need to have authorization to work in Canada.

These changes were made in consultation with the Office of Immigration. They are in line with key government priorities and they support broader government workforce and immigration strategies. They also bring us in line with most other Canadian jurisdictions. These amendments will make it easier for new Nova Scotians to join the civil service. This will complement our efforts to welcome more skilled immigrants to the province and lead to the development of a more diverse workforce.

Finally, the amendments to the Civil Service Act will clean up and modernize language in the Act as part of general housekeeping. This includes, for example, replacing out-of-date terms and making the language gender-neutral.

Combined, these amendments will remove perceived barriers to hiring practices, better reflect current standards, and keep Nova Scotia in line with other jurisdictions. They will modernize the Civil Service Act and clarify and simplify processes to enable more effective human resource management. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, I'm pleased to rise to speak to Bill No. 79. The Ivany report called for bold action. When it comes to new government policy, bold action should come in the form of well-thought-out legislation that makes a significant difference. Unfortunately, this bill is window dressing at this point.

Our Party remains committed to bringing more immigrants to this province and agrees with the recommendations of the Ivany report. When looking at Bill No. 79, we must ask ourselves, is this bill actually in the spirit of the Ivany Report and will it attract many new immigrants to this province? The Ivany report is clear when it argues that the private sector should lead economic growth. This is something that the government agrees with, yet we have yet to see any meaningful measures to create the conditions for economic growth.

The Ivany report maintains that our economy has been weakened by an overreliance on government as the leading source of new employment and wealth generation. There are a number of things the government can do to help attract immigrants and grow the private sector yet this government has done little in this regard. Today Nova Scotia rolls out the welcome mat to new immigrants with the highest HST, sky-high power rates and 1,400 or so recent hikes in user fees. That is quite a welcome, isn't it, Mr. Speaker?

Apparently, due to the Liberals' inability to create the conditions which would lead to economic growth and provide good jobs to newcomers, as well as to those already in Nova Scotia, the government has decided that it should use the public sector to attract immigrants. At a time when this province is faced with the necessity of public restraint and potential job cuts in the civil service, this government thinks that the public sector can solve our problem of attracting more immigrants. It is curious that the government is doing this at a time when it has already cut civil service positions recently.

There are a number of unanswered questions with regard to this bill. It already seems doubtful that this bill significantly impacts the number of immigrants coming into this province. One question regarding the provisions of this bill is within the civil service itself - is the bill responding to a skilled labour shortage? For example, do we currently

have a larger number of unfilled positions, due to a lack of qualified applicants? Is that the problem which the bill is seeking to address? If it is, I think that a significant problem such as that requires a bigger response, which goes back to the labour market coordination and how we can ensure that students coming out of our educational institutions are equipped with the proper skills to fill the gaps in the labour market.

Also, any time we look at immigration and an employer's ability to hire immigrants or those who are not currently Canadian residents, we must be cognizant of federal rules, such as through Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada. For example, we know that employers can hire workers from abroad in order to support their acquisition of residency. However, when hiring skilled workers from abroad to support residency, Employment and Social Development Canada maintains that first employers are required to conduct recruitment efforts to hire Canadian and permanent residents before offering a job to foreign workers. So despite the government's intention, will they be able to do what the minister has said this bill will do?

Also, within the existing Civil Service Act, it appears the minister already had the authority to waive the residency requirement. Section 23(2) says, "This Section does not apply to any office or position the duties of which require in the opinion of the Department special professional, technical or administrative ability or training." I will table that. If this is the case and the minister already had the authority, why has it been brought forward in this legislation?

We support immigration, a diverse civil service and a growing tax base but we need to make meaningful efforts to promote these pieces. We also need to make sure fairness in hiring practices remain in place and transparent. For example, what processes other than competitions does the government plan to employ when filling positions? The government may point to guidelines such as the Fair Hiring Practices but legislation overrides everything,

I think the government needs to be fully transparent about what new processes or powers they think they need by way of this bill and how will they safeguard fairness. The public sector has some of the best paid jobs in Nova Scotia. Competition and fairness or even the perception of it should not be eroded in the eyes of the public. Ministerial responsibilities in the departments of government are also critical to our model of responsible government. If deputies can delegate authority for already unclear new powers without the approval of the minister, accountability must be strengthened. This provision should not be used to shield ministers from the goings-on in their department. After all, it is ministers, not civil servants, who are accountable to this House and to the people of Nova Scotia. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to stand for a moment to speak on Bill No. 79. Often it is said through introduction of bills that a piece of legislation is housekeeping and in Opposition your antennae go up when you hear that. You hope that is the intention and with this piece of legislation I do recognize the need to update it, the need to ensure that gender-neutral language is used in legislation and I think definitely outdated language needs to be fixed. So we do want to support this piece of legislation to go through the process. We know through Law Amendments Committee and other avenues that we may hear from Nova Scotians who may have some concerns with this but I hope the minister is genuine with his attempt to try to clean up an existing piece of legislation.

When we are talking about improvement to our civil servants and access to civil service jobs, I know that is extremely important to new Nova Scotians, especially to our immigrant population who come to Nova Scotia. For many of them their first exposure to our province is through the education system. We know our universities and our colleges attract a high number of out-of-country students and we know how important it is for us as a small province to continue to have those individuals stay and remain here in Nova Scotia.

If we see an improvement to access to some of those civil service jobs, I think we can see those numbers increase. There has been a lot of talk over the last year or so around the Ivany commission and the Ivany report and the importance immigration has on our economy here in Nova Scotia and we need to continue to expand and improve the access for those immigrants to come and remain in Nova Scotia. A job, really, after the education component is finished, Mr. Speaker, is probably the most important thing for not only students from outside our province but students from outside our country. That really determines if they stay here in Nova Scotia or if they go on to other jurisdictions in other parts of the country.

We know we have been lagging behind other jurisdictions in improving the number of immigrants we can have here in the province. I know it is tied specifically to the federal government and their ability to improve the numbers we have. I know that we as a province need to continue to emphasize to the federal government the importance of immigration here in Nova Scotia and really that is where we need to emphasize some of our efforts in the coming years with the federal government.

We see some positive things in here but as I said in my opening comments, whenever we hear housekeeping the antennae go up. We want to see this go through the process to Law Amendments Committee and we'll see if there are any concerns. Hopefully if there are concerns, the government will listen to those and make some corrections as we go through this process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: I will be brief in my comments. The member for Pictou West was alluding to this bill be being a fix for all of the Ivany goals. I will go back to just mention that this is the Civil Service Act. (Interruption)

You can get up on a point of order if you don't like my words but this is a Civil Service Act, Mr. Speaker, and . . .

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, the minister wanted me to get up on a point of order. If he wants to manage somebody else's words he can do that; it's in his responsibility. But that's not what the member for Pictou West said. I think she was being more than generous in her comments and trying to be respectful of the bill that is before us and if the minister doesn't want to be respectful to us that's fine.

MR. SPEAKER: We have a disagreement of facts between two members.

The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission.

MR. KOUSOULIS: I'm pretty sure I did hear some Ivany goals in her speech, I could be wrong. What I would like to mention, just for a bit of clarification - it's the Public Service Commission that delegates the authority, not the minister. That is a very key point in terms of what the member was speaking to.

In terms of other aspects that were mentioned, I would like to add that it is very important that, if you have the eligibility to work in Canada, you have the eligibility to work at the Public Service Commission. This not only applies to immigrants, but this also applies to our youth. This is where we need to align government strategy with our strategy.

Before I became the minister of this department, Mr. Speaker, you could not hire a new graduate into the Public Service; you needed two years of experience. This has been changed. I am happy that this bill will actually change the fact that an immigrant who is eligible to work in Canada can now work for the Public Service Commission.

With that, I would like to close debate on Bill No. 79.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 79. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I call on the House Leader for the Official Opposition to set their business for tomorrow.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, after the daily routine and Question Period, we'll be calling Bill No. 73, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and Bill No. 77, the Conflict of Interest Act. I do now move that we rise for the day and meet again between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again tomorrow, April 8th, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We now stand adjourned until tomorrow, April 8th, at 1:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 3:17 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1294**

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Lorri Arnold of Musquodoboit Harbour is the manager of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Lorri Arnold and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1295

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Pat Walker of Porters Lake is the head coach of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Pat Walker and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1296

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Paul Arnold of Musquodoboit Harbour is an assistant coach of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Paul Arnold and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1297

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Eric Bertrand of Gaetz Brook is an assistant coach of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Eric Bertrand and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1298

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Greer Grady of Porters Lake is an assistant coach of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Greer Grady and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1299

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 11-year-old Lucas Condon-Oldreive of West Porters Lake is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Lucas Condon-Oldreive and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1300

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Ethan Firth of Porters Lake is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ethan Firth and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1301

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Riley Johnson of Musquodoboit Harbour is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Riley Johnson and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1302

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Nick Walker of Porters Lake is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Nick Walker and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1303

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Bryton Ferris of Chezzetcook is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Bryton Ferris and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1304

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Alex Bonang of Porters Lake is a member of the 2014-15 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom "B" Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor Regular Season Standings with a record of nineteen wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of 4-1 to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom "B" Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Alex Bonang and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom "B" Mariners on their 2014-15 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1305

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 11-year-old Cameron Mitchell of Porters Lake is a member of the 2014-15 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom "B" Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor Regular Season Standings with a record of nineteen wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of 4-1 to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom "B" Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Cameron Mitchell and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom "B" Mariners on their 2014-15 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1306

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Austin Bellefontaine of Porters Lake is a member of the 2014-15 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom "B" Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor Regular Season Standings with a record of nineteen wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of 4-1 to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom "B" Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Austin Bellefontaine and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom "B" Mariners on their 2014-15 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1307

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Ben Jackson of Porters Lake is a member 2014-15 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom "B" Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor Regular Season Standings with a record of nineteen wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of 4-1 to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom "B" Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ben Jackson and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom "B" Mariners on their 2014-15 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1308

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Anthony Arnold of Musquodoboit Harbour is a member 2014-15 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom "B" Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor Regular Season Standings with a record of nineteen wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of 4-1 to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom "B" Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Anthony Arnold and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom "B" Mariners on their 2014-15 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1309

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 11-year-old Aiden Jennex of Oyster Pond is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Aiden Jennex and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1310

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas nine-year-old Nathan Bertrand of Gaetz Brook is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Nathan Bertrand and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1311

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 11-year-old Garson Grady of Porters Lake is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Garson Grady and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1312

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 11-year-old Olivia O'Grady of Musquodoboit Harbour is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Olivia O'Grady and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1313

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Noah Lacombe-Pitre of West Porters Lake is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Noah Lacombe-Pitre and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1314

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Jackson Murphy of West Porters Lake is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jackson Murphy and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1315

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 10-year-old Mauricio Euloth of Porters Lake is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Mauricio Euloth and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1316

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas 11-year-old Cameron Thompson of Jeddore is a member of the 2014-2015 Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners; and

Whereas the Mariners finished first in the Central Minor regular season standings with a record of 19 wins, one loss, and two ties; and

Whereas on March 29, 2015, the Mariners defeated the Antigonish Bulldogs by a score of four to one to capture the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Atom B Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Cameron Thompson and the entire Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association's Atom B Mariners on their 2014-2015 season accomplishments.

RESOLUTION NO. 1317

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Hants County Christmas Angels is an awesome yearly show of community support that assists approximately 200 families every year; and

Whereas Erin Amirault, 2014's Christmas Angels coordinator, with the help of many volunteers, on December 7th, were very pleased by the end of the evening to see \$29,455 pledged; and

Whereas the musical talent, which included many Hants County schools and musicians, young and old, both amateur and professional, showed what community support is all about;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Erin Amirault for her outstanding work with the 2014 Hants County Christmas Angels show.

RESOLUTION NO. 1318

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Lieutenant Governor's Persons with Disabilities Employer Partnership Award was created to acknowledge and honour employers who go to great lengths to ensure that persons with disabilities realize their full potential in the workforce; and

Whereas when Newport Station business owner Terry Brown, who has dyslexia, was injured in a workplace accident and found himself unable to find work, he turned to the Hants County Community Access Network (CAN), which helped him obtain a Class 1 Driver's licence; and

Whereas in 2012, Mr. Brown opened Brown's Garage, where he has since been able to hire two young men who also have some degree of disability, which prompted Kim Aker, executive director of the Hants County CAN to nominate Mr. Brown for the Persons with Disabilities Employer Partnership Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Terry Brown on this prestigious award and wish him continued success in his business ventures.

RESOLUTION NO. 1319

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas on January 1st, more than 40 people took part in the first Windsor Polar Bear Dip; and

Whereas more than \$3,000 was raised by the Windsor Rotary Club, along with the six Valley-based clubs, for the Valley Food Bank; and

Whereas several hundred were in attendance, including members of the Windsor Fire Department lending a hand to ensure this event would be a great success;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate all that participated and thank the Rotary Club of Windsor for organizing the Windsor Polar Bear Dip and wish them continued success in years to come.

RESOLUTION NO. 1320

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas to beat the winter blues, the Windsor Rugby Club decided to create an annual social, friendly tournament; and

Whereas this is the 4th annual Machine Spiel at the Windsor Curling Club, bringing together rugby players from across the province for friendly rivalry curling; and

Whereas to make it more interesting, most of the 20 rugby teams arrived dressed in costume with original team names, some being first-time curlers, making it that much more enjoyable;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly applaud the Windsor Machine Rugby Club for dropping the ball and picking up the broom to make a winter social function more entertaining.

RESOLUTION NO. 1321

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas basketball is an opportunity to bring our youth together, teaching them team spirit and fair play and to just have some fun; and

Whereas the Shooting Stars Bantam Boys Basketball team recently won a Halifax tournament they competed in; and

Whereas after winning their first game of the tournament, the Shooting Stars never looked back, continuing on to play in the deciding game;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly please wish the Shooting Stars Bantam Boys Basketball team good luck as they make their way to the provincials in April.

RESOLUTION NO. 1322

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Hantsport resident St. Clair (Joey) Patterson, a long-time Legion member, has reached an impressive milestone; and

Whereas St. Clair recently received his 70 years of service pin with the Royal Canadian Legion in Windsor; and

Whereas this local historian was president of Lucknow Branch 109, Royal Canadian Legion in Hantsport many times between 1955 and 2012;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate St. Clair (Joey) Patterson for receiving his 70-year pin and being such an asset in our community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1323

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Hantsport resident Bill Mulhall has been described as a modest man and has reached an impressive milestone; and

Whereas Bill recently received his 70 years of service pin with the Royal Canadian Legion in Windsor; and

Whereas Bill has been earnestly involved over the years with the Hantsport Memorial Community Centre, an engineer at the Canadian Keyes Fibre Company, and his many years of public service with the Rotary Club of Windsor;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bill Mulhall on receiving his 70-year pin and being such an asset in our community.