



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 1324, Intl. Day of Pink (04/08/15): Bullying - Eradicate, The Premier.....	3378
Vote - Affirmative.....	3379
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:	
No. 82, Change of Name Act and Vital Statistics Act, Hon. M. Furey.....	3380
No. 83, Elections Act, Hon. L. Diab	3380
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:	
Fin. & Treasury Bd. - Friends of N.S. Film Ind.: Electronic Petition - Table, Hon. M. MacDonald.....	3380
Immigrant Serv. Assoc. N.S. (ISANS) - Programming, Ms. P. Arab	3380
Ottawa House By-the-Sea Museum: Parrsboro Shore Hist. Soc. -Vols. Congrats., Hon. J. Baillie	3381

Intl. Day of Pink (04/08/15): Discrimination - Discourage, Hon. David Wilson	3381
Becke, Dr. Axel - Herzberg Can. Award, Hon. L. Kousoulis	3382
Cabot Links - VISA Can. Traveller of Yr. Award, Mr. A. MacMaster	3382
Film Ind. Tax Credit: Changes - Consultation, Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse	3382
Borden, Theresa - Hayden Award, Hon. R. Delorey	3383
MacDonald, Arlene: Cdn. Women's Fdn. Leadership Instit. - Participation, Mr. T. Houston	3383
Rural N.S. - Taxpayers: Services - Equality Support, Hon. S. Belliveau	3384
MacDonald, Greg et al: Westphal-Cole Hbr. FD - Serv. Thank, Hon. T. Ince	3384
LeBlanc, P�re Maurice - Prov. Vol. of Yr., Hon. C. d'Entremont	3384
Agric./LAE - Wine Ind. - Lbr.: Concerns - Assist, Ms. L. Zann	3385
Gov't. (N.S.): Prov. Spending - Control, Mr. E. Orrell	3385
McNeil Gov't.: Patient Care - Focus, Hon. S. Belliveau	3386
Carman, Thian: Farming Achievements - Congrats., Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3386
Port Williams & Dist. Lions Club/Members - Commitment, Mr. J. Lohr	3386
Dance 11 Showcase: Dancers - Congrats., Hon. M. Furey.....	3387
Matheson, Beth: Commun. Worker - Congrats., Hon. A. MacLeod	3387
Seniors - Prov. Income Tax: Elimination - Recommendation Reject, Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse	3387
Social Justice Youth Camp - Pink Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3388
MacKinnon, Mayor Glenn - Competency/Engagement, Hon. P. Dunn	3388
Health & Wellness: Travel Nurses - Contract Provide, Hon. David Wilson	3388
Poulette, Margaret/Grand Chief Ben Sylliboy - Sylliboy Award, Mr. A. MacMaster	3389
Intl. Day of Pink (04/08/15) - Founders, Hon. L. Glavine	3389

Fin. & Treasury Bd.: HST Exemptions - Fam. Essentials, Ms. L. Zann	3390
Park West Sch. - Hockey Day in Can.: Students/Staff - Recognize, Hon. D. Whalen	3390
Salmon River & Dist. Vol. Fire Brigade - Gratitude Express, Mr. L. Harrison	3391
MacLeod, Janet: Constituency Office - Acknowledge, Mr. T. Houston	3391
Embree, Charles - Intl. Fruit Tree Assoc. Award, Mr. J. Lohr	3391
Bedford Players Commun. Theatre: Grandmothers to Grandmothers - Donation, Hon. K. Regan	3392
MacPhail, Mark - Arm Wrestling Gold Medal, Hon. A. MacLeod	3392
Intl. Day of Pink - Bullying: Effects - Awareness, Ms. M. Miller	3392
Intl. Day of Pink (04/08/15): Diversity - Support, Mr. E. Orrell	3393
Fam. SOS Courage to Give Back Awards: Recipients (2015) - Congrats., Mr. B. Maguire	3393
Gov't. (N.S.): Action Budget - Deliver, Hon. C. d'Entremont	3394
Gaelic Heritage/Language: Victoria-The Lakes - Protection/Promotion, Ms. P. Eyking	3394
Green, Alex: Prov. Vol. Awards Ceremony - Recognition, Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft	3394
Fisherman's Cove: ACCESS-Ability Prog. - Thank, Ms. J. Treen	3395
Healey, Pat: Commun. Info. - Thank, Mr. S. Gough	3395
Greenlaw, Mr. Bev.: Basketball - Dedication, Mr. K. Irving	3396
Ash Lee Jefferson Sch. - Hockey Day, Mr. B. Horne	3396
Boylston Commun. Assoc. - Little Red School House, Mr. L. Hines	3396
Commun. Health Team: Commun. Engagement Session - Fairview Legion, Ms. P. Arab	3397
CACL Classic Hockey Fundraiser: Antigonish MLA - Participation, Hon. R. Delorey	3397
Dart. Commun. Health Bd.: Work - Thank, Hon. T. Ince	3398
Health & Wellness: Health Care System - Workers Heed, Hon. M. MacDonald	3398
Comeau, Bernardin & Marcel: Death of - Tribute, Mr. Gordon Wilson	3399

Alzheimer Research Breakfast (02/20/15): Organizing Comm. - Thank, Hon. M. Furey	3399
Finnie, James & Linda - The Scots Soc.: Formation - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey	3400
Centre scolaire de la Rive-Sud (Grade 4): Fundraising - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft	3400
ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS:	
No. 528, Prem.: Film Tax Credit - Retention, Hon. J. Baillie	3401
No. 529, Prem.: Children's Dental Coverage - Commitment Confirm, Hon. M. MacDonald	3402
No. 530, Prem.: Fixed Election Dates - Status, Hon. J. Baillie	3403
No. 531, Prem. - Film Tax Credit: Changes - Consequences, Ms. L. Zann.....	3404
No. 532, Fin. & Treasury Bd.: Departmental Spending - Reduction, Mr. T. Houston.....	3405
No. 533, PSC: Sick Leave - Reduction, Ms. K. MacFarlane	3406
No. 534, Com. Serv.: Affordable Housing (Hants West) - Funding, Mr. C. Porter	3406
No. 535, Health & Wellness: Trained Nurses - Availability, Hon. David Wilson	3407
No. 536, TIR - Studded Tires: Driver Safety - Prioritize, Mr. E. Orrell.....	3408
No. 537, ERDT: Rural Areas - Internet Needs, Mr. L. Harrison	3409
No. 538, Prem.: Children's HST Exemption - Retain, Hon. M. MacDonald	3410
No. 539, Justice: Seniors - Phone Scams, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	3411
No. 540, Health & Wellness: Home Care - Service Standards, Mr. E. Orrell.....	3411
No. 541, Prem. - Home Energy: HST - Stance, Hon. M. MacDonald	3412
No. 542, SNS/MA: LaHave Ferry Meeting - Min. Attend, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	3413
No. 543, Com. Serv.: Rehab. Centres - Admission Moratorium, Mr. L. Harrison	3415
No. 544, TIR: Prov. Ferries - Tax Hikes, Hon. S. Belliveau	3415
No. 545, ERDT: Invest N.S. Bd. - Strategic Investments, Mr. J. Lohr	3417
No. 546, ERDT - Eastlink Internet Serv.: Provision - Improvement Urge, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	3418

OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS:

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 73, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act	
Mr. T. Houston.....	3419
Mr. I. Rankin.....	3422
Hon. David Wilson	3423
Ms. K. MacFarlane	3425
No. 77, Conflict of Interest Act	
Mr. J. Lohr	3427
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3430
Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....	3432
Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	3434

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5):

Fin. & Treasury Bd.: Film Tax Credit - Changes Halt,	
Ms. L. Zann.....	3439
Mr. T. Farrell.....	3442
Mr. J. Lohr	3445

ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Thur., Apr. 9th at 1:00 p.m.3448

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):

Res. 1325, Kelly, MacKenzie: Anna. Valley Apple Blossom Fest.	
- Princess Hantsport, Mr. C. Porter.....	3449
Res. 1326, Handspiker-Wade, Hailey: Respectful Citizenship Award	
(2015), Mr. Gordon Wilson	3449
Res. 1327, Pothier, Neil: Digby Vol. Rep. of Yr. - Congrats.,	
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3450
Res. 1328, Comeau, Jocelyne: Clare Vol. Rep. of Yr. - Congrats.,	
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3450
Res. 1329, Doucette, Mr. Stacey: Digby Mun. Dist. Vol. of Yr.	
- Congrats., Mr. Gordon Wilson	3451
Res. 1330, Grover, Will - Fire Serv. Long Serv. Award (5 Yrs.),	
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3451
Res. 1331, VanTassel, Greg - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (5 Yrs.),	
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3452
Res. 1332, Gamborg, Sean - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (5 Yrs.),	
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3452
Res. 1333, Robertson, Richard - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (30 Yrs.),	
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3453
Res. 1334, Turnbull, Jack - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (35 Yrs.),	
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3453
Res. 1335, Gaunce, Jim - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (35 Yrs.),	
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3454
Res. 1336, Wood, Justin - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (20 Yrs.),	
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3454
Res. 1337, Walker, Kenny - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (25 Yrs.),	
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3455

Res. 1338, Walker, Paulette - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (15 Yrs.), Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3455
Res. 1339, Dugas, Paul - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (20 Yrs.), Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3456
Res. 1340, Hersey, Robert - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (5 Yrs.), Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3456
Res. 1341, Sabeau, Adam - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (5 Yrs.), Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3457
Res. 1342, Stark, Nicole - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (5 Yrs.), Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3457
Res. 1343, Sabeau, Richard - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (5 Yrs.), Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3458
Res. 1344, Amero, Robert - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (15 Yrs.), Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3458
Res. 1345, Heasman, Reg - Fire Serv. Long-Serv. Award (15 Yrs.), Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3459
Res. 1346, Hfx. Field Naturalists - Anniv. (40 th), Hon. L. Kousoulis.....	3459
Res. 1347, Becke, Dr. Axel - Herzberg Can. Award, Hon. L. Kousoulis.....	3460
Res. 1348, Fusion Hfx.: Vols. - Congrats., Hon. L. Kousoulis.....	3460
Res. 1349, Macmillan, Scott: Portia White Prize - Congrats., Hon. L. Kousoulis.....	3461
Res. 1350, Syed, Talha/Gao, Victor: N.S. Spelling Bee - Congrats., Hon. L. Kousoulis.....	3461
Res. 1351, Osburn, Andy: Innovation/Entrepreneurial Spirit - Congrats., Hon. L. Kousoulis.....	3462
Res. 1352, Hobbs, Mark/Kolmatycki, Chris: Innovation/ Entrepreneurial Spirit - Congrats., Hon. L. Kousoulis.....	3462
Res. 1353, Dobbs, Jennie/Morris East Team: Intl. Pizza Expo. - Congrats., Hon. L. Kousoulis.....	3463
Res. 1354, Dr. John Hugh Gillis Reg. HS Core Gaelic Prog. - Scotland Trip, Hon. R. Delorey.....	3463
Res. 1355, Jacquard, Bruce: Shakespeare Carving - Congrats., Hon. Z. Churchill.....	3464
Res. 1356, Rogers, Capt. Sarah: Career Success - Congrats., Hon. Z. Churchill.....	3464
Res. 1357, Friel, Dr. Patrick: Retirement - Congrats., Hon. Z. Churchill.....	3465
Res. 1358, Comeau, Tina/ <i>Yarmouth Vanguard</i> - Sports Coverage Award, Hon. Z. Churchill.....	3465
Res. 1359, Yar. Garian Const. Atom C Hockey Team: Gold Medal Performance - Congrats., Hon. Z. Churchill.....	3465
Res. 1360, Yar. PeeWee A Mariners: Performance - Congrats., Hon. Z. Churchill.....	3466

Res. 1361, Jennings, Riley: St. F.X. Football Team - Selection Congrats., Hon. K. Casey.....	3466
Res. 1362, Finnie, James & Linda - The Scots Soc.: Formation - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey	3467
Res. 1363, Social Justice Youth Camp - Pink Award, Hon. K. Casey	3467
Res. 1364, McEvoy, Steve: Valley-Kempton Fire Brigade - Serv. Pin (15 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3468
Res. 1365, Morse, Aaron: Valley-Kempton Fire Brigade - MacAulay Training Award, Hon. K. Casey	3468
Res. 1366, Teed, Alex: Valley-Kempton Fire Brigade - Serv. Pin (10 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3469
Res. 1367, Moore, Brad: Valley-Kempton Fire Brigade - Serv. Pin (10 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3469
Res. 1368, Green, Kim: Valley-Kempton Fire Brigade - Officer of Yr. Award (2015), Hon. K. Casey	3470
Res. 1369, Maskill, Spencer: Valley-Kempton Fire Brigade - Fireman of Yr. Award (2015), Hon. K. Casey	3470
Res. 1370, Slack, Brandon: Debert Fire Brigade - Firefighter of Yr. Award, Hon. K. Casey	3471
Res. 1371, Geldart, Don: Debert Fire Brigade - Serv. Award (15 Yrs.)/ Fire Officer of Yr. Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3471
Res. 1372, Barnhill, Eric: Debert Fire Brigade - Serv. Award (25 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3472
Res. 1373, Slack, Kyle: Debert Fire Brigade - Serv. Award (15 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3472
Res. 1374, Hepburn, Mike: Debert Fire Brigade - Barnhill Most Improved Firefighter Award, Hon. K. Casey	3473
Res. 1375, Smith, Ronnie: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - Serv. Award (15 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3473
Res. 1376, George, Sharon: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade Ladies Aux. - Serv. Award (5 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3474
Res. 1377, Francis, Terry: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - Serv. Award (20 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3474
Res. 1378, Spence, Terry: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - Serv. Award (20 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3475
Res. 1379, Spencer, Trevor: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - Serv. Award (5 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3475
Res. 1380, McInnes Cooper: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - Steve Francis Mem. Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3476
Res. 1381, Jenkins, Barrett: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - Firefighter of Yr. Award, Hon. K. Casey	3476
Res. 1382, Jenkins, Barrett: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - Most Improved Firefighter Award, Hon. K. Casey	3477
Res. 1383, Fields, Charles: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - Serv. Award (5 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3477

Res. 1384, Congdon, Chris: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - Officer of Yr. Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3478
Res. 1385, Dodsworth-Lush, Daniel: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - Jr. Firefighter Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3478
Res. 1386, Congdon, Chris: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade - O'Brien Fellowship Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3479
Res. 1387, Slack, Kathy: Great Village & Dist. Fire Brigade Ladies Aux. - Serv. Award (20 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	3479
Res. 1388, Langille, Brian: Tatamagouche FD - Serv. Medal (30 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey.....	3480
Res. 1389, Reid, Bryan: Tatamagouche FD - Life Member Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3480
Res. 1390, Veno, Cameron: Tatamagouche FD - Life Member Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3481
Res. 1391, Langille, Bob: Tatamagouche FD - Serv. Award (45 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey.....	3481
Res. 1392, Fahey, Allan: Tatamagouche FD - Prov. Medal (25 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey.....	3482
Res. 1393, MacCallum, Adrian: Tatamagouche FD - Pin (10 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey.....	3482
Res. 1394, Colburn, Tim: Tatamagouche FD - Officer of Yr. Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3483
Res. 1395, Jollymore, Dale: Tatamagouche FD - Serv. Medal (50 Yrs.)/ Life Member Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3483
Res. 1396, Halverson, Jack: Tatamagouche FD - Serv. Award (50 Yrs.)/ Life Member Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3484
Res. 1397, Friesen, Jeffrey: Tatamagouche FD - MacBurnie Award for Training, Hon. K. Casey.....	3484
Res. 1398, Russell, Jeremy: Tatamagouche FD - Firefighter of Yr. Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3485
Res. 1399, Forbes, Jim: Tatamagouche FD - Prov. Medal (25 Yrs.)/ Life Member Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3485
Res. 1400, Bonnyman, John: Tatamagouche FD - Life Member Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3486
Res. 1401, Sellers, John: Tatamagouche FD - Serv. Medal (45 Yrs.)/ Life Member Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3486
Res. 1402, Forbes, Matt: Tatamagouche FD - MacIntosh Special Serv. Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3487
Res. 1403, Colburn, Paul: Tatamagouche FD - MacIntosh Special Serv. Award, Hon. K. Casey.....	3487
Res. 1404, Cook, Paul: Tatamagouche FD - Grant Fireperson of Yr. Award, Hon. K. Casey	3488
Res. 1405, Lockerby, Peter: Tatamagouche FD - Pin (15 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey.....	3488



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2015

Sixty-second General Assembly

Second Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Ms. Margaret Miller

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Just before we get into the daily routine, the topic for late debate tonight, as submitted by the honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River, is:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature urge the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board to hit pause on any changes to the Film Tax Credit until the industry has properly consulted.

Also, before we start the daily routine officially, I want to revisit the concerns I had yesterday about the ministerial statement of the honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

The honourable minister began her statement by saying, "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."

While later she did go on to talk about other matters as well, the opening words certainly sounded to me like debate on a bill that had just been introduced and which had not yet been added to the order paper for second reading. It has been ruled in the past that ministerial statements are not to be used for debate and I was concerned initially that this is what appeared to be happening yesterday.

Opposition members are permitted to respond to ministerial statements, and if we open up debate on bills before they have even been moved for second reading, I am concerned there will be a deterioration in the parliamentary procedure here, as we know it, in this Assembly.

In the interest of preserving order in the way this House operates, I ask that all ministers be careful not to stray too close into debate on bills under the order of business, Statements by Ministers. Thank you all for your co-operation.

The honourable House Leader for the Official Opposition.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: If I can add a couple of things to that as well - there was a bit of confusion with what was going on yesterday. I know the minister didn't have all her speaking notes with her, Opposition Parties only got the notice about 28 minutes before the House sat, so if I were to ask anything, it is just to simply make sure that we are all prepared for these things as they come along.

MR. SPEAKER: All right. We will begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 1324

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas April 8, 2015, marks the International Day of Pink, a movement started by Nova Scotians David Shepherd and Travis Price after seeing a student being bullied in the school; and

Whereas it is a day where people across Canada and the world unite in celebrating diversity and raising awareness to stop homophobia, transphobia, and all forms of bullying; and

Whereas it is important to celebrate the differences among us and ensure that every Nova Scotian has the opportunity to fulfill their dreams, to feel comfortable in their community, and be able to show us who they are;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly work together to eradicate bullying in Nova Scotia while promoting acceptance, understanding, and respect for all.

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 Community Services.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, may I make some introductions, please?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. BERNARD: I would like to direct the attention of all members to the east gallery. Joining us today are Jessica Durling of King's PRIDE and Kate Shewan, the executive director of the Youth Project in Halifax. I'd like to thank them for being here. I know the bill that I'm about to introduce on Minister Furey's behalf is very important to them as it is to me as well.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 82 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 66 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Change of Name Act, and Chapter 494 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Vital Statistics Act. (Hon. Mark Furey)

Bill No. 83 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 5 of the Acts of 2011. The Elections Act. (Hon. Lena Diab)

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 Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party.

**FIN. & TREASURY BD. - FRIENDS OF N.S. FILM IND.:
ELECTRONIC PETITION - TABLE**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, on May 15, 2012, the now Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, speaking in this House about an electronic petition signed by 22,000 people regarding Nova Scotia Power, said, “. . . more than 22,000 people have signed the petition. If they came here in person or if they phoned the office of the Premier, he would be forced to listen, and because the petition is electronic, I believe it’s just as meaningful . . .” - that was her position on electronic petitions on that day.

Today the Friends of the N.S. Screen Industry have provided the Finance and Treasury Board Minister with an electronic petition calling on the McNeil Government to preserve the Nova Scotia Film and Digital Media Tax Credit - no change without consultation. There are 24,000 names on the petition and I believe it’s just as meaningful as that petition back in May 2012. I call on the Finance and Treasury Board Minister to table today’s petition in the House. Thank you.

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

IMMIGRANT SERV. ASSOC. N.S. (ISANS) - PROGRAMMING

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services has recently changed its name to the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia. ISANS is a leading organization in welcoming new immigrants to Nova Scotia and supporting them throughout the immigration transition. They are strong advocates for helping new immigrants build their future here in Nova Scotia. The programming and services offered throughout ISANS facilitate and encourage newcomers to be active

members of their communities. The goal of ISANS is to make newcomers feel welcome and help make Nova Scotia stronger because of its diversity. They have helped thousands of families and individuals make Nova Scotia their home and I am proud to have their programs and services in our community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

**OTTAWA HOUSE BY-THE-SEA MUSEUM:
PARRSBORO SHORE HIST. SOC. -VOLS. CONGRATS.**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the volunteers who form the Parrsboro Shore Historical Society on the pending transfer of ownership of Ottawa House By-the-Sea Museum from the provincial government.

The Parrsboro Shore Historical Society was founded in 1981 for the express purpose of saving, maintaining, and restoring the historic Ottawa House By-the-Sea. I know that the society's team of volunteers are excited to get on with the repair and restoration work needed as they prepare for the celebration that marks the 100th anniversary of the death of Sir Charles Tupper, the building's most famous occupant. I congratulate the society on their new ownership, thank them for all of their hard work in preserving this historic treasure for the community, and look forward to the events they have planned for summer 2015.

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

INTL. DAY OF PINK (04/08/15): DISCRIMINATION - DISCOURAGE

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, The Pink Movement began here in Nova Scotia when two high school students wore pink shirts in solidarity with a classmate who was bullied for wearing pink the day before. The Pink Movement spread to other schools across the province and prompted former Premier MacDonald to proclaim the second Thursday in September as Stand Up Against Bullying Day in Nova Scotia.

Other provinces have followed suit. B.C. created their own anti-bullying day, which is recognized each February. Today marks the International Day of Pink, created by the organization Jer's Vision, and is another day for us to pause and take stock of our own behaviours. We can and must take a stance against bullying and harassment. As MLAs and leaders in our community, we have a responsibility to discourage discrimination when we see it and to promote a culture of kindness and equality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

BECKE, DR. AXEL - HERZBERG CAN. AWARD

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Dr. Axel Becke on receiving the Gerhard Herzberg Gold Medal for Science and Engineering, one of the most prestigious research awards in Canada. Dr. Becke, cited over 100,000 times in the field of chemistry, is known for his groundbreaking work in the density-functional theory. Two of his articles are named by *Nature* magazine among the top 25 most-cited papers of all time in all scientific disciplines.

A Killam professor in the Department of Chemistry at Dalhousie University, Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and Fellow of the Royal Society of London, Dr. Becke has also received the Theoretical Chemistry Award of the American Chemical Society and is a medalist of the International Academy of Quantum Molecular Science and the World Association of Theoretical and Computational Chemists. I'm proud to have Dr. Becke as a member of our community, and would like to thank him sincerely for the wonderful things he has done for science in Nova Scotia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

CABOT LINKS - VISA CAN. TRAVELLER OF YR. AWARD

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, the 2014 VISA Canada Traveller Experience of the Year Award was recently presented to Ben Cowan-Dewar, managing director of Cabot Links. The award is presented to the business or organization that creates the year's most exceptional tourism product, service, or experience centred on the fundamental principles of hospitality and customer service.

The only authentic links golf course in Canada, Cabot Links was selected by its peers as the most exceptional tourism experience in Canada. Mr. Cowan-Dewar gave credit to the entire Cabot Links team, who work exceptionally hard to create an unforgettable experience for visitors to a very special part of the world. Congratulations to all the staff at Cabot Links for delivering a world-class tourism experience.

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

FILM IND. TAX CREDIT: CHANGES - CONSULTATION

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, the Municipality of the District of Chester has written to the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board raising concerns over her recent comments about changing the Film Industry Tax Credit. They want to make sure the McNeil Government understands what the TV series *Haven* means to the Village of Chester and the County of Lunenburg. Every year the film production industry spends millions on food, vehicle rentals and gas, security firms, hotel rooms, construction materials for sets, costume rentals, set decoration, and more. The municipality

estimates that in only five years, the production of Haven has brought \$50 million to the local economy - \$50 million. I hope the MLAs for Lunenburg and Lunenburg West will join me in calling for no changes to the Film Industry Tax Credit without consultation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

BORDEN, THERESA - HAYDEN AWARD

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, every year Special Olympics Nova Scotia recognizes and celebrates their athletes, coaches, and volunteers with awards that are handed out at the Special Olympics Festival. I'm proud to say that three Antigonishers received awards at this year's festival, and one of them was Theresa Borden. Theresa won the Dr. Frank Hayden Award. Theresa has been an active participant with the Special Olympics since it started in Antigonish in 1979. She started as a track and field athlete, and has now competed in bowling, floor hockey, soccer, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and golf.

Mr. Speaker, at the festival event this year, guests got a first-hand account of how Theresa is an exceptional ambassador for Special Olympics. Special Olympics Nova Scotia is an amazing organization that, through the power of sport, offers empowerment, competence, and acceptance. I was so proud to be at this year's festival to congratulate Theresa in person for winning the Dr. Frank Hayden Award. Special Olympics Eastern Highlands is very proud to have her as part of their team and I am very proud to have her as a constituent in Antigonish.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MACDONALD, ARLENE: CDN. WOMEN'S FDN. LEADERSHIP INSTIT. PARTICIPATION

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, Arlene MacDonald, executive director of the Pictou County Women's Resource and Sexual Assault Centre, has been chosen as one of 24 women participating in the Canadian Women's Foundation Leadership Institute. The program is a partnership between the Canadian Women's Foundation and the Coady International Institute at St. F.X. and is designed to build the leadership capacity of women leaders. It is an intense one-year program focusing on personal leadership skills, organizational development to strengthen and lead effective organizations, and community development and policy advocacy skills to contribute to social change.

I wish Arlene the best and know that the information she takes away from this program will help the women she serves.

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

RURAL N.S. - TAXPAYERS: SERVICES - EQUALITY SUPPORT

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, provincial income taxes are the same no matter where you live. People with the same income in Sydney, Sackville, and Shelburne all pay the same amount to the province.

It is frustrating, then, to see so many provincial services leaving rural Nova Scotia. After less than two years of the McNeil Government, we have seen Community Services offices closed in rural areas, enormous ferry fee increases, no investment in rural health care or CECs, and the elimination of rural jobs in favour of R2-D2 robots.

Mr. Speaker, taxpayers in rural Nova Scotia are feeling short-changed. This government is good at talking the talk when it comes to supporting rural communities, but so far, they have been unable to walk the walk. Thank you.

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

MACDONALD, GREG ET AL: WESTPHAL-COLE HBR. FD - SERV. THANK

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to express my appreciation for three individuals who have consistently made a difference to the Cole Harbour-Portland Valley community. I am confident that the community members feel the same as I do.

Greg MacDonald, Ed Conrad, and Robyn Rutledge-Croft have been volunteer firefighters to the Westphal-Cole Harbour firefighter community for 25, 15, and 5 years respectively. This May, shortly after the session of the House concludes, these three gentlemen will be honoured by their comrades in the Westphal-Cole Harbour Fire Fighters Association for their years of service to the community.

I'd now like to take a moment to thank them for their many years of service that they have devoted to volunteering to the community.

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

LEBLANC, PÈRE MAURICE - PROV. VOL. OF YR.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: National Volunteer Week 2015 takes place across Canada from April 12th to 18th. On April 7th, more than 70 volunteers were honoured at the 41st Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony and luncheon.

The Municipality of Argyle named Père Maurice LeBlanc from West Pubnico Provincial Volunteer of the Year. Père Maurice is well known as a musician, choir director, and painter. His involvement in the local arts community is extensive. He is president of

the Conseil des arts de Par-en-Bas and was involved in the theatre production *Évangéline*. The theatre in the Centre communautaire at the high school of course bears his name.

Maintenant dans ses 90 ans, le père Maurice ne montre aucun signe de ralentir. J'aimerais lui remercier pour son service communautaire et lui souhaiter de bonne santé.

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

AGRIC./LAE - WINE IND. : LBR. CONCERNS - ASSIST

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia's wine producers are worried about the impact of this winter's record snowfall. The deep snow has meant that vineyard workers haven't been able to get out into the fields to trim and tie up vines. The industry is concerned about the potential labour shortages that could happen if the buds break later into the season than the usual time for trimming and tying up.

Oftentimes the agricultural industry struggles to find enough labour in normal seasons. I am calling on the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education to work with the industry to find solutions to their labour concerns and to ensure that grapes are not dying on the vine this Fall, like the tax credits may do, due to the extended snowfall this Spring.

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

GOV'T. (N.S.): PROV. SPENDING - CONTROL

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians are already burdened by sky-high taxes and power rates, yet so far when looking for ways to increase provincial revenues this government has decided that Nova Scotians should pay even more. To date instead of doing the hard work, this government has shown that it prefers cash grabs by increasing the burden on students, hiking fees for ferries, and considering axing a tax credit that provides employment and attracts investment to the province.

Mr. Speaker, today I call on the government to change course and show leadership by getting provincial spending under control, something it has failed to do at this point. It is incumbent on the government to ask Nova Scotians to pay more while kicking the problem of government spending down the road. Nova Scotians already pay enough and it is the responsibility of government to ensure they get a better return for their investment.

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

MCNEIL GOV'T.: PATIENT CARE - FOCUS

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, if the McNeil Government had agreed to bargaining associations last summer, Nova Scotia's health care system would not be facing the crisis it is today. The home care wait-list has doubled across the province. The wait-list for long-term care is at a record high. ICU beds are closed at our only acute care hospitals due to record retirement of experienced nurses, and travel nurses from out of province are being brought in as a result. For the first time since 2009 doctors are compelled to speak out about overcrowding at emergency rooms and the ER in Shelburne is closed far too often. It is time the McNeil Government focuses on what matters and that is patient care.

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

CARMAN, THIAN: FARMING ACHIEVEMENTS - CONGRATS.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate 15-year-old Thian Carman of Barton, Digby County, for his achievements in farming. Beginning with three chickens when he was a preschooler, he is now the youngest certified farmer in the province and has expanded into blueberries, hay, maple syrup, sheep, and many more chickens. His farm, Meadow Brother's Farm, is named after one of his siblings who often help out on the regular chores. His success has not gone unnoticed. The Digby Board of Trade awarded him the Rising Star Business Award. He has also integrated farming into his studies, designing an experiment on the impact of music on laying hens. He received first place in the Tri-Country Regional Science Fair and a silver medal at the Canadian Science Fair. For your information Mr. Speaker, Mozart eggs grow 10 per cent faster than Alan Jackson eggs. With this type of commitment to farming, the agriculture sector in the province will continue to be in good hands.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

PORT WILLIAMS & DIST. LIONS CLUB/MEMBERS - COMMITMENT

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my congratulations and gratitude to President Kendall Hutchinson and the Port Williams and District Lions Club. Chartered in 1970 the Port Williams Lions Club has served the community for 45 years and will celebrate this event at Charter Night on Saturday, April 10th. The commitment to service that the members and the club have shown over the years have been demonstrated in volunteer hours and financial support to improve the lives of individuals in their community. Thank you, their countless hours of volunteer work and commitment have led to a stronger and more engaged community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

DANCE 11 SHOWCASE: DANCERS - CONGRATS.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, in January I had the pleasure of attending the Dance 11 Showcase at Bridgewater High School. This event showcased the McKinnon Dancers under the guidance of their high school teacher and highland dance instructor, Angela McKinnon. With an incredible turnout of parents, family, and community members the dancers put on an amazing show. I would like to congratulate all the dancers who participated in the showcase and wish them the best of luck in their upcoming competitions. I would also like to thank their instructor, Angela McKinnon, for the dedication and time she puts into the development and learning of her students and dancers.

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

MATHESON, BETH: COMMUN. WORKER - CONGRATS.

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a very community-minded woman, Beth Matheson from Marion Bridge. Beth is a committed community worker and a woman of great faith who is generous with her time. For 28 years Beth has been involved in the Mira Players Society of Marion Bridge. Over the years she has been a cast member, a crew member, and president of the group. Beth is also on the board of directors of Loaves and Fishes, president of the Mira Seniors and Pensioners Centre, a volunteer at the reception desk at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, and writes community news for the *Louisbourg Seagull* magazine.

It is indeed with great pleasure that I thank Beth Matheson for her many contributions to our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**SENIORS - PROV. INCOME TAX:
ELIMINATION - RECOMMENDATION REJECT**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, in 2010, I was proud to be a part of a government that decided seniors who received the federal Guaranteed Income Supplement, known as GIS, would no longer pay provincial income tax. This change put money back in the pockets of some of our lowest-income seniors.

Now, after the McNeil Government's controversial tax review, this rebate is in jeopardy. The Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has said she is open and willing to consider all recommendations, including Recommendation 1.7, which declares that the province should eliminate the seniors provincial income tax rebate. I urge the minister to reject this recommendation and keep this rebate that benefits low-income seniors in our province. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

SOCIAL JUSTICE YOUTH CAMP - PINK AWARD

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Social Justice Youth Camp at the Tatamagouche Centre in Colchester North for being presented with the Irving & Ruth Pink Award for Youth Development and Social Justice by Dalhousie Legal Aid in January 2015.

The camp, which has been held for the past 12 years, shows young adults how to make a difference and what it is to be socially just and responsive to the needs of their communities. The camp works with young people from many communities and cultures in the Maritimes: fishing villages to urban centres, Mi'kmaq communities to recent immigrants. Together, they explore social justice issues that affect all aspects of their lives, their strategic practices against racism and injustice, discuss gender relations and positive, healthy sexuality, explore different cultural contexts, build alliances, and most importantly, have lots of fun.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

MACKINNON, MAYOR GLENN - COMPETENCY/ENGAGEMENT

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to talk about the mayor of Trenton, Glenn MacKinnon. Glenn is the mayor of a community with a great history that was founded around industry and is known for being the birthplace of the first pouring of steel in British North America. Mayor MacKinnon is known for engaging his community and for valuing the town's residents in their knowledge of the local area and for involving them in making improvements to their community.

A competent leader, Glenn shares the duties of the town with council members, providing them with the opportunity to play an important role in improvements. The Town of Trenton is very fortunate to have such a caring, thoughtful, compassionate leader for their mayor. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: TRAVEL NURSES - CONTRACT PROVIDE

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health and Wellness has repeatedly been asked to provide this House with contract information for the travel nurses who are coming from outside our province due to the shortage in critical care nurses in the units in critical care. We are still waiting for a copy of these contracts.

After a year of picking fights with health care workers, early retirements of our most experienced nurses have led to ICU beds being closed and travel nurses being hired to come into our province. Nova Scotia deserves to know how much this year-long fight with health care workers has cost our province. The bill would include living expenses, salaries higher than what Nova Scotia nurses are being paid, and agency fees. It's time for the Minister of Health and Wellness to be open and transparent and provide this information to Nova Scotians. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**POULETTE, MARGARET/GRAND CHIEF BEN SYLLIBOY
- SYLLIBOY AWARD**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, Waycobah First Nation gathered to honour Margaret Poulette and her brother Grand Chief Ben Sylliboy for a lifetime of volunteer service. Both Chief Sylliboy and Margaret were very involved in the beginning of L'Arche Cape Breton. Through their leadership, the federal government agreed to fund a group home and supportive apartments in Waycobah so that Mi'kmaq people with disabilities could live within their cultural community.

They created the Mawita'mk Society, and that society created the Grand Chief Ben Sylliboy Award for Volunteerism. Who were the first two recipients? The grand chief himself and his sister Margaret. Their acts of devotion and charity set an example for all Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

INTL. DAY OF PINK (04/08/15) - FOUNDERS

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Today - April 8, 2015 - marks the International Day of Pink. It is a day where communities across the country and across the world can unite in celebrating diversity and raising awareness to stop all forms of bullying.

The International Day of Pink was started in Kings County when two high school students from Central Kings saw a gay student wearing a pink shirt being bullied. The two students intervened but wanted to do more to prevent bullying. They decided to purchase pink shirts and a few days later got everyone at school to arrive wearing pink, standing in solidarity. The result was that an entire school took a stand and began working together to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying. The message was clear: anyone can bully and can be victimized by bullying, but together we can work to stop it.

When Travis Price and David Shepherd organized the first Pink Shirt Day they had no idea the impact it would make around the world. Each year millions of people take part

in International Pink Day. Travis and David have shown that two teens from a small town in Nova Scotia have the power to change the world for the better.

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

FIN. & TREASURY BD.: HST EXEMPTIONS - FAM. ESSENTIALS

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, in April 2010 the former NDP Government announced that it was removing the provincial portion of the HST off family essentials. This meant that important items like diapers, feminine hygiene products, and children's clothing, would cost less for the women of Nova Scotia and their families.

The HST exemption for home energy was also expanded, making life more affordable, especially for low- and middle-income households. As journalist Lezlie Lowe wrote: All I care about is that I am not paying a provincial surcharge to feed, light, and heat whoever is at my house.

The recommendations from the McNeil Government's tax review put all these important rebates in limbo, Mr. Speaker, so will Nova Scotian families be now paying more for diapers after tomorrow's budget? Only the Minister of Finance and Treasury board knows.

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

PARK WEST SCH. - HOCKEY DAY IN CAN.: STUDENTS/STAFF - RECOGNIZE

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise today to recognize the students and staff at Park West School who did a tremendous job in representing the talent and creativity of young Nova Scotians during the recent Hockey Day in Canada celebrations in Halifax. Park West School played host to Olympic athletes, NHL alumni, and other special guests in a rousing school-wide assembly on February 12, 2015. Students displayed work such as writing, research, art and live performances to show their appreciation of Canada's unofficial national sport.

Please join me in congratulating the students and staff of Park West School for their hard work and dedication in hosting an event that exhibited the energy, enthusiasm, and creativity of our province during this national event. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SALMON RIVER & DIST. VOL. FIRE BRIGADE - GRATITUDE EXPRESS

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my gratitude to the Salmon River and District Volunteer Fire Brigade for the service they have provided for the community this past year. Their commitment to our community has expressed itself in countless hours of training and practice to prepare for any emergency. They have offered their assistance to those in need at all hours of the day and night and in all sorts of weather.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MACLEOD, JANET: CONSTITUENCY OFFICE - ACKNOWLEDGE

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to acknowledge and congratulate a valuable asset in my constituency office, Janet MacLeod. Janet has been onboard as a casual for almost a year and has been a natural fit from day one. Her people skills enable Janet to work with our constituents in a way that allows them to relax and to get to the heart of their issues. Her initiative to go that extra step shows itself in her careful attention to detail. She is always available when required, and today I wanted to salute her and say that I am proud to have her as a member of our team and appreciate her and everything she does.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

EMBREE, CHARLES - INTL. FRUIT TREE ASSOC. AWARD

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, the International Tree Fruit Association recently held its 58th annual conference and toured Nova Scotia. Halifax hosted the world and at the awards banquet, one of Kings North's long-time researchers was recognized for his achievements - the Outstanding Researcher Award went to Charles Embree.

Charlie began as an extension specialist in the tree fruit sector before moving to administration as director of Horticulture and Biology Services for the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and also as a research scientist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Charles Embree has been extensively involved in international agriculture efforts relating to tree fruit. For this, he has received a medal of recognition from the International Society of Horticultural Science for co-organizing the first Symposium on Organic Apples and Pears. Congratulations, Charlie.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**BEDFORD PLAYERS COMMUN. THEATRE:
GRANDMOTHERS TO GRANDMOTHERS - DONATION**

HON. KELLY REGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to tell you about a couple of terrific organizations in my riding. As I mentioned previously, the Bedford Players Community Theatre allows local residents with a love of theatre to indulge their passion. Each year the players put on several plays at their venue at All Saints Church. Sometimes they're musical and sometimes they're farces; they are always entertaining.

At the same time the Bedford Players are delighting audiences, they are also raising money from ticket sales. In January the Players presented the Bedford Chapter of Grandmothers to Grandmothers with a cheque of over \$600. The President of the Bedford Grandmothers, Marilyn Sceles, explained that the local chapter is one of 240 such groups across the country working with the Stephen Lewis Foundation. They raise money to help support grandmothers, in sub-Saharan Africa, who are raising children orphaned by AIDS.

I would like to congratulate the Bedford Players and all the Bedford Grandmothers on their fundraising efforts. Kudos all around.

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

MACPHAIL, MARK - ARM WRESTING GOLD MEDAL

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate Mark MacPhail of Ben Eoin on winning Gold at the Nova Scotia Arm Wrestling Championships. Mark won Gold in the men's left open category and took silver in the men's right open. His win in the super heavyweight left hand division was his 24th provincial title.

It is my privilege to congratulate Mark MacPhail on his many achievements in arm wrestling categories. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure there are places here we could use him. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

INTL. DAY OF PINK - BULLYING: EFFECTS - AWARENESS

MS. MARGARET MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Happy International Day of Pink.

In 2007 Central Kings Rural High School students, David Shepherd and Travis Price of Berwick, Nova Scotia, saw a student being bullied in their school for wearing a

pink shirt. Wanting to support this student and stop this unacceptable behaviour, David and Travis bought 50 pink shirts and had everyone in the school arrive wearing pink. Since then, the International Day of Pink is celebrated each day on the second Wednesday of April. People wear pink to remember that together we have the power to stop bullying, create safe and caring communities, that positive actions make a difference, and that the change starts with each one of us. All people have the right to live free of harassment and bullying.

We need to be committed to being open minded, to being understanding, and to learning to respect each other. The International Day of Pink gives us that opportunity to draw awareness to the harmful effects of bullying and to tell those who have been bullied, you are not alone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

INTL. DAY OF PINK (04/08/15): DIVERSITY - SUPPORT

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, today, April 8th, is the International Day of Pink. On this day people around the world are encouraged to wear pink to show their support for diversity. The International Day of Pink promotes inclusiveness and celebrates diversity. Bullying or discrimination cannot be tolerated in our province. Today, wearing pink or not, I call on all members to show support for diversity so that Nova Scotia can be a welcoming place for all people to live.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

FAM. SOS COURAGE TO GIVE BACK AWARDS: RECIPIENTS (2015) - CONGRATS.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Family SOS Courage to Give Back Awards. I was honoured to be chosen the Family SOS Ambassador for the 2015 Courage to Give Back Awards.

Family SOS is a non-profit organization that has deep roots in my community with their Healthy Kids Program that operates out of Greystone. I am proud to represent this child-centred organization that is committed to building strong and healthy families. The January 15th Courage to Give Back Awards honoured extraordinary individuals who overcame diversity and have gone on to give back to the community. This year's recipients include: Nancy Walker, the Amazing Grace Award; Dave McKeage, the Brave Heart Award; Hope Swinimer, the Indomitable Spirit Award; Cory Bell, the Unsung Hero Award; and Kylie Davison, the Inspiring Youth Award.

I ask the members of this House to join me in congratulating all the 2015 Courage to Give Back Award recipients, and thank them for their dedication and commitment to their causes. Thank you.

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

GOV'T. (N.S.): ACTION BUDGET - DELIVER

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is an important day for the government to get it right and send a clear message to Nova Scotians that it is committed to righting the ship and taking meaningful action to fix our economy.

Based on its record of performance however, it's clear the government has yet to take such an approach. Unfortunately, since coming to office, it's become a common approach for the Liberal Government to send mixed signals. It claims to be taking bold action when, in reality, we've only seen inaction and window dressing.

Today I call on the government to change its ways and deliver a budget which provides a real plan to fix our economy and Nova Scotians back to work, instead of the window dressing that we expect from the Liberal Government.

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

GAELIC HERITAGE/LANGUAGE: VICTORIA-THE LAKES - PROTECTION/PROMOTION

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the work that community members in Victoria-The Lakes are doing to protect and promote our Gaelic heritage, and specifically the language. Organizations such as the Nova Scotia Highland Village in Iona, Gàidhlig Agam in Baddeck, and of course the Gaelic College in St. Ann's are a few of the organizations that are focusing on folk life, language classes, song workshops, and reading and writing instructions in Gaelic. The contributions these groups are making allow the communities to celebrate and grow what is at the core of our identity: language.

I wish to thank them for their continued work in promoting the Gaelic language and ensuring that Gaelic culture continues to thrive in Nova Scotia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

GREEN, ALEX: PROV. VOL. AWARDS CEREMONY - RECOGNITION

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a special day for volunteers in Nova Scotia and that included Alex Green of Lunenburg. Alex was one of

the province's many volunteers to be recognized at the 41st Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony and Luncheon. It is his love for the community that first got him involved in the world of volunteering.

His activities at Legion Branch No. 23 included helping with the monthly breakfast program. He operates the VON van to take folks shopping or to appointments, helps in the kitchen at monthly chowder lunches, and works at the local food bank. He also helps organize the annual Santa Claus parade. He is the past-president of the annual Fishermen's Picnic, and a founding member and past-president of the fishermen's monument. He is a member of the Parish Council and Property Committee at St. John's Anglican Church. The community and the province are blessed to have volunteers like Alex.

Please join me in congratulating Mr. Green on everything he has done and continues to do for his community.

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

FISHERMAN'S COVE: ACCESS-ABILITY PROG. - THANK

MS. JOYCE TREEN: Mr. Speaker, Fisherman's Cove is a vibrant tourist destination, located in the community of Eastern Passage. They just received an upgrade funding for ramp addition. This funding has been issued through the Community ACCESS-Ability Program. The ramp will provide the accessibility needed for many visitors who will be visiting Fisherman's Cove with mobility issues. This ramp will allow access to all the shops and businesses located on the boardwalk.

A heartfelt thanks to the Community ACCESS-Ability Program from the Fisherman's Cove Development Association and its visitors.

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

HEALEY, PAT: COMMUN. INFO. - THANK

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pat Healey, reporter for *The Laker* in Fall River, the *Weekly Press* in Enfield, Nova Scotia, and the Lakeview family of schools.

Mr. Speaker, since becoming the MLA for Sackville-Beaver Bank, I've noticed that if it's an event in any of these areas that Pat Healey will be there with his camera, making sure the residents have an accurate account of what is happening in their communities. From the Lakeview High basketball game to MP Peter Stoffer's column, these newspapers are a vital component of communication in the smaller communities.

Individuals such as Pat Healey play a key role in making sure the information is available through the newspaper and Twitter. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. Healey sincerely for the fine job he is doing for his community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

GREENLAW, MR. BEV.: BASKETBALL - DEDICATION

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and thank Mr. Bev Greenlaw, head coach of the Acadia women's basketball team for seven years, on his recent retirement. With his support in 2012, the Acadian Axewomen won their first basketball title in six decades, and Mr. Greenlaw was named AUS Coach of the Year.

Indeed, Mr. Greenlaw has been named coach of the year at numerous levels of play, including club, high school, college, university, and provincial teams, and has been widely praised for his tremendous ability to develop players. His Canada Games gold medal men's team is in the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame.

On behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia, I would like to thank Mr. Bev Greenlaw for his years of dedication to basketball in Nova Scotia and for playing a vital role in forming so many of our youth athletes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ASH LEE JEFFERSON SCH. - HOCKEY DAY

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure to attend Hockey Day at the Ash Lee Jefferson School in Fall River. I was very impressed with the work the teachers and the students put into this event. The artwork throughout the entrance way, the gymnasium, and the stage was creative and exceptional. The students learned and performed a hockey song for the ceremonies and prepared thoughtful questions for the special guests, including Darcy Tucker, Mark Napier, Cassie Campbell, and Ryan Falkenham. The students and staff put together a display of hockey memorabilia with some very interesting and very old items that have been in the families for a long time. It was very easy to see the amount of work and excitement that went into preparing their Hockey Day.

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

BOYLSTON COMMUN. ASSOC. - LITTLE RED SCHOOL HOUSE

MR. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, in 1948 the residents of Boylston and surrounding areas built a memorial to their men and women who served in the First and

Second World Wars. This memorial was and still is the little red schoolhouse, which is now the Boylston Community Association. It is a pillar of pride and community spirit. Children from the local area attended the little red schoolhouse until 1975. The Municipality of the District of Guysborough then donated the building back to the community, and it has since been run by volunteers.

The association has maintained the building through its own fundraising efforts and small grants from the municipality and the province. The hall hosts many events throughout the year - family, recreational, and community events, and reunions, weddings, baby showers, and parties. As you may see, the hall brings many residents together to enjoy one another's company and have a little fun. The Boylston Community Association has been active and an integral part of the community of Boylston for over 65 years, and I am proud to have such a vast amount of history in just one building in one community in our constituency.

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

**COMMUN. HEALTH TEAM:
COMMUN. ENGAGEMENT SESSION - FAIRVIEW LEGION**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, the community health team hosted a community engagement session on November 4, 2014, at the Fairview Legion. The free Health and Wellness programs offered throughout HRM are based on the needs of the residents living in specific communities and are designed to meet the needs of those various communities. The Health and Wellness team used a world café format to encourage residents to feel at ease sharing their ideas, which will help shape what free Health and Wellness services will take place in our community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**CACL CLASSIC HOCKEY FUNDRAISER:
ANTIGONISH MLA - PARTICIPATION**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, March 29th, I was the starting goaltender for the St. F.X. X-Men hockey team. It was the third annual CACL Classic Hockey Fundraiser. The CACL, or the Canadian Association for Community Living, partners with the X-Men for the event, and the game features the X-Men playing a fun contest of hockey against the friends of the CACL, comprised of former X-Men, business owners, and other local celebrities.

The CACL in Antigonish offers a number of programs and services for its clients, including a community employment program, community volunteer program, and community contract, as well as the CACL Community Employment Centre, which houses five businesses including a bakery, a woodshop, laundry services, a print shop, and

shredding services. The organization also offers programs focused on the development of life skills, opportunities for physical activity, and a community lunch program, as well as the residential care services.

Mr. Speaker, the CACL is an organization with deep roots in the community. Antigonish is lucky to have them, and I was honoured to be part of their fundraiser. So while I'm no longer eligible to play for the X-Men during the regular season, it was great to be part of the team, even if it was for just one game.

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

DART. COMMUN. HEALTH BD.: WORK - THANK

HON. TONY INCE: I'd like to take a moment to discuss a group that I first met this past Fall in my community, in my constituency office: the Dartmouth Community Health Board, which belongs to the Capital District Health Authority. They have expanded their area of coverage to include Eastern Passage, Lawrencetown, Mineville, East and North Preston, and Cole Harbour.

I had the opportunity to meet with them and was thoroughly impressed with their work ethic and dedication to helping citizens navigate the health care system. The professionals that comprise the health board also assist individuals in making personal wellness assessments and arrange for group sessions that focus on health and wellness, goal setting, and counselling services to better assist folks with motivational issues.

I could go on at length about the number of services the community health board covers. My belief in the Dartmouth Community Health Board inspired my constituency office to utilize one of our rooms as a community room, a room constituents can use to meet with the community health board.

I'd like to thank the ongoing work done by the community health board and, on behalf of all constituents, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: HEALTH CARE SYSTEM - WORKERS HEED

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, doctors who support women's pregnancy, childbirth and post-partum period are concerned about an increase in insurance rates they may need to pay to practise obstetrics in the province. They worry about a reduction in services for women, especially in rural Nova Scotia, where there are already few obstetricians practising now. Many women already have to travel to receive care within their region.

Now, even regional care seems to be at risk. Most obstetricians also deliver gynecological care. If they leave the region to work elsewhere, doctors are concerned that there will be a loss of gynecological services as well.

Mr. Speaker, the McNeil Government needs to stop ignoring and start listening to the people working in the health care system in Nova Scotia.

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

COMEAU, BERNARDIN & MARCEL: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, last Fall, two great men, Bernardin and Marcel Comeau, passed away within days of each other. For years they ran Comeau's Sea Foods, a great Nova Scotia company started by Bernardin in 1946. They were able to expand the business and position it as an innovator in this industry.

Bernardin's interest in the business would continue for years after he passed the presidency on to Marcel in 1981. Even in recent years, his interest in the company would inevitably come up during Marcel's visits to see his father.

Both placed great importance in their Acadian culture and their community. They supported organizations promoting their culture as well as many other local organizations and charities. In recognition of his accomplishments, Bernardin was named to the Order of Canada and received an honorary doctorate from Université Sainte-Anne.

Bernardin and Marcel were entrepreneurs, innovators, business leaders, proud Acadians, and community leaders. Ultimately, they were a father and son who accomplished so much during their lives. We continue to mourn their passing and are proud eternally of their legacy.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

ALZHEIMER RESEARCH BREAKFAST (02/20/15): ORG. COMM. - THANK

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, on February 20th, I had the pleasure of attending the first Alzheimer Research Breakfast on the South Shore at the Best Western in Cookville. With a great turnout, including my colleague, the member for Lunenburg, we had the opportunity to listen to Dr. Sultan Darvesh, the director of the Maritime Brain Tissue Bank, as well as Dr. Diyana Docheva, who specializes in geriatrics at the South Shore Regional Hospital.

This was a great event to help bring continued awareness to Alzheimer's and to educate those in our communities. I'd like to thank the local committee for organizing this

event and volunteering their time and energy to such a worthy cause. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

FINNIE, JAMES & LINDA - THE SCOTS SOC.: FORMATION - CONGRATS.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, Scottish events are numerous and popular throughout Nova Scotia, but Colchester County has few. To correct that, James and Linda Finnie of East Mountain, Colchester North, have recently formed the Scots Society of Colchester. Their goal is to bring back the feeling of Scottish culture and heritage, to interest people in their Scottish roots, and to encourage them to participate in Scottish activities.

Their first event of the year was a traditional Robbie Burns supper and dance with all of the pomp and circumstance that would be found at a Burns supper in Scotland. The event was held at the Best Western Glengarry in Truro and was open to anyone descended from the Scots, felt Scottish, or just had an interest in Scottish culture and heritage.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**CENTRE SCOLAIRE DE LA RIVE-SUD (GRADE 4):
FUNDRAISING - CONGRATS.**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to recognize students of the Grade 4 class at Centre scolaire de la Rive-Sud. Students of the class, including Jane Jacobs, Lily Wile, Sofia Oickle, Leslie Simmie, Chloe Kowalski, and Jada Conrad, recently donated \$1,000 to SHAID Animal Shelter. The students got together one day and pooled some leftover change to start the fund. Eventually it grew to a modest \$50, big money for Grade 4 students.

A bake sale followed after school during a basketball tournament . . .

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

PREM.: FILM TAX CREDIT - RETENTION

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board began the latest Liberal backtracking on the Film Industry Tax Credit. No wonder the entire industry is worried that the government will carry out its plan to cut their tax credit. Over 2,000 Nova Scotians work in this industry. It is a success story. I would like to ask the Premier, will he now assure those 2,000 Nova Scotians who work in our film and creative industries that that tax credit will be there for them next year?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to tell all members of this House how proud I am of the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board and the tremendous work she has done. She will table a budget tomorrow, which will send a clear message to Nova Scotians that we are not looking backwards; we are moving forward and we're going to put this province on the right track.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, we can only hope that the Premier is equally proud of the Liberals who wrote the 2013 election platform that he ran on because it promised that the Film Industry Tax Credit and the Digital Media Tax Credit would not only be kept, they would be expanded and that the approval process would be streamlined, and I will table that page from their platform. In other words, the government has promised the industry they would make it easier to access both. I will ask the Premier, will he keep his election promise and expand and streamline both the Digital Media Tax Credit and the Film Industry Tax Credit?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question again. I want to tell all members of this House of the tremendous work the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has been doing. Tomorrow she will table her budget and this province will begin to see a government that is focused forward, one that is putting this province on the right financial track and one that is looking towards a long-term sustainable economy in this province.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, there has been lots of talk about tax increases and program cuts. The best way to put the province back on the proper financial track is actually to support growing industries that create real jobs for Nova Scotians of all ages. That's what the Film Industry Tax Credit does; that's what the digital Media Tax Credit does. I know the Premier is focused on the taxes and the cuts but why is he not working on proven ways to create jobs like enhancing the Film Industry Tax Credit and the Digital Media Tax Credit?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see that the Leader of the Official Opposition thinks he knows what is in the budget. Tomorrow the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board will table a budget very clearly telling Nova Scotians we're moving in the right direction.

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

PREM.: CHILDREN'S DENTAL COVERAGE - COMMITMENT CONFIRM

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, two years ago on April 1st, dental care for children under the age of 14 was reinstated and was to grow incrementally to cover children up to the age of 17 by 2017. In 2013, the now Premier supported this dental program and committed to its expansion every year. On April 1, 2014, the program did expand as promised but April 1st of this year has come and gone without an expansion in the program and without a word from the government. My question to the Premier is very simple. Will the Premier tell us if he's going to keep his commitment on dental coverage for children - yes or no?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the honourable member that children under 14 are covered under the dental coverage. We're going to continue moving forward, providing programs to this province that are sustainable in the long run. I want to congratulate the Minister of Health and Wellness for the tremendous work he has been doing. We finally have a Minister of Health and Wellness who is focused on patients for the first time in a very long time. Every decision we make will be focused on patients.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, we know that children under 14, actually under 15, have coverage but my point is that the Premier committed to increasing this to the age of 17, incrementally, annually, and there has been no announcement of that incremental increase this year. I don't know what's worse, denying kids dental care or trying to hide another McNeil Government's broken promise. I want to ask the Premier, why would this Premier take away dental coverage for Nova Scotian children?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the honourable member this government is taking nothing away from children. We continue to invest in children across this province. As recently as yesterday I was pleased to stand and make an announcement of public education to ensure the kids get an opportunity to build an economy, to build a job in this province.

I'm very proud of the work that this government is doing, and it's quite interesting to listen to the Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party stand up in this House and talk about broken promises. Do you remember the HST?

MS. MACDONALD: We'll have lots of opportunity to talk about HST exemptions in the coming days, I'm sure.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell you what's painful. It's listening to the Premier boast over and over about how open and transparent his government is when it's just not true.

Would the Premier please explain to parents how cutting a dental program for kids can be kept a secret? That is not being open and transparent.

THE PREMIER: This government has not a cut a program when it comes to dental care for young Nova Scotians, and the Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party knows that. No matter how many times she repeats this, it simply does not make it true. She's wrong.

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

PREM.: FIXED ELECTION DATES - STATUS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians expect their Premier to keep his promises, including a promise to bring stability and predictability to our democratic process by introducing fixed election dates. In fact, it was reported just over a year ago that the Premier was committed to this. I'll quote directly: Nova Scotia Premier "... says his new government is working on a package of reforms ... At the top of his agenda is a plan to introduce a fixed election date."

The fact is that the Premier committed himself to this over and over again while in Opposition, but today we have amendments to the Elections Act and there is no fixed election date. So I'll ask the Premier, what happened to his promise on fixed election dates?

THE PREMIER: As the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party indicated, there is a bill before this House. It looks at election reform. What we've seen across the country - we've seen in Alberta where they have ignored the election date, and we've seen in Prince Edward Island where the election date has been ordered. As a matter of fact, his cousins in Ottawa have ignored the election dates so many times people have lost count. The fact of the matter is that we're going to continue to provide good government to the people of Nova Scotia, and I'll be certain to let him know when the next election is.

MR. BAILLIE: You know, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of questions and answers in the House, but this might be the most bizarre answer I've heard yet. What the Premier has basically said is that he won't bring in a fixed election date law because he does not trust himself to actually keep his own law. That's what he just said to the House of Assembly here.

Here we are about to go through a budget which the Premier describes as "tough," and he's looking for ways to save money - the fact of the matter is that Elections Nova Scotia would need \$1.7 million each and every year without a fixed election date. We could save that money right now if the Premier just kept his promise. If he won't trust himself to keep it, will he at least keep it to save the taxpayers \$1.7 million next year?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure where the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party gets his math, but there's been a lot that's quite fuzzy. The fact of the matter is, whatever day the election is going to be, Nova Scotians recognize (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, thank you. Whenever the election day, Nova Scotians know it's going to cost to deliver democracy to the people of this province. We're going to continue to provide them good government. We'll ask them for a new mandate at the appropriate time, and I'll be certain to let the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party know.

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

PREM. - FILM TAX CREDIT: CHANGES - CONSEQUENCES

MS. LENORE ZANN: Here we are, Mr. Speaker, just one day away from the provincial budget - and it would be nice if some of the people across the way would listen when I ask my questions.

The McNeil Government has had no meaningful consultation with the creative sector about changes to the Film Tax Credit and how this would affect them greatly by damaging this successful industry. Producer Geoff D'Eon told the CBC, "If they're going to change it, they need to understand the ramifications of changing it. And we really don't believe that they do."

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier to explain why his government isn't listening to industry experts or even to other government members from other provinces who have made the same mistake of either weakening or cutting their tax credits. What does he feel the consequences of changing the Film Tax Credit will actually be to the Province of Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to correct the honourable member. The Finance and Treasury Board Minister has met with many people in the industry. The rest of her question is simply hypothetical. She has no idea what's coming in the budget tomorrow - that's one thing I know for certain.

MS. ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that does not exactly sit well with the industry who are still sitting on pins and needles and concerned about what's going to happen tomorrow. Yesterday, the Finance and Treasury Board Minister told the industry to calm down. Isn't that ironic coming from the minister who, last November, when the Liberals pulled back their own legislation that would have banned flavoured tobacco, said, "Consultation and listening to Nova Scotians is the right thing to do . . ."

My question to the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board is, if she has suggested that Nova Scotia cannot afford the Film Tax Credit as it currently exists, why does she feel that Nova Scotians who live in our rural districts can afford to lose the jobs in the rural districts that these Film Tax Credits create?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak about this issue again today. I spoke yesterday to the honourable member and others in the House and said very clearly that the budget is coming in tomorrow on April 9th, all the information will be there for many industries that are waiting to see what the impacts are and the positive things as well that will be in that budget. I'm afraid, because of the nature of budgets, we have to wait until tomorrow. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

FIN. & TREASURY BD.: DEPARTMENTAL SPENDING - REDUCTION

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board. Last year, Nova Scotians expected the McNeil Liberals to keep their promise to reduce departmental spending, first when they said they would reduce it by 5 per cent, and then again when they said they'd reduce it by 1 per cent across all departments. They failed to do so in both cases. In fact, departmental spending went up.

Now the McNeil Liberals are talking about how tough choices are being made in this budget. Who will it be tough on - government departments who must reduce spending or Nova Scotians who must foot the bill?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question again. These are the sort of questions we've been having the last little while - a lot of speculation about the budget and really reflecting concerns of people throughout the province who have various interests. Again, I will not be letting the member opposite know what is in the budget until tomorrow. Thank you.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, the Premier has said that Nova Scotians will see their own fingerprints all over this budget. Meanwhile, the government has yet to release the results of their budget consultation process, so when Nova Scotians see the budget tomorrow, they won't actually be able to tell if their comments were actually considered. My question for the minister is, why has the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board not released her findings from her consultation process?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I know that at the consultation session in New Glasgow, the member opposite did attend. I heard from many people at eight separate public meetings around the province and the report that summarizes what was heard should be on the website tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

PSC: SICK LEAVE - REDUCTION

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of the Public Service Commission. According to figures released by the Public Service Commissioner, the average government worker used 12.6 sick days in 2013-14, costing the government \$26 million. That figure is four more sick days - approximately one-third more - than workers in the private sector. At a time when the government is reviewing priorities to find savings, what factors is the minister considering in his department to reduce \$26 million in costs due to sick leave, and will he move forward fairly for all Nova Scotians?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start off by thanking all the public servants that work so hard on behalf of all Nova Scotians in this province. I would also like to thank the Public Service Commission for their hard work on behalf of all public servants, and I would like to thank the department for actually coming up with ways to assist people who require assistance to come to work. One of the initiatives that we have is an enhanced EAP program which helps those who are in need and in critical times to be able to come to work. Thank you.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier has told us that everyone is going to feel pain in tomorrow's budget. The pain for taxpayers could be eased a little bit if the cost of sick days in the civil service was decreased. Nova Scotians are prepared to do their part, but they expect fairness. Will the minister commit to taking meaningful action to decrease the cost of sick days in the coming year?

MR. KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, we monitor sick days in the Public Service, and we actually work towards reducing them. With our EAP program, as we identify employees who require assistance to actually come to work, we support them in doing so. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

COM. SERV.: AFFORDABLE HOUSING (HANTS WEST) - FUNDING

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, my question will be for the Minister of Community Services. An announcement was made in late October of last year regarding a \$52 million investment to affordable housing, a much-needed announcement. Hants West currently has approximately 50 families on the wait-list for housing and approximately 50 seniors also waiting.

Can the minister tell us when we might see some of that funding put towards getting these people into homes and off the wait-list?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Thank you for the question from the honourable member. It was my pleasure to be able to announce that last year and of course that money came from the deferred federal contributions which had been amassing up to about \$64 million over the last decade, so \$42 million of it actually was dispensed in that announcement last October. We provided 10-year supplements for 300 folks. We were able to leverage that with the private sector, hopefully getting close to 500 supplements.

The ongoing process is still happening, people who were first on the wait-list were encouraged at that time to apply through their Housing Nova Scotia office and then whatever area had landlords who had housing stock available, they would be able to be moved off the list at that time.

MR. PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her answer. There seems to be a bit of confusion around this announcement and the amount of uptake. I don't think that landlords appear to be aware that they need to actually apply. We are just learning this in recent weeks and want to confirm that that is, in fact, the case. Is it up to them to contact government or the Department of Community Services to make application to become part of that program?

MS. BERNARD: Communications from Housing Nova Scotia actually went out across the province to many different landlords in the sector, inviting them to make application so they would be part of that partnership that we were establishing within Housing Nova Scotia.

I was committed at that time. Just because there was a rent supplement doesn't mean that I was going to put people into housing options that weren't safe, secure, clean, or substandard, so the onus was on landlords to be able to apply and then come to the table with perhaps meeting us with some of those supplements so that we could increase the number of people to come off the wait-lists. So yes, they do need to contact our Housing Nova Scotia offices.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: TRAINED NURSES - AVAILABILITY

HON. DAVID WILSON: Yesterday, in Question Period, the Minister of Health and Wellness revealed the main focus of his nowhere-to-be-seen nursing strategy when he said “. . . overall in Nova Scotia we're at a very good place . . . We know that we have a question with mobility . . .”

Mr. Speaker, it's not about mobility issues. It's about availability of trained, experienced nurses not being available for ICU wards and ERs across the province. Can the minister explain to me how moving nurses around the province is going to quickly solve our problems with a lack of experienced, trained nurses?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, yes at this point in time of 2015, we can speak about having the most registered nurses in the history of the province. We'll have over 400 graduating this year and our nursing strategy in fact, in my view, will be copied across the country once it is revealed.

MR. DAVID WILSON: I think I'll probably disagree with that comment. It is cold comfort to those patients waiting in the ER, because there's a backlog, and unable to get into an ICU bed, for example.

Mr. Speaker, this government has spent the last year distracted while experienced nurses across the province retire in large numbers as a result of the conflict brought on by the McNeil Government. Last October the minister stated that the nursing strategy he has been working on was in a draft form and when it was ready all our problems will be solved.

The minister has done nothing to solve the nursing shortage over the last seven months. Can the minister explain why he spent seven months picking fights with nurses rather than solving the problem that has led to the nursing shortage in our province?

MR. GLAVINE: Yesterday I took a little time to review some *Chronicle Herald* articles from 2012-13, when in fact the member for Sackville-Cobequid was the Minister of Health and Wellness and nursing issues were front and centre under his time in office.

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

TIR - STUDDED TIRES: DRIVER SAFETY - PRIORITIZE

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, we all know that this has been a rough winter. The deadline to have studded tires off vehicles is fast approaching yet the winter conditions don't want to go away. The weather has been cold later than usual in the season, mechanic shops are backed up, and we hear lately that the private contracts for highways and roads and plowing is due to expire soon. Storms are continuing to happen and people are getting anxious. We had a similar situation last year.

In the coming weeks, Nova Scotians will be unsure as to whether or not they should remove their studded tires or keep them on because of road conditions. So my question is, what steps is the minister taking to ensure driver safety is a top priority?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Obviously I would agree with the member - it was a challenging winter. When you spend \$75 million tax dollars combatting the impact of the snow, the ice, the drop in temperature, the fluctuation - it's been a tough year, Mr. Speaker. But I know we put all of our efforts into winter maintenance, into communication and letting people know what's happening. Of course road safety is a shared responsibility, it was a tough winter, but I do want to take this opportunity to thank our staff. It was a tremendously dangerous season. (Applause)

It was a tremendously dangerous season, Mr. Speaker, and they risked their lives and their safety every day and every night, and they worked very long hours, so on behalf of Nova Scotians and all members of this House, we want to thank our staff for the work that they did, thank you very much.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, last year the minister extended the deadline for removing studded tires. Given the current state of our roads, and this winter is showing no end in sight, the minister should extend the deadline again to ensure people choose safety over fear of non-compliance. So my question is does the minister plan to extend the deadline to have studded tires removed? If so, can he tell Nova Scotian drivers and garage owners when this will happen so they can have peace of mind?

MR. MACLELLAN: It is an important question as people get into their summer maintenance for their vehicles. Last year this question was brought before the floor to my colleague in Municipal Affairs - I had the opportunity to look at this policy, look at the situation. I'll be happy to let the member know that that minister did change the policy. It now states May 31st as the studded tire date so we will certainly uphold that date and it will be May 31st this year for all commuters in Nova Scotia.

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

ERDT: RURAL AREAS - INTERNET NEEDS

MR. LARRY HARRISON: My question was going to be for the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. The broadband for rural Nova Scotia project expired and constituents are certainly calling me about the lack of Internet service and if they do have it, the system is still very slow. My question is, has there been a review of the project to see if the Internet needs in rural areas are being met?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to refer that question to the Minister of Energy. (Laughter)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy.

MR. SAMSON: Should I now refer it to Communications Nova Scotia?

MR. SPEAKER: You've got 20 seconds.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, we remain very concerned for any Nova Scotian who doesn't have access to high-speed Internet. The broadband project did come to an end on December 31, 2014. There is a federal funding that is going to be coming to increase high speed. We are still talking to the federal government to see if through that funding there is a way to still reach out to those who have not been connected to date.

MR. HARRISON: So which minister am I going to be talking to? Anyway, is there a plan for next steps that I can tell people will be coming?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, again, we remain very concerned about any Nova Scotian who wants to have access to high-speed and doesn't have access. The initial broadband project was announced in 2006 and was meant to provide 100 per cent coverage. That was a goal which I'm sure was made with the greatest of intentions, but has proven to be near impossible to be able to achieve.

Right now, approximately 99 per cent of Nova Scotians who have asked to be connected have been connected. We continue to talk with some of the private companies that are out there about options for having connectivity in hard-to-reach areas. As well, as I mentioned earlier, we'll continue to work with our federal partners to see if there is any means, with the new federal program coming out, that that could be also an opportunity to reach out to any residents or communities which are not connected. We'll certainly let the member know the minute we have more information.

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

PREM.: CHILDREN'S HST EXEMPTION - RETAIN

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, in the Fall of 2013, the Premier released his election platform. It states, "A Liberal government will . . . Maintain all current HST exemptions." A year later, in the Fall of 2014, the Premier released his tax review and it recommends that rebates or exemptions from the HST be eliminated, or the HST be put back on children's clothing, shoes, and diapers.

My question for the Premier is, will he keep his promise to maintain current HST exemptions including children's clothing, shoes and diapers?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the member and all members of this House that the report that was tabled in this House was an independent report at arm's length. Unlike the former government when they did the electoral boundaries commission, we did not interfere. We actually allowed the people to do their work.

I want to tell the honourable member that tomorrow, the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board will table her budget. I think all Nova Scotians will recognize it's a budget that's looking forward, one that is looking to put Nova Scotians back to work.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, in July 2010, the previous government exempted children's clothing, shoes, and diapers from HST to help Nova Scotians with the cost of raising a family. If these HST exemptions are removed, families will pay hundreds of dollars more in taxes on these household essentials. My question to the Premier is, will he assure Nova Scotian families these HST exemptions remain in place?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, like all Nova Scotians, I look forward to tomorrow when the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board stands up in this House and notifies all Nova Scotians of the changes that have been made and the direction we're moving this province in. I'm looking forward to working with Nova Scotians from one end of this province to the other to put this province on the right track.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

JUSTICE: SENIORS - PHONE SCAMS

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. There have been a number of instances in the province this year where seniors have been targeted by people posing as their grandchildren saying they're in trouble and asking for money. It was only a faulty bank card that saved the Banks family in Annapolis County last month from one of these scams. Can the minister tell us what conversations she has had with law enforcement agencies regarding phone scams and has she been made aware of any increases in the number of phone scams reported?

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. It's not something that's come to my attention recently. Thank you.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I am aware the Department of Justice encourages Nova Scotians to contact Project PhoneBusters, which is run through the federal government and the RCMP, but I do know in Ontario, online, they have a more comprehensive description of the types of phone scams that are out there and providing people with advice on how to avoid them. Can the minister inform us of the Department of Justice's current practices when it comes to alerting Nova Scotians of these scams and also if there are any new measures being put in place to catch those responsible?

MS. DIAB: Mr. Speaker, indeed, safety and security of all Nova Scotians is our priority at the department. We consult extensively with all our stakeholders, including obviously all the police partners with regard to those issues as well as other safety and security issues.

I can certainly get that information for you. There is nothing that is currently in front of me that I can provide to you at the moment.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: HOME CARE - SERVICE STANDARDS

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Seniors, caregivers and home care workers across the province are feeling a great level of uncertainty over the government's plans for future home care delivery service. The

minister has been unclear about when the RFP would be issued and what sort of impact it may have on the people who rely on home care service. For instance, if the government plans to potentially change the vendor delivering home care services on the government contracts, Nova Scotians and employees need to know the service standards will be in place to ensure the quality of care is unchanged.

My question to the minister is, has the department consulted stakeholders to develop a standard of care to be included in the request for proposals?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for a very good question. In fact it's one that would require a lot longer than 45 seconds to answer. But just to get to the heart of the matter here, we brought in all of the vendors. It was interesting that there were about 60 vendors who are interested in providing either nursing care, home support or home aid as the RFP is now being developed. Also, within the RFP there will be criteria and accountability that currently is not there at the level that we want to attain.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, it's a very difficult time for a family when their loved one can no longer take care of themselves in a way they once could. By leaving questions unanswered, the government is adding to their anxiety. The department's own report said this publicly-funded home care is not available for nearly 40 per cent of the people who are on a waiting list for a nursing home bed. The government is changing their policy on the wait list and shifting those seniors to skyrocketing home care wait-lists and we still don't know who is going to be providing the care.

All these changes in the government cannot tell Nova Scotians whether it will result in more service availability for those who need it. My question to the minister is, will more Nova Scotians be able to access home care services as a result of this RFP process?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I know the whole goal of going through an RFP and changing the process of providing home care to Nova Scotians in fact is to bring both a greater quantity to Nova Scotians but above all, quality care in the home delivered.

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

PREM. - HOME ENERGY: HST - STANCE

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians have just been through a pretty tough winter. However, in this winter they've saved hundreds of dollars on their heating bills because of a decision to take the HST off home energy. Although the Premier voted against that policy in the past, in May he promised to respect that policy if he went into government, telling reporters - and I'll table his talk with reporters - that we will not be putting the HST on home energy.

Mr. Speaker, today the Premier is not telling us what his position is now. He has refused to comment on keeping the HST on home energy. My question to the Premier is, why has he backed away from his promise to not charge Nova Scotians the HST on their home heat.

THE PREMIER: Oh my goodness, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to see - and I'm sure Mr. Gorman up there is glad to see - that anyone is reading the stuff that he prints and to remind them of what I might have said in the past.

We are continuing to move forward. We are going to continue to move forward, Mr. Speaker, and provide good government to the people of Nova Scotia and I would encourage the honourable member to come to the House tomorrow. When the Minister of Finance and Treasury stands up, she will table the budget that all Nova Scotians will want to see and all Nova Scotians will see one that is moving forward.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I certainly intend to be here tomorrow and quite a few tomorrows after that. In May 2013, the Premier stood in this House, he called for a vote on a resolution to, “. . . support keeping the provincial portion of the HST off electricity bills in Nova Scotia and commit to not putting it back on in the future.” However, we know that the McNeil tax review recommends doing the exact opposite.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the Premier is this, can members of this House expect another vote on keeping the HST off home energy in this House anytime soon?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we finally have the return of the old NDP - fear-mongering after fear-mongering. I would encourage the honourable member, instead of speculating what's in the budget, to show up tomorrow and the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board would be more than happy to tell her what's in the budget. And I'm going to tell you, Nova Scotians will understand this budget as one looking forward, unlike the one that was tabled for four years by that Party.

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

SNS/MA: LAHAVE FERRY MEETING - MIN. ATTEND

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, LaHave Ferry riders, like Nova Scotians in other places, are facing steep price increases at the hands of this Liberal Government. In Lunenburg County citizens have organized protests and petitions to register their concerns. Prior to a recent protest some of the local organizers made a simple request of the Minister of Service Nova Scotia, and Municipal Affairs - they asked for a community meeting to discuss ferry fee increases. The minister said that he would get back to them.

I know this is a Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal question that I should be asking the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, but maybe I can ask the Minister of Service Nova Scotia whether he can commit today to attending a community meeting so that LaHave Ferry users can have their voices heard - if he can't answer it, maybe the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal can urge the minister to have that meeting.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. This past Monday I attended to the LaHave Bakery - for those of you who travel rural Nova Scotia, a great place to stop for a cup of coffee and a snack - where I had the opportunity to meet with organizers of a protest that followed that very same day at 12:45. I had great discussions with those who participated and I actually attended the protests with those who were present at the very site of the LaHave Ferry. In my discussions with those individuals I committed to a meeting in the near future to further address the questions that they had posed.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I thank him for that answer. According to a news story on CKBW, when asked how negotiable his government rate hike may be, the Minister of Service Nova Scotia said there could be options to explore - and I'll table that document.

My question to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, could he please enlighten the House to which of these specific options may be available in which he and the Minister of Service Nova Scotia have explored?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. What we've talked about is with respect to the 10 passes and the migration to the annual fee, the annual rate that we have for all of our seven ferry runs. What we talked about would be payment options for having that annual rate applied to those who use the service. Obviously, this annual number was based on a percentage and a certain portion of trips that were made on an annual basis by those who live in the area. So we're looking at those options for an annual pass to see what we can do for payments to ease the annual number overall.

We're also looking at talking to all stakeholders in those areas where the ferry services are impacting and take place, and we're listening to Nova Scotians. Again, we had to close that gap between cost and revenue, but we're doing good decisions for the people of Nova Scotia.

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

COM. SERV.: REHAB. CENTRES - ADMISSION MORATORIUM

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services. The minister's road map for change for a service with persons with disabilities was submitted to the department in June 2013. The report includes a number of recommendations and goals that the department will improve service. One of those recommendations is that a moratorium on admissions to rehabilitation centres and large residential facilities goes into effect in Spring 2015. Stakeholders have been told that this is going to need to be pushed back another year - what would be the reasons for that push back?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, as I've said many times in the House I am committed to the road map for transformation, but we have to do it in a way that is both respectful and responsible. Quite simply, the date was pushed back because the communities were not ready with the service providers to provide the absolute, acute and necessary provisions of care in the community right now.

It takes a long time to deconstruct one system while you're building up another, so I'm not going to not have people go into rehabilitation centres and get the required services that they need simply because they may not be available in the community of their choice right now. It was just responsible to move that back. I also committed that there would be no new construction of any rehabilitation rooms or beds within this province, and I am committed to that.

MR. HARRISON: Thank you for that explanation. The advisory group who designed the roadmap had a positive vision for persons living with disabilities in the province. In order to make that vision a reality, certainly we need to make some progress. Could you provide a status update on the recommendations made in that report?

MS. BERNARD: I know that both my senior staff within the Disability Support Program have been working with and are still working with the advisory council and there will be updates that come at different time frames. I would be happy to provide the member with that.

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

TIR: PROV. FERRIES - TAX HIKES

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Yesterday, when asked about the new unfair tax hikes on our provincial ferries, the minister gave an answer that shocked - shocked - people who use these vital links on a daily basis. The minister told the House that the McNeil Government didn't hike ferry taxes and that the only obvious alternative is to end the service altogether.

Nova Scotians use these ferries to go to work, visit relatives, and to get to medical appointments every single day. My question, does the minister stand by his statement of yesterday that if the McNeil Government didn't hike ferry taxes - more than 160 per cent in some cases - the only obvious alternative is to end the service altogether?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that we're spending over \$9 million per year - all taxpayers, including those who use the services - on the cost to operate these ferries, while collecting just over \$1 million in revenue. We have to make tough decisions. There are tough choices to be had and we're going to have the courage to make those decisions.

At the end of the day, we looked at what we could do to close the gap on the cost versus revenue. The reality is that when you look at the number of the subsidy, if you had to close that gap in other ways, you would have to look at the services and what you provide in those areas. We've talked to all the representatives from those respective communities. They've all shown leadership on the fact that their communities want those ferries to stay put.

We're not impacting services. We had to impact the cost. Therefore, that's the way we made it fair for all Nova Scotians, and we stand by that decision. Thank you.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, we're beginning to get a clear picture of how this government intends to deal with rural communities. The Minister of Community Services thinks it's okay to remove child care services. The Minister of Natural Resources thinks it's okay to remove welcoming faces from a provincial park. The minister of economic and out-migration thinks it's okay to eliminate rural tourism jobs.

After watching his Cabinet colleagues eliminate rural jobs and child services, does the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal think it's okay to pile on these major transportation tax hikes?

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, again, these decisions were made to cut the gap between the cost and the revenue for these services. We understand their importance in their communities. That's why we're protecting those services. We're not removing them. These were choices that were tough but necessary.

The reality is that for four years, there was no leadership on the tough issues on the questions facing this province. We've brought leadership to this House and I will stand by the people of Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

ERDT: INVEST N.S. BD. - STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of ERDT. It is crucial that the province's offering of economic development programming is operating at full capacity. Speaking about the Invest Nova Scotia Board at the Economic Development Committee meeting in February, the deputy minister of ERDT said, "The arena of how they could support economic development is this big. They're going to have to figure out of that what are the most strategic areas. They're doing that analysis now." I'll table that comment.

My question for the minister is, has the Invest Nova Scotia Board informed you of the strategic areas they will be focusing on, and will the results of their analysis be made public?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the Invest Nova Scotia board, as a new board, has been mandated by the government, on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia, to make some strategic investments for sector-wide-type developments in this province.

They are now working through the process of identifying the specific areas they wish to focus on. That work is ongoing, and as soon as that work is finalized, we'll be more than happy to share the results of those discussions.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. It has been indicated that the board will not have its own staff but will be relying on ERDT staff. Additionally, it has been indicated that the board will have a budget to hire consultants to conduct research.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask this question: to date, how much has the board relied on ERDT staff, and has it hired any consultants to conduct economic research to inform its future funding decisions?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the board has been using Economic and Rural Development and Tourism staff in order to discuss some of its priorities, some of the sectors that they wish to focus on.

One of the other important areas has been board governance and how the board should conduct itself going forward to ensure that the most transparency and accountability take place in all their decisions. To date, I'm not aware of any consultants that they would have used. This is a board that is still in its infancy, and we certainly look forward to seeing some projects being put forward before the board and having them making decisions on investing money on behalf of Nova Scotians, which is arm's length and independent of government - something that was uncommon in this government under previous administrations.

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

ERDT - EASTLINK INTERNET SERV.: PROVISION - IMPROVEMENT URGE

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, my question will be sort of on the same line of economic development and on Internet service in rural Nova Scotia. I have been getting a lot of calls and petitions and a lot of information, especially from my constituency, through Argyle-Barrington, through the East Pubnico-Woods Harbour-Cape Island areas. I'm starting to get some calls as well from the Yarmouth area, those people who are in Richfield and the back sides of Yarmouth County, who have to rely on the wireless Internet service.

My question to the Minister of ERDT is, beyond waiting for the federal government program to completely understand what it is, are there any other steps that the department maybe could take to urge Eastlink Internet service to provide a better service to citizens?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as I've said many times, as the member is aware, the broadband project was first launched in 2006. In fact, I believe he was a minister of the government that launched that service.

There was a request for proposals that went out, and the government of the day decided to award part of those contracts to Eastlink to service the area which he represents. That contract did expire in December 2014. Mr. Speaker, the monies under that contract were provided to Eastlink by previous administrations. It is a private company, and therefore government is very limited in what it can do to force any private company to do in Nova Scotia.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I appreciate that answer, but we know that there were millions of taxpayers' dollars that ended up in this program, that did provide what I thought was a relatively cross-Nova Scotia service, whether it was through Eastlink in southeastern Nova Scotia or southern Nova Scotia or whether it was Seaside in northern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton.

I can definitely hear the differences between the members that I have in our caucus that are under the other system versus the ones under our system. If there's a way that government can urge them along, can provide them with a little bit of funding to make this happen, whether it is even to buy back the tower so that local communities can own it, I think would be a benefit. We even have people at this point who are wanting to - they are actually signing petitions that they will quit their service at the end of a certain date.

My request to the minister is whether he could work hard with Eastlink Internet service or ask government to really push down on those providers in Nova Scotia.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable . . .

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

OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Private Members' Public Bills for Second Reading.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 73.

Bill No. 73 - Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: I'm pleased to rise today on second reading of Bill No. 73, amendments to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. This bill requires the government and other public bodies to notify a person whose personal information has or may have been compromised.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that is short on words, just 72 in total, but long on protection of Nova Scotians. Most Nova Scotians trust their government with their most personal information: their health information, their family information, legal information, financial information, social insurance numbers, and much more. For the most part, people simply believe and trust that the government will protect it. Unfortunately we learned last December that there is cause to be worried about the security of their personal information.

The December 2014 Report of the Auditor General revealed that, "The Department of Community Services and the Department of Internal Services do not have all the necessary controls in place to protect the privacy, integrity and availability of the data in the Integrated Case Management (ICM) system." Mr. Speaker, that's a direct quote from the Auditor General - the Department of Community Services and the Department of Internal Services do not have all the necessary controls in place to protect this information.

Specifically, security weakness allowed the Auditor General's Office to gain unauthorized access to sensitive, personal information, including detailed case notes of people's living situations, names of children taken into care, and their financial information.

Mr. Speaker, just imagine that. The Auditor General's Office was able to gain unauthorized access to that level of sensitive information. If I recall how the Auditor General said he did it - his staff are not professional hackers. I mean they had some knowledge of computers but they certainly weren't professionals engaged for the purpose of gaining unauthorized access. They were able to gain it.

Mr. Speaker, they were also able to gain unauthorized access to information on four servers, which they then used to gain full control over two of those servers and access a database of information. In that database that they could access were passwords and usernames for other databases - a pretty serious amount of personal information, private information, that the Auditor General's Office was able to gain access to.

Anyone within the government network could potentially view this information, so with the amount of bureaucrats - I think we have over 10,000 who have government IDs, usernames, passwords - all those people could have potentially viewed this sensitive information.

Now I hear members opposite heckling a little bit but this is the Auditor General's findings, not my findings, and none of the people - and that database, this Integrated Case Management system that holds all of the major information for Community Services, I believe what I heard was that 20 per cent of Nova Scotians are in the database in some way, shape, or form. It's not immaterial by any stretch of the imagination, the amount of data that's in here. There was a hole that could have been breached, and the Auditor General's Office did go through it. They did gain unauthorized access to it. None of the people who have information in that database were notified that their information had been - how would we know? - or may have been breached. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, that's something I think Nova Scotians have a right to know.

The department told the Auditor General that they had not been aware of any security breaches, and that we all must ask ourselves, how could they have been aware of any breach, given the state of the controls over this personal information? How would they know if the information was accessed? Well, we do know that it was at least once, because staff at the Auditor General's Office was able to gain unauthorized access to it.

Should this information - this personal, sensitive information about approximately 20 per cent of Nova Scotians - fall into the wrong hands, it could have devastating and long-term effects on the person whose information was breached. For instance, a fact sheet on Canada's Privacy Commissioner's website warns that, along with other personal information, someone may be able to use your social insurance number to apply for a credit card, to open a bank account, to rent vehicles or equipment, or to book accommodation in your name, and you would be responsible for all the bills, the charges, the bad cheques, and taxes. That's from the website.

Last October, about 900 Canadians had their social insurance numbers stolen from the Canada Revenue Agency's system after the federal agency's online service was attacked by a computer bug. In that case, each person affected was to receive a registered letter to inform them of the breach, and they were also provided free access to credit protection services. The federal government went to great lengths to inform individuals by registered letter to ensure that communications were secure and could not be exploited by fraudsters.

In 2012 an Employment and Social Development Canada hard drive went missing, containing information including social insurance number, name, birthdate, home address, telephone number, and loans and balances of almost 600,000 Canadian students who had borrowed between 2000 and 2006. In this case, letters were sent to individuals to advise them of the incident and what steps they should take to help protect their personal information. Government also offered a toll-free number for those people affected to call.

Now, in today's day and age we accept that it may not be possible to guarantee the absolute security of personal information held by the government. Unfortunately, we cannot always prevent human error - an email sent to the wrong person with the wrong attachment - or we can't always protect ourselves from those who seek to obtain information for their own illegal use. There's always a certain risk.

However, what we can do is set up controls so that the government knows when unauthorized access has been gained to sensitive information, then government has a responsibility to ensure that those affected are notified. It's the government's responsibility to make sure that those people are armed with the knowledge they need to protect themselves against identity theft and other ruinous consequences that come with it.

The government has the right - has the obligation - to make sure that people are armed with the knowledge they need to protect themselves, and that certainly extends to telling people when the government knows that they may be at risk. In this case - and this is just one example. We don't know what other ones. This came about through the Auditor General's Report. There are numerous databases used by the Province of Nova Scotia. The Auditor General hasn't looked at them all, so who knows what the case is with all of those. But in this case, we know that the Auditor General was able to gain unauthorized access.

With the knowledge of that risk, no matter how big or how small, people want to try and minimize the risk. That's fine for us to sit here in this House and try and minimize the risk, but the people who are at risk have the right to have the knowledge to try and mitigate it. That's the least the government can do.

Providing our government with personal information is very often a necessity to citizens. If you want to access services, the government will require you provide information to them. People must be able to provide that information confidently. They

must be able to provide the information with the confidence that the government is going to safeguard that information to the best of its ability.

When the best of its ability falls short for whatever reason, the people have a right to know that that happened. If the unthinkable happens and unauthorized access to information is gained, government must tell the people affected. Government must tell the people who are at risk of being violated that they are at risk. It's a simple thing, because people must be able to act quickly to protect themselves before it's too late.

For these reasons I urge all members of this House to support Bill No. 73 and require any public body to notify individuals or groups of people whose personal information has, or may have been, compromised.

With those few words, I will take my seat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to say a few words on this bill to amend the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

As the Opposition knows, the Chief Information Access and Privacy Officer has indicated that the Department of Internal Services is commencing a review of the corporate privacy policy this year. The privacy review officer will be consulted as part of this review to ensure that Nova Scotia aligns with the privacy review officer's expectations around privacy breach reporting.

There is a perception on the other side of the House that a breach occurred or that personal information has been - and I quote from the bill - "compromised" within government, specifically as early as last week at Public Accounts Committee relative to Community Services. The key word in the bill of this amendment proposed is ". . . may have been compromised." The event of a breach has not been used by anyone outside of the Opposition, including the Auditor General, who has been asked about a perceived breach. When he was asked at Public Accounts Committee, his answer was that he could not say that it's a breach - it was a weakness. You can refer to the transcript from Public Accounts.

Auditors General in the past have found similar instances of a risk in protection of information. These include governments led by both Parties opposite, not just in the December 2014 Report. The reality is that there is always a degree of risk with a breach in information systems everywhere in government. There are several known to the public in U.S. security systems in the private sector, and the member opposite also mentioned the privacy breach in CRA. That breach is not one that you can compare to the weakness that was proposed - and there was no breach - highlighted by the Auditor General in his December 2014 Report.

The issue here is the degree of risk. Governmental departments and businesses aren't in a position to deny risk, but rather, with the advice of the Auditor General, assign extremely low likelihood of any compromise occurring and the type of impact it has. That ought to be the goal of any entity, both public and private, not to deny risk, not to inform virtually all people and all information systems that there has been a possibility of a breach. No information system is guaranteed without risk; its integrity is its vigilance.

All departments are accepting and indeed welcoming all those recommendations highlighted. Many of those vulnerabilities were being addressed even before the Auditor General Reports were released in 2014 and I am sanguine about the swift action by several ministers to improve vigilance to protect integrity. To legally subscribe to what this amendment asks for is to unnecessarily ring the alarm bells to people when there is no proof of any breach or any unauthorized person looking at their information. Many of these people, in particular those on social assistance or receiving health care treatment, do not need to have undue stress on theoretical events of security.

The member is correct about describing this information as sensitive. That's all the more reason to give up the fear-mongering. The member frankly has no evidence of a breach and I suggest he reread the AG report again. (Interruption)

No, he didn't mention breach in the report and we asked him that at Public Accounts Committee. The Nova Scotia Government already (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect has the floor.

MR. RANKIN: The fact is there is no fact of a breach and the fact is nobody can enter into the system without a username or password, just to start, and that's before all the other firewalls that are set up. The Nova Scotia Government already has policies in place that require any government entities to have their own policies and processes to ensure the proper management and protection of personal information.

Our government has a corporate privacy policy that also requires each government entity to have a privacy breach protocol. Can we improve this? Of course we can, enhanced security is an iterative exercise. What is important is that there is an information access and privacy officer in each government entity and it is his or her responsibility for weighing the risk of harm when a breach of privacy, or as the Opposition surmises, "... may have been comprised."

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: I'm glad to have a few moments to stand on Bill No. 73. I think the government are a little bit too strong on going after the member for Pictou East.

I don't believe for a moment that he is trying to fear-monger or really elevate a discussion or a concern that I think is an important one.

We know that Nova Scotians want their information protected when they go and seek services within government. A lot of personal information is being housed within departments within government so a piece of legislation, I think - and as I read through it, I mean it's a one-paragraph amendment, which really, I think, says all that really needs to be said. If there is a breach of personal information from Nova Scotians, they should be contacted. I mean to me that makes common sense. I would think that if that information is breached, they should contact the individual.

Reading through the bill it doesn't say may, or shall, or pretend, or maybe, or protect in French, it says if (Interruption)

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

MR. DAVID WILSON: Because honestly, this is an important issue for some Nova Scotians, for many, because the information gathered when you're filling out for the renewal of your licence, or going into a health service and receiving treatment, a lot of information is available and there have been issues throughout the years, that information has been breached, not may have been - have been breached.

Mr. Speaker, I will give you a few examples over the almost 12 years that I have been here that I know that that has happened and the government has had to take some steps to try to ensure that person's information was - well that person was acknowledged and told about the breach that happened.

I know, for example, a number of years ago in a health authority, there was some personal information that was looked upon by someone who did not have authorization. I believe there was a lawsuit after that. But the government - the district health authority - had to, and as the Minister of Health and Wellness, I had indicated that those individuals needed to be contacted.

I think really that's what the essence of this piece of legislation is. It's to say if that information is breached, those individuals should be contacted. It's not it has been breached, it will be breached. I think the government needs to just relax a little bit. They are a bit touchy. Maybe it's because the budget is coming out tomorrow and they know that after tomorrow, there will be a lot more lively debate in the House, Mr. Speaker.

Definitely, I think what the member for Pictou East was trying to do was to ensure that Nova Scotians are told if that information has been breached or lost. Throughout my career and even today, Mr. Speaker, in Public Accounts Committee, I asked the director of Service Nova Scotia about the possibility of privatization of some of the registries that we

have, for example. A number of years ago, the information that is housed by the government was outsourced to an international company - an American company - and there was some concern around the ability for the American government to gain access to that information because of security issues that the U.S. has and the laws that they have.

The witnesses today acknowledged that and that the number one concern should be, especially when a service like Service Nova Scotia and the information they take in needs to be protected, there need to be controls in place to ensure the protection of that.

I think the government should revisit this. I think the minister who would be overseeing this should maybe stand up and maybe give a different opinion than the member for Timberlea-Prospect has. I know he was given that information to relay on behalf of his caucus. I don't look into it as fearful information . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Look at this. He wrote that himself.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Maybe he wrote that himself, Mr. Speaker. If he did, I congratulate the member opposite. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, seriously, personal information needs to be protected. I think the government should look at a piece of legislation like this to see if they can strengthen the legislation that we currently have. I think it's a good piece of legislation. I look forward to the vote on it and getting it through the process here in the Legislature. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on second reading of Bill No. 73, amendments to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Over the past several decades, government has moved from hard copies of personal information to digital versions. With this have come new vulnerabilities to the personal information of hundreds of thousands of Nova Scotians. Where before, this information was kept under literal lock and key, behind physical drawers and doors, now this information is kept behind firewalls and network log-ins.

The digitization of information allows for efficiencies. It allows for services to be provided in a more timely manner with greater accuracy, but at the same time there are risks that have to be addressed. Those risks are a greater ability for unauthorized access to personal information. We expect the government to do their best to ensure this information is kept safe. We expect top-of-the-line security measures to be in place and to avoid any risks of personal information, but equally important is that we are made aware when those security measures fail and information is put at risk. That is the very spirit of this bill - the right to know when your personal information may have been compromised.

In December, the Auditor General released his report that outlined how auditors were able to gain unauthorized access to personal information on thousands of Nova Scotians. These auditors discovered vulnerabilities in the security of the Integrated Case Management system. That allowed them to view information that they were not authorized to have access to. The department has said that since then, the security holes have been fixed and further security measures are being put in place.

Meanwhile it is unclear what other unauthorized individuals may have accessed files they had no right to read. Those individuals who had their names in the system were not notified of this breach despite the fact that there was the potential for unauthorized access to their information. Individuals do not have a choice in whether or not they provide sensitive information to the government, unlike in the marketplace where you can choose to do business with organizations that pride themselves on top-of-the-line security measures.

Government has the monopoly on the most personal information of citizens. This includes social insurance numbers, previous and current addresses, driving records, social assistance history, and criminal history, and it is because of this sensitive information that government must be held to a greater standard than private companies. When private companies are concerned that personal information may be compromised, they issue statements to change personal passwords and monitor credit cards. Often they do not have certain proof that the information has been compromised, but individuals are notified just to be safe. Unfortunately we do not have a transparent system in place that deals with how government notifies individuals when their personal information has or may have been compromised.

In British Columbia the government records and reports on privacy breaches across government departments. Between 2010 and 2013, 2,718 privacy breaches were reported; a majority of the breaches occurred in Social Services and Health. Suspected breaches over that time frame were higher at nearly 3,800. These are security breaches where it was not proven that information was disclosed, but there was the potential. Suspected breaches are reported and individuals notified. This is because often the information held by government is highly sensitive and any disclosure could have negative impacts on individuals. This is especially true if they are unaware of the disclosure.

These metrics are important as it allows government departments to be more mindful of how personal information is handled and when individuals should be notified. In B.C., some of those reported cases could have been as simple as a PDF attachment with someone's personal information being sent to the wrong person. Incidents like this matter to those whose personal information has been sent to the wrong person.

We already have required reporting of privacy breaches in health care. The Personal Health Information Act requires that any unauthorized access to personal information be reported to the individual whose information was compromised. This makes good sense

and should apply to sensitive information held by government departments like Community Services, where the information held is just as important. A system needs to be put in place to do better monitoring practices. This bill is a step in the right direction by requiring any privacy breaches, either proven or suspected, be disclosed to the individuals affected. This should be paired with ongoing training and awareness of the importance of protecting personal information and how to address the breaches.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I just want to say that we all should consider this bill. We all value our privacy for the protection of not just ourselves but our loved ones, our family - and I was just thinking about how a couple of weeks ago I had taken someone to emergency and how we sat there in the hallway in emergency and listened to doctors and nurses go on about other patients surrounding us, and I thought about the privacy of these individuals and how it wasn't being protected. So here's one incident where we can go ahead and put a bill forward and protect Nova Scotians' privacy.

I ask for unanimous consent to vote on it today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Well, I thank everybody for that lively round of debate. The list I did provide to the other Parties, and maybe to you, Mr. Speaker, a guide of who is speaking next - you know it's a maximum of 15 minutes, but we rarely get there. We can just use it as our schedule.

Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 77.

Bill No. 77 - Conflict of Interest Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise to speak to Bill No. 77, the Conflict of Interest Act. I know each of you have this bill in your binder. It's a very short bill with two major clauses: one clause that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner be an officer of the House of Assembly, and the second clause that would require the Conflict of Interest Commissioner to make an annual report to the Speaker, who is then required to table it to the House of Assembly.

I have a number of comments to make about the bill, but before I do, I just want to tell you about my own personal interaction with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, which was all positive. Upon becoming an MLA, I was serving as the vice-president of Kings Mutual Insurance Company, which is a federally regulated financial institution. At that time, I sent a letter to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner asking if I should step down from that service. I did get a letter back saying no, that was fine, I could continue.

In fact, the conflict was I couldn't possibly make both the requirements for this House and the requirements to serve on the board of Kings Mutual Insurance Company, so I ended up stepping down. However, I would say about Kings Mutual Insurance Company, if you were maybe not aware, that it resides in Berwick, Nova Scotia. There are four mutual insurance companies in the province that are locally-owned, true mutuals. One is Clare Mutual Insurance; the other two are Pictou Mutual Insurance and Antigonish Farmers' Mutual Insurance. All four - if you have your homeowner's insurance with them, you're doing a really great thing for the economy of the province. I would encourage you to think about that.

In my experience at Kings Mutual, the governance of these organizations was under rapid change ever since the Enron event. We were required to become much more vigilant about things like conflicts of interest. I can tell you that in the corporate world, conflicts of interest are a big deal. From about the time of the Enron event on, the world for all financial institutions and all corporations, but especially federally regulated financial institutions, was changing.

As I speak to this bill, even though thinking about this bill - would my interaction with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner be any different? Likely not. I had a positive interaction with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. However, what is clear is that we are living in a time when in the corporate world, and I would suggest in the government world, it is becoming much more important that these things are easily accessible, and the public has a higher level of expectation of transparency from those in public office.

The public has been given too many reasons over the years to be distrustful. It is our job to put the proper measures in place to prevent that. This bill would make the Conflict of Interest Commissioner an officer of the Legislature. Another example of an officer of the Legislature is the Auditor General. It's clear, as we know, the important role the Auditor General has in our lives in the Legislature and overseeing the budget and the finances of the province. I would suggest to you that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner likewise has an equally important role. This is why this bill is important to pass. This is the right thing for us to be doing.

We are the only province in Canada in which the Conflict of Interest Commissioner - or as it's sometimes called, the ethics commissioner - is not an officer of the Legislature. Apparently in every other province, in every other Legislature in the country, this role is part of the Legislature. If we are not willing to be open and transparent with the public about our contact and the potential issues like other provinces, then that sort of sets a black mark on us, if we're not willing to take this step.

The House of Assembly Management Commission was put in place to allow for more transparency with regard to expenses and financing. It was important that those dealings be moved into the light of day. By allowing the Conflict of Interest Commissioner

the independence offered by holding the position of an officer of the Legislature, we would be doing the same thing.

The bill also requires that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner would produce an annual report to the Speaker, which would then be tabled in the House. The advantage of this would be that then we would be able to see that annual report and know what went on and how it was done, so it would offer greater transparency. Again, we are the only province in Canada that does not require this reporting to the Legislature.

We are not allowing the commissioner to fulfill their duties if these things are overlooked by our province alone. As MLAs and public representatives, it is our duty to try to restore any lost faith Nova Scotians have with politicians. As you all know, we live in the time of the 24-hour news cycle. Often it is focusing on things that go wrong or stories of scandal or deceit, and I think it damages the reputation of this Legislature.

We need to put an end to backroom meetings and hidden agendas and take proper steps to show the people of this province that what goes on in this House and among the members is their business and is transparent and shows up in an annual report, and that sort of thing. It's time that we, as a province, caught up with the rest of the country in regard to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, rather than simply letting this sort of drift on, as it has for the last number of years.

Again, our province and our citizens deserve to know that our Legislature is keeping up with the times, just as in Kings Mutual Insurance Company, on the board of directors, we were forced to start dealing with many of these governance issues, which sometimes even in that business might seem like a distraction. The company was about selling insurance, not dealing with governance issues, yet at the same time, it's very clear that even if we think that our business here is about making legislation, not dealing with these sort of governance-type issues, I believe that we're not doing the Legislature or the province a service.

As I said, Kings Mutual Insurance Company and all of these types of companies have to deal with these governance-type issues. This, in my opinion, is a governance-type issue for this House. It is important that this role be incorporated into the structure of the House, just as the Auditor General's role is, and I would suggest equally important to the Auditor General's role.

I realize that these things have changed over time. In the past maybe this wasn't seen this way, but in our time, these types of issues and conflicts of interest and all of that have become much more significant, much more important. It's time for our Legislature to catch up with the rest of the country. With those words, I take my seat. Thank you.

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

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I take privilege to stand and rise and speak on Bill No. 77, an Act to Amend Chapter 35 of the Acts of 2010, the Conflict of Interest Act. Interesting to read the three points this bill addresses - very short, very to the point - and question what it means. This piece of legislation wants to establish an annual report and it wants the Conflict of Interest Commissioner to report to the Speaker of the House.

I guess what really stands to mind with this are my personal thoughts on the motivation of this bill. We sit here in the House every day with a lot of challenges facing this province, and Opposition Day comes around only once a week. To bring something like this before the House sometimes makes me wonder what our priorities are. I question the motive, and I'll be quite frank about it myself, personally.

I think the previous government that was in power from 1999 to 2009 certainly had a chance to bring it forward at that point in time. It even raises more questions of, why are we talking about this here today? Is it because we had an issue brought before the Conflict of Interest Commissioner that maybe they just didn't like? I'm curious about that. I think it's probably a bit of a coincidence more than anything. (Interruption) I hear the member for Argyle-Barrington over there chirping a few comments about it. Obviously it strikes a note with him, I'm quite sure.

I will say this much - there's two things in this House that we stand for. One of them is integrity. I will say this much, that the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, the person whose face this was thrown at, as far as I'm concerned has a lot of integrity, has a lot of respect, and did not deserve for one minute what this bill, as far as I'm concerned, represents.

It's about trust, and I think it's also about something else. I would like to thank Justice Nunn on his hard-working, qualified position that he brings to that office. He is a well-respected person who I think does a very good job there and I think it's important for us to recognize the issues the government and the public are protected against by his office. Again, I go back over successive governments and I don't know where any other opportunities to challenge the organization were ever brought forward and it makes me wonder why we're here today.

There's no question that Nova Scotians have to trust - and that's important - they have to trust their government.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is why we're here.

MR. GORDON WILSON: And that is why we're here. We're here as an elected government to maybe change the views that previous successive governments have lost as far as trust. We're here as a government to bring forth, probably for the first time, one of the most open pieces of legislation, the first piece that we tabled, the accountability Act. Our government made it very clear, well before we were elected, and recognized that far

too often the previous government's approach with economic development was doing side deals and picking winners and losers and this was not acceptable to the public.

I can understand where trust is and I can understand where conflict of interest - yes, maybe we've got to focus on that, but one of our first orders of business was, as a new government, to pass the Accountability in Economic Development Assistance Act. This law put a new standard across the country for transparency.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Clare-Digby has the floor.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously there must be some things over there hitting a note. This legislation ensures that our government's major funding agreements with businesses are posted online, on a website, for all Nova Scotians to see - again, trust and accountability.

I just want to make it clear that we're doing everything that we can to promote transparency and accountability as government, and I would like to point out a few other things that we have already in place. This bill promotes the fact that we should create more bureaucracy within government. This bill ignores the fact that we have already in place checks and balances within this province. The media scrutinizes every single thing we say and do and researches every single thing that we say and do. I do not understand what more we would get by simply - and I haven't heard one pitch from the member who spoke before. I heard a few pitches on getting a plug in for his insurance company; I wish I had thought of that. That was a good move.

He even noted the fact that he had a positive interaction with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner himself. Again, it raises suspicion on my part why we're even here talking about it. He stated that this government is not willing to be open and transparent and puts a black mark on government. I do not see one single thing that we have done as government that would even vaguely represent something along that line. I'm extremely proud of how open and transparent we are, extremely proud. He also made the comment that this damages the reputation of this Legislature. Well, I'm here to say that this government is here today to fix the reputation of this Legislature, not damage it.

I'll go back briefly to the news articles I can remember, just previous to Christmas, when our minister, unfortunately, was thrown into a position of taking over a portfolio, among all the other portfolios that he had, and the juggling and the getting up to speed that he did - and I think he did an excellent job in not only handling that in a difficult position but moving that file forward.

I would also like to just again comment that my confidence in Justice Nunn is very high, and I hope to hear a few things from the other side that reflects that also.

In closing I just want to state that this government will continue to build Nova Scotia up by building back the trust of Nova Scotians. I think everybody is going to see in our budget tomorrow that that trust and that understanding and that openness and that transparency and that listening is going to be reflected there. I just hope that in future bills that are brought forward by governments on Opposition Days may be more focused on the needs and the concerns that we have of government, not just political intermix things within different members of the House. Thank you.

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

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: It's an honour for me to stand here today because I was wondering if I was at Yuk Yuk's comedy show or something when I heard about the transparency and what they're striving to do.

I want to speak on the conflict of interest because it's so interesting about saying you're keeping promises and I don't think there is one check mark by a promise that was made in the election. So what I would like to focus on is the fact that the commissioner, or if you have commissioner in a province, such as the Province of Nova Scotia, they carry the same responsibilities and privileges of a judge. There is a lot of power that our commissioner does have in his office, although, as mentioned, he's a very respectful gentleman.

I think it doesn't matter what job you're in, whether you're an MLA, whether you're a president of a country, or a prime minister, there are rules that need to be followed and those rules are usually created through a job description - and in our province there is not a job description per se for the conflict commissioner, and I think that's important. You can see that that's a start with Bill No. 77 to address the fact one of the steps forward is that the commissioner follows those same rules as the Auditor General in order to present to this House a report - and there is absolutely nothing wrong with that, that's what transparency is about.

Hiding behind words is not transparency, actually taking action by presenting legislation of this nature is really true transparency, not this bit about well we'll put something up on the website and we have a few words there, but the details are missing - and that's what happened over and over with this government.

It's important for the commissioner to have a job description with all the power that he has - and there is a question. I mean, what the position does for us as MLAs is give us the opportunity to make sure that we are not in a position of conflict and that we can go to the commissioner and we can find out for sure because it's a learning experience. Things evolve and change every day in this political world, so it's important for us to have the ability to go to somebody, but to go to somebody who has some criteria, so that criteria are the same each and every time a member approaches the commissioner.

Because we have no job description, we have no criteria, Mr. Speaker, what happens is what constitutes - there is a big question here - what constitutes an investigation, what are the parameters around it, is it a half-hour telephone conversation, is it an hour telephone conversation, or a two-hour conversation? Is it a meeting, a direct meeting? Is it bringing in others so there is a third party there to be present as a witness to the questions being asked?

I don't have those answers and that's why this type of legislation is a starting point to move towards having a better system so that the people of Nova Scotia can be confident in the fact that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner has rules to follow and has criteria. I would think whoever took on that huge responsibility would feel much more comforted in knowing he or she has those parameters to work within and that they would not be accused of being partisan in any manner because they have followed the criteria that have been set for them.

I think that's very important, especially coming from a government that talks about how transparent they are and how open. It's not about the words; it's about the actual actions and taking the actions to make that happen. It's important for the government to address this. It is important legislation. We all know here as politicians that the political world is one that the public does not trust and they have, unfortunately, good reason for that because promises are made and promises are not kept. We've seen that and no wonder people feel like they do. There is no politician who is immune to that feeling in here. Let's get that straight. Nobody is any better than anybody else; nobody is immune from that feeling from the public in Nova Scotia, and they have a right to feel like that.

This takes a good step towards making people understand the accountability that comes with the honour of being elected here to represent Nova Scotians and it really does say something about the transparency. Also I think it's important that within these types of positions that you look at the time frame that an individual has in that position. Right now it is five years, but that can be re-offered; there's no specific time saying that after 10 years that goes to somebody else.

I think it's important to look at that too. It's always good to have a change. I know that my political colleague from across the way was talking to the Progressive Conservative member about why didn't you bring it in when you came in as government? But you're going to hear that many times over yourselves someday because there are so many important issues that need to be brought to the table and that's a function of government and they will also learn that they won't be able to do it all because there are so many departments, there are so many issues that need to be addressed in legislation; there are so many policies that need to be changed.

To use that attack line is disingenuous and it's something that will happen in the future if that political colleague will continue in his position and will find out that someday somebody will be saying - why didn't you bring it forward?

In closing, I think that this is a good piece of legislation. I think it's a piece of legislation that will help bring back some confidence to the people of Nova Scotia, that there are rules to follow and even the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, who has the power of a judge, has to follow the rules, because a judge has to follow the rules of the law in his or her court so it should make absolutely no difference for us in the political world that there are not criteria that every one of us, plus our public members, know these are the criteria that the commissioner is following when I, as a member of the Legislature, go to him to ask if I may be in conflict with something or if I, as a member of the Legislature, or a person in the public feel there might be an issue with a politician.

We support this because it is a step towards trying to rebuild that confidence. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker; glad to see you in the Chair today. It's my pleasure to speak to Bill No. 77, the amendments to the Conflict of Interest Act.

I first want to thank my colleague from Clare-Digby. I have tremendous respect for that member, but I don't know why he has to come in here and take that negative look at what the reasons are that we are bringing bills like this forward. I'm going to try to help him out in trying to make him understand why the bills are coming forward.

I do want to say two things, though. Number one, this is not about the current Commissioner Justice Nunn. It is not about the member who was brought forward in December. As a matter of fact, nowhere in my documents anywhere do I mention that.

AN HON. MEMBER: He just scratched his notes out.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: No, I'll table the notes that I'm probably not going to read, but I do want to respond to what I felt was an attack on this Assembly.

What I don't think the member is understanding is that this is the place to have discussions about conflicts of interest, about transparency, about doing the best that we can do as MLAs and as public officials in the Province of Nova Scotia. If we can't have the discussion here during Opposition Day, well, why doesn't government bring some of these things forward? Well, because they're too busy being government. Why can't they take (Interruption) Apparently my tone is now too soft on this. Apparently it is too soft, too soft. I just want to know that the heckling is coming from the Liberal side, when we're just trying to be . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: That wasn't heckling.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: From the Liberal side. Again from the Liberal side.

Listen, this Premier has come on a number of occasions and said that under his watch, Nova Scotia will be the most open and transparent province in Canada. (Applause) Thank you, because I think that's a laudable level to try to get to. We need to get there. In light of what Opposition Day really is, why don't we, as Opposition, provide other ideas to government to make things better, to make things more transparent? That's what this bill is here today.

You know, I think the member talked about media. Well, you know, the media are going to be our Conflict of Interest Commissioner. They're going to look at the data and they're going to do the research and they're going to decide who is in conflict or not. (Interruption) Well, speaking to that, who brought the issue of that thing I talked about in December? Who brought that thing forward and how did they already judge it before it was ever sent off to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner? I'll let the member maybe answer that later on, if he wants to stand and continue on that.

We are, Madam Speaker, one of the only provinces left that doesn't have a Conflict of Interest Commissioner as a true commissioner who reports directly to this House. We do not have an independent freedom of information officer, we don't have an integrity officer - all of those things that other provinces have. Maybe we don't want to be the top province and the most expensive province, but heck, if other provinces are doing it, why aren't we? Just because other people might be doing it for us and it's not our experience and we don't have time to do it, those aren't good answers to bring to the floor of the Legislature. That applies equally here today as we revisited many of the same arguments and how people apply to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. We had one example from the member for Kings North on his interaction with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

We all have a yearly date with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner when we have to fill out all the forms and say there are no changes or what our investments are, what our wives' or spouses' investments are, and send it off. But that is the only interaction in my 12 years as a legislator here - I mean, there have been referrals to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, but you know, they have been pretty lax in detail in the way that they come out or they've been very lax in the information that has flowed through or how the investigations are happening.

Let's be clearer in how that person conducts its business. You know, we're not discussing what we would qualify a fancy title. It's an important distinction that provides real independence, and with it, public confidence.

When the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, like the FOIPOP officer, look at our bill previous to this one, which was another - I would say - easy amendment to the FOIPOP rules that when there is a breach of confidentiality or a breach of information, that the people whose information was breached would be notified. Again, a simple piece in trying

to help this place become more transparent, to try to help government become more transparent in trying to provide some simple ideas in how things are done. When the Conflict of Interest Commissioner reports to the Legislature, there is no risk of being at odds with his or her boss or to help to provide more independence.

I'm going to give some examples across the country. We need to look to our neighbours in New Brunswick to see how far our province has fallen behind in terms of transparency and accountability when it comes to matters of conflicts of interest. In addition to annual reports that are tabled in the New Brunswick Legislature and posted on the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's website, the New Brunswick Commissioner posts summaries of the investigations that he does undertake. For instance, already this year, there have been three investigations posted on the New Brunswick website. Voters and taxpayers in New Brunswick know exactly what steps the commissioner took to investigate an allegation that one MLA had breached the Members' Conflict of Interest Act. They also know that the commissioner received three affidavits and conducted interviews with three witnesses. They know what documents he examined, and they know exactly how the commissioner came to his finding. We know that all of this information is contained in a 26-page document that is online for everyone to see.

Madam Speaker, right now, if you look at who the Conflict of Interest Commissioner is in Nova Scotia - I think there is a little glance on the bottom of the Nova Scotia Legislature site of who the person is, but that's it. There is no indication of when the office hours are or how to contact the person or anything like that. That's the challenge right now. It's that we've got these two tremendous extremes on what other provinces are doing and what we're doing.

In Saskatchewan, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner tables an annual report. In addition to the opinion of the commissioner with respect to a request for an opinion, it is provided to the Legislative Assembly through the Office of the Speaker and to the affected member, except when the request is an issue received from the president of the Executive Council, in which case the report is made to him or to her.

In Ontario, they have an Integrity Commissioner in addition to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, who advises Ontario's 107 members of Provincial Parliament and provides conflict of interest advice. Copies of the commissioner's reports on all complaints can be found online. For instance, Ontarians can simply look online to understand how a complaint about the content of an MPP website is resolved. The report outlines the complaint, the actions taken by the commissioner, the complainant, and the MPP accused of infraction. They can also understand how and why the commissioner arrived at her decision and why no penalty was recommended. This is the kind of transparency and accountability that I think Nova Scotians do deserve.

In Nova Scotia, unless there is media coverage around a complaint or an investigation, taxpayers - and MLAs for that matter - have no idea that there is an allegation

or a breach by an elected official. It's impossible to know how many complaints he has dealt with or even how many rulings he has issued because the process in Nova Scotia is confidential from start to finish. It's secret. Unless the person accused of the breach makes the commissioner's decision public, Nova Scotians have no idea how the commissioner completed his work or how he reached his decision.

In Nova Scotia, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner does not and is not required to produce an annual report of his or her activities. There is no dedicated website. As I said earlier, the tab on the legislative website for the Conflict of Interest Commissioner does not even contain a biography of the current commissioner.

The most recent case before the commissioner - that we know of - resulted in the subject of an investigation posting a letter addressed to the complainant online before the complainant had even received the letter. This raises serious questions that I feel that this bill does remedy.

Madam Speaker, I urge the government to fulfill their pre-election commitment to bring Nova Scotia in line with other provinces, to take a substantial step towards increased transparency and accountability by supporting this important and long-overdue legislation.

Madam Speaker, I can say that I am disappointed by some of the comments that I did hear today, but I am very happy that many people sat and listened to what I did have to offer - an idea, at least, that maybe later on, if someone wants to grab hold of and copy it, I'm happy with that as well. But to stand here and impute motive of why something is here, when it is not factual, does a disservice to this House. There's a reason why this information is here, why this bill is before us, and why it is here during our Opposition Day: because it makes sense, and I hope it helps the government and helps this Legislature in its long and proud tradition. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Well, unfortunately, that concludes the Opposition business for today. I will turn it back over to the Government House Leader to call hours for tomorrow and what we're going to be doing.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The House will sit tomorrow from the hours of 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. At the start of the day, the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board will be delivering her Budget Address. Following that will be a reply from the Finance and Treasury Board Critic from the Official Opposition. It's possible that due to that, and as the daily routine will start after the Critic from the Official Opposition, Question Period may be pushed off and not be one hour after the start of our time tomorrow.

So I would look for the unanimous consent of the House that Question Period take place after the daily routine is concluded, in light of the time that the Budget Address and reply from the Opposition will take. I would ask you to seek that consent.

MADAM SPEAKER: There has been a request for consent for Question Period to be delayed until after the budget.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

MR. SAMSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. In light of tomorrow with the Budget Address, not knowing how long that will take, if time permits, we may be calling second reading of Bill Nos. 82 and 83.

On Friday we're scheduled to meet from the hours of 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Following the daily routine, if there is time before the start of Question Period, we will be wrapping up the comments - the reply from the Finance and Treasury Board Critic of the Official Opposition followed by the comments from the Finance and Treasury Board Critic of the New Democratic caucus.

Again, because of those replies, Question Period may be delayed beyond the one-hour start of our proceedings, so I would seek consent for Friday morning, that Question Period take place following the replies of the Finance and Treasury Board Critics from both the Official Opposition and the Third Party.

MADAM SPEAKER: There has been a request that Question Period be after the replies from the Official Opposition on the budget. We need unanimous consent for that.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

MR. SAMSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Following Question Period on Friday, we would start the Estimates Debate both here in the main Chamber and in the Red Room. Once the four hours of estimates are up, that will conclude the government's business on Friday.

With that, Madam Speaker, I would move that House do now rise to meet again tomorrow from the hours of 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., and that you now start the late debate that was previously scheduled to start at 5:30 today.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again on April 9th between the hours of 1 p.m. and 6 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 stand adjourned until 1 p.m. on April 9th.

We now have reached the moment of interruption. The Adjournment motion was submitted by the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River, and the key words are:

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature urge the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board to hit pause on any changes to the Film Tax Credit until the industry has been properly consulted.”

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)

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

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, I'm pleased to rise to my feet today to do late debate on a topic that is near and dear to my heart:

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature urge the Minister of Finance to hit pause on any changes to the Film Tax Credit until the industry has been properly consulted.”

I'd also like to add the film and television and digital animation tax credit because I think that's really important that we keep that - there is none. You guys were going to

promise to do a sound tax credit; however, that has not been forthcoming. Therefore, it is the film, television and animation tax credit which I will be talking to today.

Madam Speaker, I have to say that as somebody who has been in that industry for 33 years, I started when I was 20 years old, I started as an actress at the age of 17, became professional at 17, in theatre. By the time I was 20, I had been chosen to play Marilyn Monroe in a rock opera on the life of Marilyn Monroe out in Edmonton and I became what you would call a Canadian star, which we all laugh about in the industry because most Canadian stars, nobody even knows our names. They might recognize us on TV; they might go oh, I know that person, she's really good, I've seen her in something but they don't have a clue what our names are.

Part of that is the problem of living right next to the United States where it's like - as Pierre Elliott Trudeau once said - it's like sleeping next to an elephant where every twitch and groan is felt by us here on this side of the border. That is the case with the film and television and animation industry.

When I first became an actress here in Nova Scotia there was no film industry, there was no television and there was no film. Therefore, I had to go away to Toronto, then on to Vancouver, then to Montreal before I even went to the United States. The reason for that, Madam Speaker, is because each province has their own film and television and animation tax credits, and depending on the strength of those tax credits, that is where the work gets done for the majority of years that the tax credit exists.

The industry needs these tax credits, Madam Speaker, because arts and artists do not make much money. Theatre does not pay well and most theatre actors and people who are carpenters and everything else in that industry don't make as much money as they do when they are doing film and television. It's a big difference so most people tend to make the majority of their money doing film and television, and if you're an actor, you can do voice-overs as well, which is very lucrative, in between the theatrical jobs you want to do.

I love theatre, personally, I never wanted to do television, was never interested in television. I said I just want to do theatre and movies, that's all I want to do. Unfortunately it's hard to make a living that way because the movies are few and far between as well. If you want to be a successful performer, you need to be able to do it all.

Luckily for me, at one point in my career, after I turned 37 I think it was, just as the movie and television roles are starting to dwindle for most actors, especially female actors, I discovered that I had a voice. In fact my first voice job I landed in Toronto was the X-Men. I became Rogue of the X-Men, which is a superhero. (Applause) Thank you. She's a superhero. Okay, I'll do you a voice: *My daddy like to kill himself when he found out I was a mutant.* (Laughter)

Madam Speaker, I would say that role has probably made my name more well-known around the world than any other job I've ever done, including this one. (Interruption) Wendy Waters, that's true, Wendy Waters is pretty popular as well with young kids. Dragon Tales was another one, also My Little Pony, I play Star Catcher in My Little Pony, and also right here in Halifax I was lucky enough to land a job when I first moved back to Nova Scotia in Animal Mechanicals, which was done by DHX films.

DHX is a fantastic production company here, run by Michael Donovan and his brother Paul Donovan and Charlie Bishop. They have actually added their voice to the cry to please save our film and television and animation tax credit.

One of the things that I'm very proud about my hometown in Truro for is we have a Nova Scotia Community College there that trains young artists to do digital animation. Those digital animators who come out of there are looking for jobs, really well-paying jobs, and they want to stay in Nova Scotia.

One of the things this Film Tax Credit does is it adds another 5 per cent to any producer who is going to hire somebody fresh out of school. So if there's a kid in university or college who has a talent in the creative industries and they get a job from one of the production companies, that production company will get another 5 per cent tax credit. This is a great incentive to keep our young people here, Madam Speaker. I can't tell you how many people from Truro have landed jobs with Copernicus Studios, an award-winning animation company. They work for Disney, they work for many American companies as well, they do the work here, they hire the Canadian-Nova Scotian artists here and then that work gets seen all around the world.

All of the people I know in this industry are very concerned. We know the budget is coming tomorrow, we don't know what it holds, but if the minister herself had not created some havoc in the industry by making very negative comments about the Film Tax Credit in front of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce this wouldn't be happening. Luckily, we did get a tipoff, so like any good industry that cares about the industry, we're out there fighting to keep this industry alive.

The Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism should be pleading with that Finance and Treasury Board Minister to please keep it the way it is, don't change it, don't listen to the bean-counters in the Finance and Treasury Board Department, they don't know what they're talking about. They have hated this Film Tax Credit for years; they've tried to get rid of it for years. Don't listen to them; they don't know what they're talking about. All they do is look at the bottom line and they say, oh, it is \$24 million going out.

Well, it's not \$24 million going out. Actually, if you have \$150 million coming into the province and you give a tax credit that amounts to, altogether, \$24 million, do the math. What's 50 per cent of nothing is my question - 50 per cent of nothing is nothing. I can

promise most of these production companies will be doing their work elsewhere. They'll have to; they can't afford it here. Toronto has a much better tax credit - as soon as we lower our competition here, they'll go there. It's a very fluid industry.

I lived out of a suitcase for 30 years because I went wherever the work was. We're like gypsies. You have to be just to stay alive, to be able to feed yourself, to be able to stay working, and most of us love our craft. We work hard at our craft and we're proud of our craft, and if we have to go wherever the work is, we go. That's why I moved around.

Finally, I realized I miss my home, I miss my family. I don't care; I want to make a living in Nova Scotia. Right now Nova Scotia had a good tax credit and when we got into government we improved it. Therefore, that means there have been more productions being done and we want to entice more productions to come and more indigenous productions being done here, more of our Nova Scotians telling their story around the world. *The Book of Negroes* spent \$9 million here in Nova Scotia, \$9 million, and it's being seen everywhere. Do you know what that's going to do to tourism? Do you know how many people are going to want to come and see the Black Loyalist Museum when it opens? Way more people in Birchtown.

The Trailer Park Boys, so well known, even in Australia - my family, they're huge fans, they're oh, gosh, we gotta come and see what Nova Scotia's like. It's being filmed in my hometown now. Bible Hill, in Truro, is now Sunnyvale which is why I kind of joke and say I am the MLA for Sunnyvale and why I stand by the Trailer Park Boys and the kitties. You don't want to move those kitties anywhere; in fact, they're feral kitties; they belong there.

My point is that this particular tax credit is extremely important, an extremely important business for Nova Scotia. We want to be seen as a young, exciting, hip, cool province. Halifax is getting that reputation - and what are we going to do? Cut it off at the knees and go, no, we're boring old fogeys, we don't believe in film and television industries. What we believe in is just the same old, same old.

What our industry is saying is don't change it, don't change something that's already working - don't fix what's not broken. Please keep the film and television tax credit and keep our productions happening in all the rural districts.

That's another thing I want to add . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. Your time has elapsed.

The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Madam Speaker, it's actually exciting for me today to rise as a private member to address this topic. As we all know, budget time is one of the

most important parts of any legislative session and of any legislative agenda. Of all the members today, I've been chosen to rise at this very important time in the agenda to speak to this topic.

The other thing that's actually exciting to me is - I wasn't going to do this, but since my colleague, the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River recited her acting credits, I thought maybe I'd take this opportunity to mention some of the highlights of my acting career.

I began quite some years ago. My first role was as the judge in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial by Jury*, which was staged by the Tantramar Theatre Company in Amherst. I went on from there to play General Genghis Khan Schmitz in *Seussical the Musical*. What I consider two of my personal highlights actually were appearing as the Big Bopper in *The Buddy Holly Story* and the lead role in a locally created and staged musical called *Frenchy's: The Musical*, which was a huge success in Amherst and which I got to do with my good friend, the late Ruth Nichols, who was actually the musical director. Ruth and I, in *Trial by Jury*, got to marry one another four times in one week, and I really cherish those moments now that Ruth is gone.

Regardless, Madam Speaker, I do want to go on and address the issue of the Film Tax Credit because it is a very important issue. It may or may not be addressed in the budget tomorrow, but I do want to end any suspense that may be building in that regard by saying unequivocally that if you want to know what's in the budget, you will have to attend tomorrow and listen to the remarks of the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board. That's what I will tell about anything that may or may not be changed with respect to the Film Tax Credit.

I do want to talk a little bit about the existing program as it exists in the province today. It's known as the Film Tax Credit, Madam Speaker, but it's not a true tax credit. It is a payroll rebate or grant that's given to companies that work within the industry. It pays somewhere between 50 per cent to 65 per cent of eligible salaries of workers who work in film and TV projects. The difference there between the 50 per cent and 65 per cent has to do with the shooting locations, so if a project shoots outside of the Halifax metro area, they would be eligible for that extra 15 per cent.

We have other payroll rebate programs in the province, Madam Speaker. They are used by government as one of our primary tools to stimulate business and industry throughout the province. By comparison, other payroll rebate programs pay between 8 per cent and 10 per cent of eligible wages, so there's quite a disparity between the different programs that exist. I think that's important to note when we talk about this program and how it works.

Much has been made of the Finance and Treasury Board Minister's comments. I think they have been taken out of context in the respect that only 1 per cent of the Film Tax

Credit money was used to offset taxes. I think that has been misinterpreted in many ways to indicate that she is saying that the tax credit isn't working and that there are many other problems with it. Really, her comments were accurate.

I'm going to begin my explanation of them by telling you what they do not mean. The Finance and Treasury Board Minister did not say that employees in the industry do not pay taxes because, Madam Speaker, they do. What it does mean is that there's no requirement that companies that receive funds under the program pay corporate tax in Nova Scotia. Therefore, only 1 per cent of the funds that are paid out under the Film Tax Credit are used to offset taxes payable in Nova Scotia. Now, why do companies do that? They do that because they can. It's not their fault. It's a legitimate, legal way for them to organize their finances now, but that is a fact of the program and that is what the Finance Minister, in fact, meant when she said that.

Now as I've said, we all know the budget won't be delivered until tomorrow and I'm not going to address that. I'm not going to speak about what's going to be in the budget tomorrow but I do know that Minister Whalen has met with representatives of the industry.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. You are not permitted to use the minister's name during address.

The honourable member for Cumberland North has the floor.

MR. FARRELL: I do know that the honourable Finance and Treasury Board Minister met with representatives of the film industry earlier this month. She heard their concerns and she has committed to further meetings with them beyond Budget Day.

The government is obviously still looking closely at all the recommendations that were made in Laurel Broten's tax review and as we've said many, many times, the Premier said this in Question Period, he said this in the media, everything in the province is on the table and I think there is clear evidence of that with the bill, the amendments to the House of Assembly Act that were introduced on first reading yesterday and with the minister's statement that was made yesterday with respect to the salaries and benefits payable to the employees of the province. Everything is out there; everything is being looked at because, as we've heard in One Nova Scotia, the province is in a serious financial situation and it is important that it be addressed now, not next budget, not next election, but now, Madam Speaker.

This government feels it's important for Nova Scotians to know what is entailed in the number of existing tax credits they pay, hence the Finance and Treasury Board Minister's comments and it definitely includes the tax credit available to the film industry.

I certainly want to thank the honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River for her comments and for her input in this. She has first-hand experience,

and I also want to thank the Finance and Treasury Board Minister and all the members of the Department of Finance and Treasury Board who have been working tirelessly towards the goal of introducing a fair budget that Nova Scotians will see as coming from them and being in their interest.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: I'd like to thank the member for Cumberland North for his comments. I feel like I should comment on my acting career too and I'm sorry to have to confess that it's virtually nil, although my colleagues tell me I should be auditioning for the Friendly Giant.

I will say that in the last number of years I've gotten involved in a program in our area called Stage Prophets, which my family has been involved in and actually I build sets for Stage Prophets. I built the Anne of Green Gables set for Anne of Green Gables, obviously I built part of it anyway, the school house which then flipped around and became the store. It was a pretty big piece. It was real fun to do that stuff.

One thing I notice about the acting community is if you do one little thing for them, your name gets in the credits. You watch a movie or anything like that, anything that happens, everybody's names - so my name was on the program having contributed or built and I was very pleased to be able to do that.

I'm very pleased to be able to say a few words about the Film Tax Credit and I'm very pleased that the member for Cumberland North drilled down into the details a little bit, I appreciate that. It's interesting that my own experience actually building sets is relevant too because there are a lot of companies that supply things like that too and this tax credit is very important. It's interesting in terms of his comments about the rate of tax credit versus other tax credits in other industries. I find that interesting because it's obvious that the film industry is a very mobile one that is very sensitive to what different jurisdictions do in terms of tax credits. So we're in effect competing with other jurisdictions to try and attract some of that industry into Nova Scotia, which is the reason why that tax credit is at the level that it is.

Having said that, the companies in Nova Scotia that participate and benefit from that tax credit and do the work here are not mobile. It's the big international companies that bring the work in but in reality the Nova Scotians who are participating in that industry are here and are benefiting from the work that's being done here. There are reasons why that tax credit is at the rate it is at. I mean other tax credits in other industries are at different rates. It's because that's what's required to get that done and like I said, it's clear that the international industry are very sensitive to a number of things including the Canadian and American dollars. That's moving in our favour too. There are a number of things there.

That tax credit, at \$24 million last year, brought \$139 million worth of work into the province. I take the member's comments on the taxes - I would have to think about that, I understand what you're getting at for the major companies - but for those local Nova Scotia companies, they are certainly paying taxes in Nova Scotia. I just think that this is a very good return for our province.

There are other spinoffs that haven't been mentioned by either member - maybe my fellow member from the NDP mentioned that - but it certainly brings a certain amount of tourism into Nova Scotia; it brings a certain amount of prestige internationally. *The Book of Negroes*, interest in the Fortress of Louisburg - all of those things are very beneficial to the province to attract this industry. It's important that we participate in the way that we are doing so.

I will say too, that I think that it's interesting when I think about the way this House operates and the way industry operates - the way the minister sort of unveiled the sort of potential of changing this tax credit when it was in the platform not to change it just a few short months ago, it just sort of sent a shock wave through the industry. Does that mean that any tax credit or any program can never be changed? I would say no, it doesn't mean that. I think that it means that the way these changes are made has to be thought about carefully and if you're going to make changes to a program like this, it needs to be signalled very clearly, it needs to be consulted so that the film industry will be able to go okay, in 2017 this is what the rates are going to be; in 2018, this is what the rates are going to be. It needs to be very predictable.

Industry is very adverse to unpredictable messaging where in the Legislature we're used to, we're holding on to that, or we're going to tell you but we're not telling you right now, you'll find out tomorrow. Maybe that works fine in this House for us but it doesn't work very well for industry. Industry doesn't react very well to that sort of messaging. The way these things get rolled out needs to be thought about, and that would be one of my major criticisms of the way the minister has handled this. She did not handle it well in terms of the international exposure that Nova Scotia has gotten for this and it's not really necessary. If they're going to change this tax credit, it could have been changed in a manner which would be much more predictable over time, and more time to do it.

If that was the case - and I don't believe that should be done anyway, but I'm just saying that the manner in which the messaging is handled is important and the minister needs to realize that what works in this House doesn't work for industry. Industry operates on a different set of ideas. They want to know, and they want predictability. They don't want things to be changing mid-stream - what you thought you were applying for isn't there anymore. That might work well for us, but it doesn't work well for industry. I think it's incumbent on us as a Legislature to realize that the way that we message things matters to the industry.

Also on consulting, there's not a lot of evidence that this was consulted much with the industry. It would seem to me, and I would be speculating, that the minister might be surprised that there were 24,000 names on a petition today or yesterday passed in and the Trailer Park Boys did a video and got 600,000 hits. Some of that could have been avoided with consultation and maybe different messaging and a more predictable roll-in of a change. I just think it's unfortunate this happened in this manner for the government and for us as a province. It didn't have to happen that way and maybe what it is, is a lesson learned. Next time before changing a program, think about what the industry needs, consult with that industry and find out beforehand how that should all be rolled out, and take that into account.

One of the other things, a very key factor, is that we have our Nova Scotia Community College doing all kinds of programs in training actors and in all of the other side things like sound stage and filming and all those sorts of crafts that relate to the film industry, they are being trained in the NSCC. Those young people coming out want jobs, and to change this tax credit and drive that business out, like I said, at the very big level, it's highly mobile, and to drive that all out of the province means that those young people will be leaving the province too.

This Film Tax Credit kind of captures those young people into these trades, into the creative arts, and is very beneficial to them in these programs. So we're funding the NSCC to a considerable level, obviously. As a province we fund - and these types of courses, these young people benefit from the work being here in the province. So it's another very compelling reason why we should be keeping the Film Tax Credit as it is, or if we are changing it, to be changing it in a very careful manner, in a very predictable manner, which allows the industry to adapt to it.

I'm not saying that nothing should ever be changed. I'm just saying that if we are going to change things, then they have to be done in a very careful manner. As I said, I believe this Film Tax Credit is something that is very beneficial to our province, and should not be changed.

As I said, too, one of the goals of the Ivany commission was to retain our young people. This is an industry that clearly does retain young people. (Interruption) And attracts them, yes. Thank you.

So there are many different components to this, as I said. I think it's unfortunate that this has all played out this way. I think it's extremely unfortunate that the platform of the government was so positive toward the Film Tax Credit, the Digital Media Tax Credit. Now, just one year in - 15 months in, or whatever it is - this is seen as a major flip-flop. I think that is very . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. That brings us to the end of our Adjournment debate for today. I wish to thank all members of the House for the role they have played in the Adjournment debate.

The House stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

[The House rose at 4:27 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1325**

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 being a princess is something that every little girl thinks about, and MacKenzie Kelly always took an interest in being a Princess in the Apple Blossom Festival; and

Whereas MacKenzie got her wish as she was crowned Princess Hantsport 2015 on April 1st; and

Whereas as Princess Hantsport, MacKenzie will attend numerous events as she represents her town and will be vying for the title of Queen Annapolisa during the Apple Blossom Festival in May;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate MacKenzie on being crowned Princess Hantsport and wish her all the best.

RESOLUTION NO. 1326

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas students from across the province received, on February 25, 2015, at Government House, the 2015 Respectful Citizenship Award; and

Whereas this award recognizes students who demonstrate leadership and commitment to creating safe and inclusive spaces where bullying is not accepted and respectful, responsible relationships are promoted; and

Whereas Hailey Handspiker-Wade, a Grade 12 student at Digby Regional High School, is one of the recipients of this year's award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Hailey Handspiker-Wade on receiving this prestigious award for outstanding contributions to her school and community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1327

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of every community in Nova Scotia, and the people of the Town of Digby are proud of the many dedicated individuals who give of themselves each day to make our town a better place to live; and

Whereas this year, the Town of Digby has selected one of its outstanding citizens as Volunteer Representative of the Year, and this individual has given much in the way of time and energy to various organizations; and

Whereas through this individual's genuine warmth and caring toward others, he has become a valuable asset to the organizations that he has been involved in;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Neil Pothier for being named Volunteer Representative of the Year for his outstanding contribution to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1328

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of every community in Nova Scotia, and the people of Clare are proud of the many dedicated individuals who give of themselves each day to make our town a better place to live; and

Whereas this year, the Clare community has selected one of its outstanding citizens as Volunteer Representative of the Year, and this individual has given much in the way of time and energy to her community; and

Whereas through this individual's genuine warmth and caring toward others, she has become a valuable asset to the organizations that she has been involved in;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jocelyne Comeau for being named Clare's Volunteer Representative of the Year for her outstanding contribution to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1329

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of every community in Nova Scotia, and the people of the Municipality of the District of Digby are proud of the many dedicated individuals who give of themselves each day to make our municipality a better place to live; and

Whereas this year, the Municipality of the District of Digby has selected one of its outstanding citizens as Volunteer Representative of the Year, and this individual has given much in the way of time and energy to various organizations; and

Whereas through this individual's genuine warmth and caring toward others, he has become a valuable asset to the organizations that he has been involved in;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Stacey Doucette for being named Volunteer Representative of the Year for his outstanding contribution to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1330

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Will Grover was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Will Grover for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his five years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1331

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Greg VanTassel was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Greg VanTassel for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his five years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1332

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Sean Gamborg was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Sean Gamborg for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his five years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1333

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Richard Robertson was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Richard Robertson for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 30 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1334

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Jack Turnbull was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Jack Turnbull for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 35 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1335

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Jim Gaunce was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Jim Gaunce for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 35 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1336

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Justin Wood was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Justin Wood for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 20 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1337

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Kenny Walker was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Kenny Walker for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 25 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1338

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Paulette Walker was recognized for her dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Paulette Walker for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for her 15 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1339

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Paul Dugas was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Paul Dugas for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 20 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1340

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Robert Hersey was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Robert Hersey for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 5 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1341

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Adam Sabeau was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Adam Sabeau for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 5 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1342

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Nicole Stark was recognized for her dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Nicole Stark for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for her 5 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1343

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Richard Sabean was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Richard Sabean for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 5 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1344

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Robert Amero was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Robert Amero for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 15 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1345

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas many local volunteer firefighters provide a vital and outstanding service throughout rural Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Digby Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet on February 14, 2015; and

Whereas Reg Heasman was recognized for his dedication and service beyond the call of duty in helping preserve the security of our town, municipality, and surrounding communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate firefighter Reg Heasman for receiving the Fire Services Long Service Award for his 15 years of service as a dedicated volunteer firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 1346

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas the Halifax Field Naturalists society educates the public on the rich natural history of Nova Scotia through field trips, hikes, presentations, and newsletters; and

Whereas the society is celebrating its 40th anniversary; and

Whereas the commendable efforts of the society are made possible by outstanding volunteers such as Janet Dalton, Clarence Stevens, Ingrid Plache, Michael Bradfield, Allan Robertson, Burkhard Plache, Lilian Risley, Stephanie Robertson, Richard and Grace Beazley, Elliott Hayes, Rachelle Watts, Gillian Webster, Patricia Chalmers, Ursula Grigg, Bernice Moores, Doug Linzey, Regine Maass, Bob McDonald, and David Patriquin;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate the Halifax Field Naturalists on 40 years of providing natural history education and thank their volunteers for their outstanding efforts.

RESOLUTION NO. 1347

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Dr. Axel Becke, a resident of Halifax, has promoted excellence in research as a Killam Professor in the Department of Chemistry at Dalhousie University; and

Whereas he is cited over 100,000 times in the field of chemistry and known for his groundbreaking work in density functional theory, with two of his articles among *Nature* magazine's top 25 most cited papers of all time in all scientific disciplines; and

Whereas Dr. Becke, a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and Royal Society of London, past recipient of the American Chemical Society Award in Theoretical Chemistry, and medallist of the International Academy of Quantum Molecular Science and the World Association of Theoretical and Computational Chemists, was awarded the prestigious Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Dr. Becke on his receipt of one of the most prestigious research awards in Canada and thank him for his contributions to science in Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 1348

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Fusion Halifax is a non-profit organization that challenges young professionals in Halifax to think forward and take charge of their city's future; and

Whereas their efforts are driven by a dedicated team of volunteers, including Adam Hayter, Alyson Murray, Jared Dalziel, Jeff Mitchell, Emily MacRae, Katie Kushner, Sasha Sears, Sharique Khan, Lori Cadelli, Jennifer Simpson, Jeremy Moore, Akram Al-otumi, Leslie Gallagher, Kelly Schnare, and Natalie Irwin; and

Whereas the efforts of these incredibly dedicated individuals result in young professionals throughout Halifax being brought together for friendship, mentorship, and new partnerships in working towards a better city;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate the volunteers of Fusion Halifax for their exceptional dedication in building civic engagement and a sense of community among young professionals.

RESOLUTION NO. 1349

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Scott Macmillan, a resident of Halifax, is an ambassador of East Coast music throughout Canada and the world; and

Whereas he is a leading Canadian musician known for his work with Rita MacNeil and Symphony Nova Scotia, among many others; and

Whereas Mr. Macmillan, an East Coast Music Award recipient who has received numerous awards from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Nova Scotia Arts Council, received the Arts Nova Scotia Awards Portia White Prize for cultural and artistic excellence on the part of a Nova Scotian artist who has attained mastery in their discipline;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Macmillan on his receipt of the Portia White Prize and thank him for his notable contributions to music and culture in Atlantic Canada.

RESOLUTION NO. 1350

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia Spelling Bee is an annual event for students from across the province and a local sponsor of the Scripps National Spelling Bee; and

Whereas the Nova Scotia Spelling Bee encourages students to improve their spelling, expand their vocabularies, and gain confidence through participation; and

Whereas Talha Syed of the Halifax Grammar School and Victor Gao from Gorsebrook Junior High came second and third respectively out of 48 spellers from across Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate these exceptional young students on their performance.

RESOLUTION NO. 1351

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Equals6 is a Halifax technology startup founded by Andy Osburn to provide an online environment in which students can interact with each other and potential employers; and

Whereas their new platform, Students2Mentors, links university students with mentors across all faculties; and

Whereas this program, already used by organizations such as Dalhousie University and Fusion Halifax, helps provide graduates with opportunities in Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Andy Osburn on his considerable innovation and entrepreneurial spirit.

RESOLUTION NO. 1352

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Fundmetric is a Halifax technology startup founded by Dalhousie University graduates Mark Hobbs and Chris Kolmatycki; and

Whereas these innovative Halifax residents were recently selected as part of five companies across Canada to participate in the Google for Entrepreneurs tenancy program; and

Whereas Fundmetric has also won a competition hosted by Launch 36 and received a significant investment from the Business Development Bank of Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Messrs. Hobbs and Kolmatycki on their commendable innovations and entrepreneurial spirit.

RESOLUTION NO. 1353

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Ms. Jennie Dobbs owns and manages the Morris East restaurant in Halifax; and

Whereas the Morris East team competed in the International Pizza Expo in Las Vegas; and

Whereas Ms. Dobbs and her team obtained third place in the non-traditional category, international division, with a Nova Scotia-inspired pizza featuring the best of our amazing local ingredients;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Ms. Dobbs and the Morris East team on their strong performance in representing Nova Scotian cuisine on an international stage.

RESOLUTION NO. 1354

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Gaelic Affairs)

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

Whereas 19 students enrolled in the Core Gaelic Language program at Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School, Antigonish, recently travelled to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland on a Gaelic Language, Culture and Educational visit; and

Whereas these students and their Gaelic teacher, Màiri Parr, diligently worked to raise funds via bottle drives, bake sales, and dinner theatre, as well as receiving funding support from groups such as the Scottish Travel Bursary, the Antigonish Highland Society, and the Antigonish Kinsmen Club; and

Whereas having opportunities to use their Gaelic language skills with friends in Scotland, obtain a greater sense of the international presence of Gaelic language and culture and opportunities associated, visit the regions where their families originated, develop a sense of camaraderie and fellowship, and have instilled in them the desire to assist others working to develop their own Gaelic language and cultural skills were key objectives of this trip;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School Core Gaelic students, their Gaelic language teacher, Màiri Parr, and the many individuals and community groups in the Antigonish area who assisted in organizing and supporting this wonderful educational opportunity.

RESOLUTION NO. 1355

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Bruce Jacquard of Yarmouth has completed a carving of William Shakespeare at work; and

Whereas Bruce Jacquard's carving is now on display at a local pharmacy; and

Whereas this is only one of many masterpieces he has carved;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bruce Jacquard on completion of this excellent carving and wish him continuing success in his artistic endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1356

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Captain Sarah Rogers, formerly of Yarmouth, is now a flight test engineer; and

Whereas Captain Rogers develops experiments to ensure the safety of new flying capabilities; and

Whereas Captain Rogers is in the 11th year of a distinguished Air Force career;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Captain Sarah Rogers on her continuing success in a most challenging career and wish her all good things for the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1357

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Dr. Patrick H. Friel has announced his retirement, effective June 25, 2015;
and

Whereas Dr. Friel has been an excellent medical practitioner for 32 years; and

Whereas Dr. Friel has been a valued member of the Yarmouth community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dr. Patrick Friel on his retirement and wish him many years of continued community involvement.

RESOLUTION NO. 1358

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas the *Yarmouth Vanguard* has been honoured nationally for sports coverage;
and

Whereas *Vanguard* editor Tina Comeau has written many excellent sports articles;
and

Whereas the *Vanguard* is a perennial winner of writing awards;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tina Comeau and the *Yarmouth Vanguard* on winning this prestigious award and wish them continuing success.

RESOLUTION NO. 1359

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas the Yarmouth Garian Construction Atom C Hockey team have had a very successful season; and

Whereas the team won the Joe Lamontagne Memorial March Break Tournament; and

Whereas the team is coached by Head Coach Kevin Hubbard and Assistant Coach Michel Saulnier;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the team and coaches on their gold medal performance.

RESOLUTION NO. 1360

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas the Yarmouth Peewee A Mariners have had a very successful hockey season; and

Whereas the team won a silver medal at the Gary L. Wentzell March Break Tournament in Bridgewater; and

Whereas they lost the gold medal game by a close score of 2 to 1;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Yarmouth Peewee A Mariners on their fine performance.

RESOLUTION NO. 1361

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Riley Jennings, son of Laurie and Lisa Jennings, from Masstown, Colchester North, and a high school senior at the Cobequid Educational Centre in Truro, had an exciting career as a key player on the CEC Cougar football team and was named as an all-star receiver; and

Whereas Riley caught the notice of scouts from several universities who tried to make him a member of their squad; and

Whereas recently Riley met with Gary Waterman, head coach for St. Francis Xavier, and officially signed the papers making him a member of their team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Riley Jennings for becoming a member of the St. F.X. team and for moving forward to the next phase of his career.

RESOLUTION NO. 1362

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Scottish events are numerous and popular throughout Nova Scotia but Colchester County has few, so to correct this, James and Linda Finnie of East Mountain, Colchester North, have recently formed the Scots Society of Colchester; and

Whereas their goal is to bring back the feelings of Scottish culture and heritage, to interest people in their Scottish roots, and to encourage them to participate in Scottish activities; and

Whereas their first event of the year was a traditional Robbie Burns supper and dance with all the pomp and circumstance that would be found at a Burns supper in Scotland, including pipers, speeches, haggis, and a traditional ceilidh dance;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate James and Linda Finnie for promoting the Scottish culture and heritage in Colchester County once again.

RESOLUTION NO. 1363

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas the Social Justice Youth Camp at the Tatamagouche Centre in Colchester North was presented the Irving and Ruth Pink Award for Youth Development and Social Justice by Dalhousie Legal Aid in January 2015; and

Whereas this camp, which has been held for the past 12 years, shows young adults how to make a difference and what it is to be socially just and responsive to the needs of communities and different groups; and

Whereas the camp works with young people from all the different communities and cultures in the Maritimes, from fishing villages to urban centres, from Mi'kmaq communities to recent immigrants, exploring social justice issues that affect all aspects of their lives;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Social Justice Youth Camp for receiving the Irving and Ruth Pink Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1364

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas rural Nova Scotians for many years have depended on the members of volunteer fire brigades to keep their families and properties safe from fire; and

Whereas training, fundraising, first aid, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the many additional responsibilities of the members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Steve McEvoy of the Valley Kempton Fire Brigade for receiving the 15 Year Pin 2015, and commend him for his commitment to serving others.

RESOLUTION NO. 1365

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas rural Nova Scotians for many years have depended on the members of volunteer fire brigades to keep their families and properties safe from fire; and

Whereas training, fundraising, first aid, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the many additional responsibilities of the members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Aaron Morse of the Valley Kemptown Fire Brigade for receiving the John MacAulay Training Award 2015, and commend him for his commitment to serving others.

RESOLUTION NO. 1366

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas rural Nova Scotians for many years have depended on the members of volunteer fire brigades to keep their families and properties safe from fire; and

Whereas training, fundraising, first aid, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the many additional responsibilities of the members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alex Teed of the Valley Kemptown Fire Brigade for receiving the 10 Year Pin 2015, and commend him for his commitment to serving others.

RESOLUTION NO. 1367

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas rural Nova Scotians for many years have depended on the members of volunteer fire brigades to keep their families and properties safe from fire; and

Whereas training, fundraising, first aid, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the many additional responsibilities of the members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brad Moore of the Valley Kemptown Fire Brigade for receiving the 10 Year Pin 2015, and commend him for his commitment to serving others.

RESOLUTION NO. 1368

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas rural Nova Scotians for many years have depended on the members of volunteer fire brigades to keep their families and properties safe from fire; and

Whereas training, fundraising, first aid, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the many additional responsibilities of the members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kim Green of the Valley Kemptown Fire Brigade for receiving the Officer of the Year Award 2015, and commend him for his commitment to serving others.

RESOLUTION NO. 1369

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas rural Nova Scotians for many years have depended on the members of volunteer fire brigades to keep their families and properties safe from fire; and

Whereas training, fundraising, first aid, recruitment, and public relations are only a few of the many additional responsibilities of the members of a fire brigade; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Spencer Maskill of the Valley Kemptown Fire Brigade for receiving the Fireman of the Year Award 2015, and commend him for his commitment to serving others.

RESOLUTION NO. 1370

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brandon Slack, a member of the Debert Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the Firefighter of the Year Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1371

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Don Geldart, a member of the Debert Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the 15-Year Service Award as well as the Fire Officer of the Year Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1372

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Eric Barnhill, a member of the Debert Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the 25-Year Service Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1373

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kyle Slack, a member of the Debert Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the 15-Year Service Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1374

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mike Hepburn, a member of the Debert Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the Wendall Barnhill Most Improved Firefighter Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1375

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ronnie Smith, a member of the Great Village and District Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the 15-Year Service Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1376

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sharon George, a Ladies Auxiliary member of the Great Village and District Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the 5-Year Service Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1377

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Terry Francis, a member of the Great Village and District Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the 20-Year Service Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1378

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Terry Spence, a member of the Great Village and district Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the 20-Year Service Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1379

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Trevor Spencer, a member of the Great Village and District Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the 5-Year Service Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1380

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate McInnes Cooper for receiving the Steve Francis Memorial Award at the 2015 Great Village and District Fire Brigade banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1381

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Barrett Jenkins, a member of the Great Village and District Fire Brigade, Colchester North for receiving the Firefighter of the Year Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1382

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Barrett Jenkins, a member of the Great Village and District Fire Brigade, Colchester North for receiving the Most Improved Firefighter Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1383

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Charles Fields, a member of the Great Village and District Fire Brigade, Colchester North for receiving the 5-Year Service Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1384

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chris Congdon, a member of the Great Village and District Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving Officer of the Year Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1385

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Daniel Dodsworth-Lush, a member of the Great village and District fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving the Junior Firefighter Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1386

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chris Congdon, a member of the Great village and District Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving Claude O'Brien Fellowship Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1387

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kathy Slack, a Ladies Auxiliary member of the Great Village and District Fire Brigade, Colchester North, for receiving 20-Year Service Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1388

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brian Langille, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the 30-Year Service Medal at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1389

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brian Reid, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the Life Member Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1390

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Cameron Veno, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the Life Member Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1391

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bob Langille, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the 45-Year Service Medal at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1392

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Allan Fahey, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the 25-Year Provincial Medal at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1393

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills, and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas an annual banquet is held as a way to thank these dedicated volunteers and to present special awards for years of service and for outstanding contributions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Adrian MacCallum, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the 10-Year Pin at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1394

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tim Colburn, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the Officer of the Year Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1395

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dale Jollymore, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving at the 2015 banquet the 50-Year Service Medal and the Life Member Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1396

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jack Halverson, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the 50-Year Service Award and the Life Member Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1397

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jeffrey Friesen, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the MacBurnie Award for Training at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1398

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jeremy Russell, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the Firefighter of the Year Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1399

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jim Forbes, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the 25-Year Provincial Medal and the Life Member Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1400

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate John Bonnyman, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the Life Member Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1401

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate John Sellers, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the 45-Year Service Medal at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1402

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Matt Forbes, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the Murray MacIntosh Special Services Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1403

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Paul Colburn, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the Murray MacIntosh Special Services Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1404

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Paul Cook, a member of the Tatamagouche fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the Walter Grant Fireperson of the Year Award at the 2015 banquet.

RESOLUTION NO. 1405

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's fire departments are made up of individuals who are dedicated to serving others; and

Whereas these firefighters and first responders not only contribute hard work, skills and time, they often risk their lives and must deal with incidents of great emotional stress; and

Whereas firefighters seldom receive the accolades which they deserve and most fire brigades hold a banquet and awards ceremony to thank all members and to present special honours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Peter Lockerby, a member of the Tatamagouche Fire Department, Colchester North, for receiving the 15-Year Pin at the 2015 banquet.