



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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

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

### Second Session

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015**

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015**

**Sixty-second General Assembly**

**Second Session**

**1:00 P.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

**DEPUTY SPEAKER**

Ms. Margaret Miller

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Before we begin the daily routine, the subject for this evening's late debate was submitted by the honourable member for Halifax Needham:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature condemn the recent cuts made by the McNeil Government and urge them to change course. Attacking the deficit through the most vulnerable is not acceptable.

This will be debated this evening after Opposition Members' Business.

We will begin the daily routine.

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

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



**Bill No. 89 - Boat Harbour Act.****Bill No. 91 - Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act.****Bill No. 95 - Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act.**

and the committee recommends these bills to the favourable consideration of the House, each without amendment.

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

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, may I do an introduction, please?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. BERNARD: I would like everyone's attention to turn to the east gallery. Last year we worked with the Heartwood Centre for Community Youth Development, and Leaders of Today, to engage over 100 youth. The comments and feedback from youth will help inform the province's sexual assault strategy.

Seated in the gallery are Laura Swaine, the executive director, and the two women who were youth engagement coordinators on the project, Brianna Miller and Tamsyn Loat. With them is Rene Ross, co-chairman of the sexual violence strategy. I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, as part of the development of the province's first sexual violence strategy, we engaged with over 100 youth last Fall. I'm pleased to table a report, A Sexual Violence Strategy - Youth Engagement Summary.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

With the consent of the House we will revert to Presenting Reports of Committees.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

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

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Private and Local Bills, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bills:

**Bill No. 104 - Milford Haven Fire Protection Commissioners Act.**

**Bill No. 106 - Colchester Regional Development Agency Act.**

and the committee recommends these bills to the favourable consideration of the House, each without amendment.

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

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

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

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge that we are in the midst of Public Rail Safety Week here in Canada. Public Rail Safety Week runs until May 3<sup>rd</sup> and gives us a chance to highlight the dangers when drivers, pedestrians, and trains meet.

Most Nova Scotians do not realize how dangerous it is to walk on or near railroad tracks, or how careful you have to be when taking your car over railroad tracks. In 2014, 57 fatalities and 46 serious injuries occurred across Canada as a result of railway crossing collisions and trespassing on rail property.

It's important to use Public Rail Safety Week to highlight these dangers and to remind Nova Scotians that when you see tracks, think train. By avoiding dangerous activities such as trespassing near tracks or trying to race a train to a crossing, we can reduce or eliminate these preventable deaths and injuries. Thank you very much.

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for providing a copy of his remarks earlier this morning. The Progressive Conservative caucus joins the minister in recognizing Public Rail Safety Week. It is a time set aside to increase awareness of safety around railroad operations and a commitment to making the rail system safer.

The statistics that the minister mentioned are frightening - 57 lives lost and 46 injuries. Those are numbers that really do highlight how dangerous it is to walk or drive on or near railroad tracks.

Earlier this week, the federal Minister of Transport announced new funding for railroad crossing improvements. She also issued an emergency directive requiring companies to slow their trains to a maximum of 64 kilometres per hour when travelling in a highly-urbanized area, and increased inspections and risk assessments along key routes used for the transportation of dangerous goods.

It is my hope that the federal initiatives, along with the minister's sincere efforts to raise awareness here in Nova Scotia, will reduce the number of accidents, injuries, and deaths at railroad crossings.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I didn't mention how disappointed I am in the operators of the rail line in Cape Breton. They have done their part for rail crossing safety by raising the fees so high that nobody can use the rail around Sydney and surrounding areas anymore, and therefore rail safety is not an issue. Thank you.

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

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to thank the minister for the copy of his statement before we sat today. I'd also like to echo the minister's comments regarding rail safety in our province. It's difficult to overstate the relationship that Nova Scotia has had with railway lines and how they have connected our communities to each other for as long as many of us can remember.

I hope that this minister will remember this point as he considers the future of the railroad line in Cape Breton. We know that this government has had a difficult time with the Yarmouth ferry file, and now that that file has moved from one Cape Breton MLA to the other, to the current Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. I would just like to say that it is my hope that now that both files - both the Yarmouth ferry file and the Cape Breton rail file - are housed in the minister's department, he'll treat the future of both transportation links with equal respect.

There is only one train song that I know but I'm not allowed to use. Just let me say this, for the sake of our beautiful Island of Cape Breton, I hope the people who live there continue to hear that train a comin' for many decades to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: We'll now move on to Government Notices of Motion.

#### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1646**

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

Whereas April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Nova Scotia and today is Denim Day; and

Whereas Denim Day began as a protest over a controversial acquittal in a rape case in Italy in 1992 and has grown into an annual event marked in many countries around the world; and

Whereas wearing denim is symbolic of our support for sexual assault survivors and a call to action to educate ourselves and others about sexual assault;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House support Denim Day and that they consider making a donation to an organization that supports survivors and victims of sexual assault.

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

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

It is 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 Justice.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1647**

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

Whereas the CyberSCAN team has investigated over 500 complaints since its introduction in September 2013 and has successfully worked with those involved to remove intolerant or cruel posts online; and

Whereas the CyberSCAN team in the Department of Justice had conducted over 500 presentations across the province to inform Nova Scotians about a level of protection in place should they ever be faced with cyberbullying; and

Whereas the CyberSCAN is leading valuable work in Nova Scotia and is a front-runner in Canada when it comes to preventing and dealing with online bullying;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize Director Roger Merrick and the CyberSCAN team for their dedication to building a safer Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1648**

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

Whereas the RCMP, the Halifax Regional Police, and Crime Stoppers work together to prevent a heinous plot to open fire arms at the Halifax Shopping Centre; and

Whereas our police agencies acted quickly, effectively, and avoided what could have been one of the worst acts of violence carried out in our community; and

Whereas the work of all those involved in this case who acted courageously and put their lives on the line every single day to protect us deserve the respect, appreciation, and recognition of this House and of all Nova Scotians;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize the RCMP, the Halifax Regional Police, and Crime Stoppers for their courage, expertise, and for their genuinely heroic act to keep us safe.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver and 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 Environment.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my capacity as Minister of Gaelic Affairs and I beg leave to make some introductions.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, in the gallery today, both in the east and the west are a number of people here to participate in the launch of Gaelic Awareness Month including, and I'll ask each of these people to rise so they can receive the warm welcome of the House: Mr. Glenn Graham, a representative of the Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia; Marlene Ivey, a professor at NSCAD University; Seamus Watson, who works at Highland Village; Heather Smith in the west gallery, formerly from Antigonish County, my home town, cartographer student; Frances MacEachern, program officer with the Office of Gaelic Affairs; and over here in the Speaker's Gallery, former Premier, the Honourable Rodney MacDonald who is now the CEO of the Gaelic College in Cape Breton.

I would ask all members of the House, for all those people to please stand again and receive their warm welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Gaelic Affairs.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1649**

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

Seach gum bi Gàidheil na h-Albann Nuaidhe mar choimhearsnachd agus thro'n cànan agus cultur air a bhith a' cur ri sòisealtas, eaconomaidh agus iomadachd na mór-roinneadh againn gu pailt; and

Whereas the previous clause states Nova Scotia Gaels as a community, and through their language and culture, make numerous contributions to Nova Scotia's society, economy, and diversity; and

Whereas the Gaels community has designated the month of May to recognize, celebrate, and share with all Nova Scotians their language and culture through song, music, dance, stories, tales of humour, foodways, customs, and spirituality;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Legislature take time to better understand the social and economic contributions of Nova Scotia Gaels and participate in activities this month that educate and raise awareness of the value of the language and cultural identity of Gaels in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, may I do an introduction prior to introducing my bill?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as members of the House know, we stand in this House to introduce bills. The fact is that there is a lot of hard work and many months and sometimes even years of work that go behind preparing such pieces of legislation.

We have a few of my staff from Energy who are here today, who attended the bill briefing earlier, and are here to see the introduction of many months and years of hard work. I'd ask them to stand be recognized by the House. We have Mr. Bruce Cameron, who is the executive director of Sustainable and Renewable Energy; Sandra Farwell, who is the director of Sustainable and Renewable Energy; and Melissa Oldrieve, who is a policy analyst with the Department of Energy. I'd ask the House to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

**Bill No. 110 - Entitled an Act Respecting the Generation of Electricity from Marine Renewable-energy Resources. (Hon. Michel Samson)**

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

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, may I beg leave to make an introduction first please?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. ZANN: In the west gallery, I'd like to draw everybody's attention to Lynn Jones and to Dr. Ingrid Waldron. They're members of the ENRICH Project. Please take a stand. (Applause)

**Bill No. 111 - Entitled an Act to Address Environmental Racism. (Ms. Lenore Zann)**

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

#### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

#### **STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, in your Speaker's Gallery there is a gentleman by the name of Colin MacDonald, who is Director of Gaelic at the Gaelic College. I would ask that he stand. I know he has been announced already, but we also have the former MLA for Inverness and Premier Rodney MacDonald here with us, and we have also a gentleman whom I happen to know it's his birthday today - Mr. Glenn Graham, who is here with the Gaelic Council - give him a round welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

#### **A' GHÀIDHLIG/A CULTUR: ATH-BHEÒTHACHADH - TAIC**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: A Labhraiche Urramaich, Dualchas agus canan nan Gaidheal a' toirt trichead muileann dolaires do'n eaconomaidh Albainn ùir.



Bhris seo am pobull Gàidhealach, agus am nisneachd agus ‘s e miarailt a th’ ann gu bheil cànan agus dualchas nan Gàidheil fhathast an Albainn Ùir. Tha an dà chuid ann an éiginn agus feumach air cobhair.

Feumaidh smn ar dicheall a dhèanadh gus gach cobhair a dhèanadh air ath-bheòthachadh an cànan agus an dualchais anns a’ mhór-roinn seo.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

### **GAELIC LANGUAGE/CULTURE: PROMOTION - CONGRATS.**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, Gaelic Awareness Month is a time to celebrate the contribution Gaels have made to our province and the beauty of their language and culture. Unfortunately I am unable to speak Gaelic but as someone who grew up in Antigonish (Interruption) The one word I know the Minister of Health and Wellness wouldn’t want me to use. Unfortunately I am unable to speak Gaelic but as someone who grew up in Antigonish, I’m very familiar with the language of my grandfather and my forefathers. I’ve also attended many Gaelic events, including the Highland Games in Antigonish and other Gaelic events in Cape Breton, which showcase the culture to thousands of visitors each year.

While events like the Antigonish Highland Games and others around the province help promote the Gaelic culture, the number of Gaelic-speaking Nova Scotians continues to dwindle. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century only one in five Nova Scotians could speak Gaelic and today that number is much smaller.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate those who continue to promote this important language and culture. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

### **GUNNING, DAVE: COMMUN./PROV. - CONTRIBUTIONS**

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an upstanding member of the Pictou community and a well-known Nova Scotian. Dave Gunning has been a champion of Nova Scotia arts and culture and a strong advocate on behalf of the Pictou Landing First Nation and all Pictou County residents concerned about the cleanup of Boat Harbour.

He has tirelessly advocated for Nova Scotian musicians and artists and has spoken at length about the need to make significant changes in Boat Harbour to benefit the health and wellness of residents in Pictou County.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this building in the Law Amendments Committee the member for Pictou East referred to Mr. Gunning as someone who spends his time writing Internet comments from his basement - from his parents' basement.

I can assure you that the contributions that Mr. Gunning has made on behalf of his community and his province deserve more recognition than this. I would ask the member for Pictou East to take a moment to apologize for his remarks and instead thank Mr. Gunning for the contribution that we all know he has made on behalf of his community and his province, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **GUNNING, DAVE: PICTOU CO. - CONTRIBUTIONS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a minute to thank Mr. Gunning for his contributions to Pictou County and his efforts. I'd also like to take a moment to point out to the member for Cumberland North that he would be well suited to take comments in context and understand matters which he speaks about before he leaps to his feet and reads stuff that somebody put in front of his face. Thank you.

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

### **SHOREHAM VILLAGE - REPAIRS**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, in 2013 the former NDP Government announced a rebuild of Shoreham Village, a long-term care home in my constituency that is in need of major repairs.

The member for Annapolis, now the Premier, promised that if elected he would keep all these capital investments announced by the government. You don't have to take my word for it, Mr. Speaker, the former Liberal candidate in Chester-St. Margaret's clearly states in a Facebook post from September 21, 2013, while making a reference to Shoreham Village, "A Liberal Government under Stephen McNeil will fulfill the capital promises of the NDP."

With no action on the rebuilding site, it is clear the Premier has no intention of following through on the commitment he and his Liberal candidate made. He has broken his promise to the seniors of Shoreham Village and their families.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**GAELIC AWARENESS MO. (05/15) - ACKNOWLEDGE**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, May is Gaelic Awareness Month in Nova Scotia. Gaelic continues to live because of the interest of Nova Scotians who speak and who try to learn this founding language of our province. Modest government support for Gaelic is an investment in education and the maintenance of a language and culture that contain insights, wisdom, and humour that date back thousands of years. That investment pays off to the tune of \$32 million each year for our Nova Scotian economy.

Gaelic language and culture remain in dire straits. The government's elimination of two of the five positions in the Gaelic Affairs office is a setback for the Gaelic community and all the good work that has been going on over the past number of years. May we in this Legislature acknowledge Gaelic Awareness Month for recognizing the spirit of Nova Scotians who are Gaels.

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

**RURAL N.S. - RESOURCE DEV.**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Premier some tough questions about jobs in Nova Scotia. I asked him what he was doing to address the nearly 22,000 jobs that have been lost since he became Premier. He and I both agreed that the status quo is not working, but instead of offering an innovative solution, the Premier said, "... the best opportunity for rural Nova Scotia ... is resource development." He went on to describe the resource-based economy that our province has had for a century - the one that is often unsustainable, and the reason that in the last 30 years our province has tried to diversify our economy.

I don't disagree that our farming, fishing and forestry sectors play an important role in our economy, especially in rural Nova Scotia, but it is sad that in 2015 our Premier would have no other suggestions on how to bolster our economy and keep our rural communities vibrant.

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

**MLA HOCKEY GAME: ORGANIZERS - THANK**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, on April 28, 2015, I had the privilege to attend an exciting hockey game where members of this Legislative Assembly were showing off their athletic prowess. I was extremely impressed by the speed, agility, and raw talent exhibited by these gentlemen, and was kept thoroughly entertained.

The members for Queens-Shelburne and Kings West, forcing the more junior players to keep up - without much luck, I might add. Our Chief Legislative Counsel, Mr.

Gordon Hebb, proving to all that there is more to him than a sharp legal mind. The member for Antigonish, tending net like an on-point Carey Price, and the members for Sackville-Cobequid, Hammonds Plains-Lucasville, Clare-Digby, and Cape Breton-Richmond scoring the most impressive NHL-quality goals for their team.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for organizing this House league. It was a night of hockey that I won't soon forget.

MR. SPEAKER: Let's hope we can double the attendance from you and me for the next game.

The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

### **NEW GLASGOW JUBILEE: ORGANIZERS - THANK**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, the New Glasgow Jubilee reaches a music milestone this summer. It's been 20 years since the jubilee began as a small jazz festival on the New Glasgow waterfront, transitioning into one of the province's longest-running multi-artist rock festivals. Executive director Carlton Munroe recently reflected over the past 20 years, and he said thousands of visitors find their way home for this yearly music festival. Large crowds gathered to see Blue Rodeo in 2010 and sellout crowds greeted Great Big Sea in 2013.

The festival has been a great success each year, with aspects of pop, rock, and Celtic musicians performing on stage. Music fans have made this the destination for the summer. Doris Mason has performed at the Jubilee numerous times and has said it's a great experience every time, singing in front of thousands and listening to music along the river. A big thank you to all the organizers that prepare this music event each year.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

### **COM. SERV.: BUS PASSES - REFUSAL**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, over the past number of months, I've been hearing from many residents about changes in the Department of Community Services. One of the issues that has been raised over and over again is the sudden refusal of bus passes, in particular to individuals with disabilities. An article in the Halifax Media Co-op confirms that professionals at Dalhousie Legal Aid and the North End Community Health Centre are also hearing from clients who are having bus passes taken away, and many new, legitimate requests being denied in recent months. I expect many other MLAs in HRM are hearing these concerns as well.

Mr. Speaker, transportation needs are not just about getting to medical appointments. Having access to transportation means the people are able to participate in

our society, get groceries, go to church, synagogue, or mosque, go to the library, and visit family members who provide them with support and comfort.

I raised this issue with the Premier yesterday and he seemed to have absolutely no idea this was going on, which is concerning to say the least. I hope he takes this issue seriously, and I look forward to hearing his justification for policy changes in the very near future, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. LOHNES-CROFT: In the east gallery I'd like to draw everyone's attention to Mr. Robert Young, who is a former councillor for the Town of Lunenburg and a great community advocate. (Applause)

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

#### **DIGBY DISABILITIES PARTNERSHIP: IMPORTANCE - RECOGNIZE**

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the important role that the Digby Disabilities Partnership has had, and continues to have, in the lives of individuals with disabilities in our community. This organization is a non-profit organization offering programs and services to unemployed persons with disabilities.

In the recent announcement of funding through the Skills Link program, they will be able to add yet another program to the ones they offer currently, this time focusing on youth with disabilities. The partnership will organize group workshops for eight youth in which young clients will be able to improve and acquire new job skills, therefore becoming more employable. They will also acquire valuable work experience working with employers involved in early childhood education, health services, and the skilled trades.

Through this program and other programs and services offered by this organization, the Digby Disabilities Partnership is filling some of the cracks that this client base has traditionally fallen through. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

#### **PICTOU CO. SPECIAL OLYMPIANS - ANNA. VALLEY COMP.**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Pictou County Special Olympians who competed in the recent provincial competition held in the

Annapolis Valley. Twenty-nine athletes represented Pictou County, with several bringing home medals. Competitions were held for floor hockey, curling, skiing, and snowshoeing. Athletes took home two gold, five silver and six bronze medals in the snowshoe event, and a silver medal in curling; the floor hockey team had three wins and one loss.

Athletes who qualify from the provincial event will attend the national event in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador, next winter, and it is expected that at least one snowshoer will qualify as well.

It is an honour to congratulate all the Special Olympic athletes on their success. Thank you.

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

#### **MCNEIL GOV'T.: YOUNG PEOPLE - ATTRACTION/RETENTION**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the McNeil Government claims to be working to attract and retain young people to Nova Scotia. However, with the recent deregulation of tuition costs in the province, it doesn't seem that the government is taking this claim seriously. For example, Cape Breton University is increasing tuition by 20.7 per cent over the next four years. How is increasing tuition by over 20 per cent part of a strategy to attract and retain young people?

Two years ago, after expressing concerns over a 3 per cent increase in tuition, when in Opposition, the McNeil Government now claims that a 20 per cent increase over four years is okay for students. The only thing that has changed is they've walked the 10 feet across the floor of this Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

#### **WILSON, LEN: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness that I rise today to honour the memory of a constituent and friend of many years, Len Wilson, who passed away at age 85 on April 23, 2015. Len lived a remarkable, upbeat life dedicated to family and community.

Len was born in Springhill to immigrant parents from Lithuania, moving to Halifax at age 18. He developed a career in life insurance, ultimately opening his own business as a chartered financial consultant, which he did until the age of 83. Len will be forever remembered as a loving husband to Gwen for 65 years, father, grandfather, and trusted friend. This family man worked in the community as an active member of the Knights of Columbus, and also a member of the Liberal Party.

Mr. Speaker, I've known Mr. Wilson for many years and have always appreciated his pragmatic perspective on life and his commitment to the community. He will be missed.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. LOHR: In the west gallery we have Eamonn and Macky Schwartz of Canning, twin sons of Chris O'Neill and Ken Schwartz of Ross Creek Centre for the Arts and Two Planks and a Passion Theatre. I would ask the House to give them a warm welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**EAST. KINGS HEALTH FDN./KINGS CO. ROTARY CLUB:  
CONTRIBUTIONS - ACKNOWLEDGE**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge the work and contributions of two local Kings County foundations: the Eastern Kings Health Foundation and the Rotary Clubs of Kings County Charitable Foundations, each contributing \$15,000 to the purchase of six fetal health monitors for the material and child unit at Valley Regional Hospital. Care and concern about the health and well-being of mothers and babies are always a priority and these monitors can detect and correct problems which may arise before a baby is even born. My thanks and appreciation for this invaluable contribution.

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

**C.B. RAIL LINE - BUS. LIFELINE**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, the Cape Breton rail line is a vital transportation link that deserves a government that will fight for its future. The rail line has been the lifeline to business in Cape Breton that relies on the line to ship their products. This line was built with public money and now Cape Bretoners are concerned the track will be ripped up and the bridges sold for scrap. If that happens, that would close a door for the future economic development of Cape Breton. The Cape Breton rail line is a basic building block of the Island's future economic development. The rail line must remain.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**MACDONALD, MICKEY  
- BEDFORD BUS. ASSOC. DISTINGUISHED VOL. AWARD**

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to take a moment today to congratulate Mickey MacDonald on receiving the Bedford Business Association's Distinguished Volunteer Award bestowed during this year's Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception.

Mr. MacDonald is well known in our community for his outstanding generosity. Notable are his work with the Nova Scotia Boxing Authority, as a family SOS Courage Award ambassador, and with his own Palooka's Charitable Foundation for which he is chair. Mickey has received many accolades including but not limited to being named the 2008 Nova Scotia Humanitarian of the Year, 2005 Nova Scotia Philanthropist of the Year, 2004 Newfoundland Philanthropist of the Year, the Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year, and he was among the top 50 CEOs in Atlantic Canada for five years in a row.

Mickey MacDonald is an inspiration to all for his skills and success in business, which he combines with a devotion to service and charity. I'm proud to have Mickey MacDonald as a member of our Bedford community.

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

**SYDNEY MINES VOL. FD - HUNTING & FISHING WEEKEND SHOW**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Sydney Mines Volunteer Fire Department on their second annual fishing and hunting outdoor weekend show. This two day fundraiser has doubled in size from last year with over 60 vendors with displays. Although the theme is hunting and fishing, there was something for everyone who attended. This event is a community favourite and supports a first class fire department. It is my pleasure to congratulate the Sydney Mines Volunteer Fire Department on this successful event.

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

**LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES - BUDGET CUTS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: The McNeil Government has cut \$3.6 million from the long-term care facilities budget, cutting in half their allowance for small equipment replacement. The Minister of Health and Wellness stated last week that he expects the long-term care facilities will make up the shortfall by leaning on their fundraising foundations. The minister does not seem to realize that not all long-term care facilities have fundraising foundations and those that do fundraise for extras and not to support operating budgets.



The McNeil Government has already put a moratorium on new long-term care beds, now they seem intent on freezing the budgets of long-term care facilities as well.

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

**THOMAS, GENTRY: UC RIVERSIDE - BASKETBALL PROG.**

HON. KEITH COLWELL: I would like to congratulate Gentry Thomas and his parents Graham and Sharon Thomas of East Preston on Gentry signing a letter of intent to join the basketball program at the University of California in Riverside.

Gentry is a highly acclaimed athlete, a six-foot-four guard who had formerly played for Auburn High School in Cole Harbour. He was named a Second Team all-SWAC at the Scenic West Athletic Conference at Snow College. Snow College is a National Junior College Athletic Association school in Utah. Gentry's impressive average of 14.4 points and 6.1 rebounds, which undoubtedly contributed to his being named the Player of the Week in the National Junior College Athlete Association, in this final week of the regular season.

I applaud and commend Gentry on his tremendous achievements, and wish him every success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**TRENTON PARK**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak about one of the hidden secrets located in Pictou County - six kilometres of trails over 565 acres of land filled with coniferous trees, Trenton Park is a recreational haven and one of the town's gems. The park is open year-round where the visitors can use the six and a half kilometre mountain bike trail, leisurely stroll on three and a half kilometres of prepared trails, or fish trout at one of the three ponds. The park is a perfect location for family fun with a playground, a 3,000-square foot family swimming pool, and a water splash pool for visitors, and a picnic area, a canteen, parking areas, and washrooms, make this park a great place to visit and have fun with your family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MCNEIL GOV'T.: RURAL COMMUNITIES - TREATMENT**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, in a recent news story, an interview with Shelburne Mayor Karen Mattatall, the mayor of Shelburne raised concerns on the loss of jobs and services and asked the question, why is the McNeil Government picking on

small rural communities? The mayor of Shelburne goes on to say that “. . . too much of the government’s day to day business is being centralized in Halifax . . .”

The jobs and services being lost are now being replaced - I repeat, replaced - by R2-D2s by the McNeil Government in rural Nova Scotia. I cannot help but wonder, which Cabinet Minister or which Liberal backbencher may be next to be replaced by an R2-D2 machine because of efficiency? Thank you.

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

MS. JOYCE TREEN: Mr. Speaker, on Monday past, the Acting Leader of the NDP stated, “Many people have heard me joke about my dad telling me that I would go to vocational school and take hairdressing.”

I want to assure the honourable member that choosing a trade as a career is not a punchline for a joke. I can tell you that hairdressing is an honourable way to earn a living. It is an industry full of very caring, wonderful people. There are over 700 stylists in Nova Scotia who contribute to the economy. For 29 years I owned my business in Eastern Passage and I employed people, I paid taxes, and I made a difference in people’s lives. I served my clients on the best days of their lives and on the worst days of their lives. Now as an MLA I help people in a different way.

Today I’m going to help the Acting Leader of the NDP by reminding her that tradespeople built this province, and owners of small business are the backbone of our economy. Multiple degrees do not make her any better than those of us who have earned our living by our trade. Her remarks are disrespectful, unacceptable, and after 17 years in this Legislature she should . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. (Interruptions) Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage that during members’ statements, personal attacks are not permitted. A statement about the political position of another member would be permitted, but attacks that are personal are out of order. Any statement questioning a member’s integrity, honesty, intelligence, or character is unacceptable.

The honourable member for Pictou West.

### **RIVER JOHN LIONS CLUB - RECOGNIZE**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the River John Lions Club. The club was chartered 45 years ago in January 1970. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Pictou West has the floor.

MS. MACFARLANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize the River John Lions Club. The club was chartered 45 years ago in January 1970. Currently there are two dozen members, two of them being original charter members. Over the years the club has been involved with many community initiatives including a children's park, Bissell Park, and the ball field. They are also involved with many other events like those held during River John Festival Days. The club members live the mission of their organization, meeting the needs of the community.

They have a lot fun and enjoy the camaraderie and fellowship whether fundraising or volunteering. It is an honour to have this opportunity to recognize the River John Lions Club.

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

### **NUALLAN: SUCCESS - RECOGNIZE**

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the success of the Cape Breton Gaelic-dance piping group Nuallan. Just minutes ago their first album was officially successfully funded, thanks to contributions from approximately 120 people. "Nuallan" describes the "constant murmuring sound of the ocean," and literally translates as the "droning sound of the Highland bagpipes."

The members would take note that the music you heard today was from that very group. The style of music they play celebrates rich, historic Gaelic culture and recognizes a fun, vibrant method of engaging young people to get up and celebrate not only Scottish culture but a style that Cape Breton can call its own.

Specifically, I want to congratulate pipers Keith MacDonald, Kevin Dugas, and Kenneth MacKenzie for this impressive achievement, and the Gaelic College that facilitated the formation of this piping group. Tapadh leibh.

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

### **MACISAAC, ZOE - HIGHLAND DANCING CHAMPIONSHIP**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Zoe MacIsaac from Albert Bridge. On Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, Zoe competed in the Nova Scotia Championship & Selection Meet for Highland Dancing. Zoe won the Nova Scotia championship in her division. She is nine years old and is the daughter of Natalie and Chris MacIsaac.

Zoe attends Grade 3 at Riverside Elementary and started dancing at three years of age with the MacArthur School of Dance, winning many trophies and medals. She loves to highland dance and is very dedicated to her profession.

Zoe will go to London, Ontario, to compete for the Canadian championship in early July. Congratulations to Zoe, and we wish her the best of luck in her next competition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

### **DART. GEN. HOSP. - RENOVATIONS**

HON. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the House to talk about an important step at the Dartmouth General Hospital. As you may know, renovations at the Dartmouth General Hospital begin tomorrow. For decades, people have received exceptional care in this hospital, but parts of it have become outdated.

The first phase of the project will cost \$6 million, with government providing \$4.5 million over the next two years and the rest coming from community fundraising, like the lobster dinner I know you will buy a ticket to.

Our government previously contributed \$375,000 toward the design work. The renovations, which include upgraded patient rooms and bathrooms, will accommodate wheelchairs and walkers, and also include the first work on the fifth floor of the hospital, with upgraded plumbing and electrical work there for a space that will eventually add 50 beds to the hospital. The fifth floor work and the addition of a surgical tower require the work of the third and fourth floor to happen first, and I am happy that this long-overdue project is finally underway with construction.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

### **BRUEGGERGOSMAN, MEASHA & MARKUS: SON - BIRTH CONGRATS.**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, Canadian opera star Measha Brueggergosman announced the birth of her second child on Monday. Sterling Markus Brueggergosman was born in Halifax and named after his maternal grandfather, Reverend Sterling Gosman, and his father, Markus Brueggergosman. Both mother and baby are said to be in excellent health.

The Brueggergosman family moved to Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley two years ago. The internationally-acclaimed soprano Measha has a busy summer schedule planned, including performing in Brazil, Spain, Austria, Norway, Rome, Quebec, and Toronto.

Please join me in congratulating my dear friends Reverend Sterling and Ann Gosman of Kentville and parents Measha and Markus on the successful arrival of young Sterling.

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

**ROSS FERRY MARINE PARK:  
ROSS FERRY STEWARDSHIP SOC. - MANAGEMENT**

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, the Ross Ferry Marine Park is on the site of a ferry which operated for many years between Ross Ferry and Big Harbour. Now the site is home to a community park with picnic areas, walking trails, a playground, a refurbished wharf, a sewage pump-out for boaters, and a boat launch.

Mr. Speaker, on May 9<sup>th</sup> the Ross Ferry Stewardship Society is holding a park cleanup. In addition to the cleanup, there is also going to be a community supper for those who volunteer during the cleanup.

Mr. Speaker, the Ross Ferry Stewardship Society is a non-profit charitable organization whose sole purpose is to manage and maintain the beautiful Ross Ferry Marine Park. They exemplify what it means to be good stewards of our community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**RODENHISER, HAILEY/FAM. - FUNDRAISING**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, we all have in some way been touched by cancer. There is no escaping it. Whether it's a friend, a family member, or yourself, we've all had experiences.

It's during such times that we realize how important our friends and family are. When 7-year-old Hailey Rodenhiser of Dayspring was diagnosed with leukemia, she quickly learned that she would have the unyielding support of two of her biggest fans - cousins Allie and Taylor Bruhm. The Bruhm sisters, students at New Germany Rural High School, shaved their heads this past winter in a fundraising effort that saw them collect \$2,200 to help with travel costs for the family.

It didn't stop there. Other students at the school and even staff member Dale Bruhm also shaved his head as part of the fundraising rally.

The Rodenhiser family was overwhelmed with the support they received and I'm overwhelmed with the generosity and love shown by the Bruhm sisters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**DOW, TODD - ACADIA UNIV. VOL. OF YR. (2015)**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Mr. Todd Dow of Coldbrook on being named Acadia University's 2015 Volunteer of the Year. Mr. Dow is a fourth-year biology student and is involved in an astounding range of volunteer activities at his school, in his community, and abroad. For the second year in a row, he is travelling to Honduras as a member of the Acadia Public Health Brigade. He volunteers at the Valley Regional Hospital, the Wolfville Nursing Home, and the Wolfville Animal Shelter. He's also assistant football coach at the Central Kings Rural High School.

These are only a few of the volunteer roles in which Mr. Dow is active. On behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, I would like to thank Todd Dow for his deep commitment to sharing his skills, talents, and time with so many individuals and communities.

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

**PURCELL, MIRANDA: N.S. INTL. STUDENT PROG. - CAMPECHE UNIV.**

MR. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, every year the Nova Scotia International Student Program holds a leadership camp in partnership with the Centre for Spanish and Mayan Studies of the University of Campeche in Mexico. Twenty-one students from Nova Scotia were selected through an application process and then paired with host families for two weeks. Miranda Purcell, a Grade 11 student from Guysborough Academy, was one of the 21 students selected to take part in the leadership camp. Once she arrived in Mexico, she began with language classes and leadership skill-building workshops, visiting local projects that focus on improving the lives of underprivileged children. Miranda also had the opportunity to participate in social justice projects in the area, including visiting schools for underprivileged children.

I am proud to have such a remarkable young woman living in my community. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for her generosity and dedication to humanity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**WARD, DARRYL/DRUHAN, CHARLENE/CAMERON, CAROL ANN  
- BOSTON MARATHON**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, on Monday, April 20, 2015, three of my constituents completed the world's oldest annual marathon and one of the world's most prestigious road racing events, the Boston Marathon - 2015 marks the 119<sup>th</sup> running of the Boston Marathon. We all know that people from around the world travel to Boston for this

annual event. There were 27,165 runners who started the race; 26,610 finished, including Darryl Ward, Charlene Druhan, and Carol Ann Cameron, all from Antigonish.

The Boston Marathon is 26 miles, 385 yards; that's 41.2 kilometres. Darryl completed the marathon in 3 hours, 27 minutes, 14 seconds; Charlene crossed the finish line with a time of 3 hours, 38 minutes, 41 seconds; and Carol Ann finished after running for 3 hours, 55 minutes, 6 seconds. Their dedication, determination, and passion are remarkable. I ask that the members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Darryl Ward, Charlene Druhan, and Carol Ann Cameron on finishing the Boston Marathon.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

### **100IN1DAY MOVEMENT: EFFORTS - SUPPORT**

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the 100In1Day movement that began in Colombia and has been adopted by many urban centres. June 6, 2015, will mark the second 100In1Day Halifax. On June 6<sup>th</sup>, many cities across the world will participate in a global festival of citizen engagement. Each city hopes to have 100 citizen-driven initiatives taking place throughout their neighbourhoods, demonstrating that even the smallest actions can create big changes.

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, many residents from the Spryfield area met at Chebucto Connections to discuss what our neighbourhood can do to make a difference. From this brainstorming session, many great ideas were put forward, such as aerobic exercises throughout the community, a community cleanup, an outdoor concert, a seniors' games day, and distribution of healthy, low-cost recipes at the local food bank. Everyone left the brainstorming session feeling invigorated and excited to begin planning their events.

I ask the members of this Legislature to encourage and support the efforts of their constituents participating in the 100In1Day movement and thank them for their dedication to making a difference in their neighbourhood.

MR. SPEAKER: The time allotted for members' statements has almost expired, so while we get ready to move on to Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers - we will now begin.

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

#### **ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS**

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

**PREM.: FILM IND. STUDY - RESPONSE**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. The government has stated publicly that the last study done of the economic benefits of the film industry was done in 2004; oddly, the Premier actually seems to want to make a virtue of the fact that they didn't look at the benefits today the industry brings. But now we know that Canmac Economics did do a socio-economic study of the film industry as recently as 2008 and provided it to Film Nova Scotia.

It concluded, Mr. Speaker, that the industry has experienced successful growth to date, and the further sustainable development of this industry will increasingly become an anchor for Nova Scotia's general economic and social prosperity - and I'll table that report for the benefit of the House. I'd like to ask the Premier, why did he ignore the report and its conclusions when he blindly put the film industry and the 2,700 jobs that go with it at risk?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for his question, and I want to thank Screen Nova Scotia for the work they've been doing with government the last number of weeks. I'm very pleased with the agreement that has been reached, and I'm looking forward to continuing that dialogue over the years to come so we can continue to build an industry in this province, one that will allow for investment, will allow the creative economy to continue to grow. The good news is we are broadening the benefits when it comes to the creative economy so that more Nova Scotians and more Nova Scotia communities get an opportunity to benefit from that investment.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, you don't thank an industry by cutting them off at the knees. The 2008 report showed that the film industry adds \$150 million to the economy of Nova Scotia and employs 2,797 people - that was in 2008. It also reported that the industry adds to our prosperity, immigration, and environment goals as were enumerated in the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act. Those are not included in the \$150 million number.

I'll ask the Premier, why didn't the Premier at least ask for an update on this important economic analysis before gutting the Film Tax Credit?

THE PREMIER: I disagree with the question from the honourable member. Mr. Speaker, what has happened is we've seen a coming together of the industry and government. They understand the dilemma the province is faced with and we understand the challenges that they've had with the delivery model that we spoke about. We've agreed on a new model that will deliver and broaden the opportunities across this province - that's good news for the industry. We're looking forward to it continuing to grow and we're looking forward for not only the film industry to grow but the entire creative economy to grow.



MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, what the film industry understands is that the government cut them off at the knees without looking at the benefits that they bring, or even consulting with them prior to making such a mess of their industry. This Canmac Economics study shows that the industry paid direct taxes to the province in 2008, \$13.6 million - \$6 million in income tax, which the Premier has acknowledged, but apparently forgot to mention the \$4 million in HST, and the remainder from other direct taxes.

This whole mess could have been avoided if the government had just consulted with the industry and looked at the benefits side before they took the steps they did. Now there is a new formula. Has any work been done on the costs, benefits, and tax revenue expected under the new formula and, if so, will the Premier share it with all Nova Scotians?

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to acknowledge the work done by Screen Nova Scotia and the support that we received from Nova Scotians as we've gone through what has been a difficult transition for some Nova Scotians. I want to acknowledge the goodwill that was brought to the table to find a common ground and an understanding for both sides. We've made a commitment to the sector to continue to work with them, to continue to gain greater knowledge, and continue to watch as the fund is developed and put out to the industry. Again, I want to remind all members of this House that change will take place for next year's budget; this year's budget has \$24 million in it.

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

#### **PREM. - SURGERY: DELAYS - PATIENTS EFFECTS**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Premier. Patients are beginning to express their frustration over the mounting pile of cancelled surgeries at the Halifax Infirmity. Elizabeth Collins was to have surgery last Thursday to remove a tumour on her lung but this surgery, along with hundreds of others have been cancelled. Her daughter, Carolyn, told CBC this morning: "This has taken a lot of people down. It's taken our family down."

Collins can't get answers as to when her mother's surgery will be rescheduled and she's very worried her mother's health will deteriorate. My question to the Premier is, how long is your government going to allow much-needed surgeries for Nova Scotians to be cancelled before a solution to this problem is found?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The Minister of Health and Wellness has said a number of times in this House, the challenges are associated with the equipment, to sterilizing the equipment that is used in those surgeries. Patient safety is the rationale for what is happening. We have been very encouraged by the fact that equipment is being used from other places across the province, sterilized, and we're now starting to see some of those surgeries being booked.

There is no way that I can and that we can justify or that we could, quite frankly, tell this family that they don't need this surgery; of course they need it. We are doing everything we can as quickly as possible to have all of those surgeries rescheduled in a timely manner.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, Jim Murphy has waited more than a year to have surgery on his leg and last week he was prepped and ready for surgery but after four hours of waiting at the hospital, he was told his surgery wasn't going to happen, with no information as to what a new date might be. Murphy and his wife have told CTV news that they both had to take time off work for surgery and they are very frustrated because there doesn't seem to be an end to the cancellations. Again, my question to the Premier is, how many Nova Scotians who are waiting for surgery will have their lives disrupted while the government attempts to find a solution to this problem?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health and Wellness is working with all of our partners to ensure that we can come to a resolution to the challenges facing the delivery of these surgeries. I, like all Nova Scotians, find it unacceptable. The reality of it is that the piece of equipment that sterilizes the instruments that are required to provide safety as these surgeries are done is broken. It's a challenge; it is broken. The Minister of Health and Wellness is moving forward either to replace that or ensure that we have the equipment to come forward. But I share the frustration of those Nova Scotia families. It is unacceptable and the Minister of Health and Wellness is moving as quickly as possible to have those surgeries rescheduled.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, a year ago on the eve of a legal strike, this government had, on a regular basis, announcements in terms of how many surgeries were going to be cancelled in the face of that situation and we now have three times more surgeries cancelled than what occurred back then. My question to the Premier is, what is it going to take for the government to recognize that this must be addressed very quickly and we need a backup plan in place to prevent this kind of backlog from happening again?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the honourable member. It is completely unacceptable. That's why the Minister of Health and Wellness has been engaging with our partners to ensure that there is a backup plan if this ever happens again. It is unacceptable to these Nova Scotians who have had their surgeries cancelled just like it was unacceptable to have their surgeries cancelled when a potential labour disruption came into force. It's why we supported essential services legislation and it's why we wish we could have had their help to ensure it got through. (Interruption)

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

**PREM. - TAX BREAKS: BIG BANKS/FILM IND. - ANSWERS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. The Premier has been very clear about capping the tax paid by large financial corporations like banks, that it was done, in the words of his own budget, to encourage growth for them. Meanwhile, our film industry remains in limbo about whether they are capped or not. I'll ask the Premier why is he so quick to give big banks a clear answer about their tax breaks but won't give the same courtesy to Nova Scotia's home-grown film industry?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the honourable member that the amount of taxation that banks pay prior to this budget will remain the same as they pay after the budget. I want to also tell him that I'm very encouraged and supportive of the work that is being done by the film industry and the creative economy to come together to help build a fund that will allow the industry to continue to move forward. We told them that we will continue to monitor that and continue to be engaged with them, as this fund is rolled out.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker the point of my question was to seek clarity for the film industry equivalent to the clarity the government gives to the banks. But when the Premier says, yes, they are capping their tax but there's no financial cost to the government, that actually creates more uncertainty for what he has done for the banks.

How can you encourage growth by putting something in your budget that actually doesn't have any impact? I'm now confused about both, Mr. Speaker, instead of just the film industry.

I am particularly interested in knowing why the Premier is happy to leave the film industry in limbo about whether they are capped or not, while he is providing this tax break to our biggest banks.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank the honourable member for the question. Again I want to say thank you to Screen Nova Scotia and the work they have been doing. We have said all along that we are looking forward to work we've done rolling out this fund. We'll continue to monitor the fund to make sure it's meeting the needs of those Nova Scotians in the industry and we will continue to do so, just like we do with every other fund that government delivers to the people of this province.

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

**PREM.: NOT-FOR-PROFIT NURSING HOMES - CUTS EXPLAIN**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. The Community Governed Nursing Home Society of Nova Scotia represents over 80 per cent of the not-for-profit care facilities in Nova Scotia. Last night they issued a press release regarding the McNeil Government's funding cuts to long-term care. They say it will be

difficult to adopt new patient care standards imposed by government for long-term care because they require an investment, not a cut.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is, why is the Premier cutting funding to not-for-profit nursing homes when their needs are actually increasing, not decreasing?

THE PREMIER: I thank the honourable member for the question. There's no question, Mr. Speaker, this province is facing very difficult challenges financially, after four years of a New Democratic Party that ignored many of the challenges we are faced with.

We've asked all our partners to help us bring this province back to fiscal health so that at the end of the day, when that reality happens, all Nova Scotians will share in that success and benefit from that. I'm very proud of the work being done by nursing homes across this province, from one end of Nova Scotia to the other, who are providing top-quality care to our seniors.

MS. MACDONALD: The Premier makes things up just like he made things up about the Film Tax Credit. Mr. Speaker, this organization says in their release that of particular concern to us is that these cuts are not shared equitably among the long-term care sector. Some long-term care organizations will feel these budget impacts while others will not. We believe that equity should prevail in decisions that are intended to be in the economic interests of Nova Scotia.

My question to the Premier is, cutting funding to non-profit care facilities and leaving for-profit care facilities unaffected, how does that reflect this government's priorities, Mr. Speaker?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Again I want to tell her of the financial challenges we're facing in this province. We value the contribution being made by all long-term care facilities across this province, the work that they have been doing to ensure that our seniors are cared for.

I've had the great fortune of being in many of them as I travelled this province. Whether they are for-profit or not-for-profit, whether they are publicly owned or privately owned, Mr. Speaker, is not the question I ask when we go in. We want to make sure that our seniors are being cared for.

I am very pleased to report to this House that seniors across this province are cared for in a respectful, honourable and safe way.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**BUS. - DEPT. STAFF: CLASSIFICATION - EXPLAIN**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Business. The Department of Business was created in the Budget of 2015-16 as a regular ministry. The cost of senior management is \$3.3 million for this budget.

There are 36 full-time employees and the total gross departmental expenses are \$114 million. The Financial Measures Bill amends the Civil Service Collective Bargaining Act such that employees of the new Nova Scotia Department of Business are excluded employees.

My question to the minister is, why does his department require only staff that are excluded or not subject to a collective agreement be employed there?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. I certainly recognize and respect the role of bargaining unit employees aligned to certain positions with certain responsibilities and in most cases the inability to ask for or apply any flexibility in those primary roles. The excluded classification allows the department that flexibility so that when there are challenges or needs, we're able to assign tasks and responsibilities that meet the needs of clients and business.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his explanation. With the collapse and split of the Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism into a Tourism Agency and a newly named Department of Business, the Minister of Business has stated that staff expertise has been moved to the new Department of Business. Under the General Civil Service Regulations, "An employee's pay rate on promotion may be higher than the pay rate prescribed in subsection (1) if, in the Commission's opinion . . . a higher rate is necessary to promote a qualified person to the position . . ."

In establishing this department, how many of these 36 employees, especially at the senior management level, received a promotion - a pay increase - while others from Economic and Rural Development and Tourism were asked to exit?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, the classifications for the positions within the new Department of Business have been determined in discussions and dialogue between our human resources department and the Public Service Commission. They're aligned to the roles and responsibilities of similar positions across government at those various excluded classification levels. In these circumstances, the very same process was applied.

MR. SPEAKER: Just before we move on to the next question, I want to remind all members of the House, in particular the Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party, that any suggestion that any member of this House is making things up or fabricating the information they're bringing forth is unparliamentary.

The honourable member for Inverness.

**PREM. - MLA EXPENSES: ONLINE POSTING - AGREEMENT CONFIRM**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Last week, the member for Clare-Digby said, “. . . it is a very onerous process to make sure that you submit a proper expense claim.” It may be onerous, but it is important, and it’s important that Nova Scotians can see where their money is being spent. Does the Premier agree that MLA expenses should be posted online?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to also remind him that it was this member of the House that actually led that charge that all MLAs’ expenses should be posted online. I want to tell you that Nova Scotians then get an opportunity to see how their member is spending the tax dollars towards their constituency.

We believe that should translate to the Executive Council. We’re looking at options about how we make that happen. There may be a regulation change that we could do or there may be a need for a piece of legislation, but at this point, we’re looking at all of our options.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I’m hoping the Premier will lead another charge. I think I got two answers there for the price of one, which I appreciate. But we did bring forward a bill to this Legislature to do just that just a couple of days ago.

MLA expenses are posted online - we know that - but ministers don’t have the same requirement. I actually wasn’t aware of that. I didn’t realize that. The member for Clare-Digby also said last week in the government’s response to our bill, “. . . I don’t think we should just simply be creating bureaucracy . . .”

The Premier has suggested that he would look at this. Will he look at this to ensure that ministers post their expenses online before the end of this sitting of the Legislature?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, for a Party that talks about cutting red tape, they have a bill for everything. The fact of the matter is, we don’t believe it’s necessary for a piece of legislation to move forward. We’re looking at the possibilities and we will do so in due time. I want to remind all members of this House that my expenses are in the Library of this House. I’m sure the Librarian in the Legislature would be more than happy to show all Nova Scotians those. I’m sure if they called and asked, she would probably even fax them to them.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - C.B.: ER CLOSURES - RESOLUTION TIME FRAME**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, accessing an emergency room in Cape Breton has been difficult over the past month. The ER at the Glace Bay Hospital has been closed more than 10 full days over a span of just 28 days. The Northside General ER also remains closed daily from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. This forces people to the Cape Breton Regional Hospital ER, which then becomes overcrowded and people end up waiting for hours for treatment.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, how much longer will the people of Cape Breton have to wait before these emergency room closures are resolved?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that as we speak this is a work in progress. We have had initial conversations with Dr. John Ross and the clinical review that is currently going on to make sure we have the right emergency services for the four primary locations in Cape Breton. We should see work underway as to what structure will be in place at Northside very shortly.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that initial conversations are happening. This conversation should have happened a year ago. The situation is urgent. Tomorrow three emergency rooms - Glace Bay, Northside, New Waterford - will be closed, leaving just one ER open for people in these communities. This weekend people in Glace Bay won't have access to their ER at all. It is scheduled to close from 3:00 p.m. Friday to 7:00 a.m. Monday.

It has been almost two years since the McNeil Government was elected. Why has the Minister of Health and Wellness waited so long to address the emergency room closures, especially in Cape Breton?

MR. GLAVINE: Yes, we can talk about emergency room closures. However, we know that a great number of the smaller issues are being handled by primary care physicians. We have had additional capacity open in communities. We know that the mobile emergency vehicle in New Waterford is not getting quite the amount of pickup and the capacity that it has, but I can assure the member opposite that there is a plan being initiated, and we hope to see some of those results very soon.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: EQUIPMENT PURCHASES - DELAY EXPLAIN**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the minister about his plans to address the hundreds of postponed surgeries at the QEII hospital. The minister said, "We're now moving to a point where ordering new equipment is very much at hand."

The problem has cancelled surgeries for nearly three weeks. Hundreds of Nova Scotians and their families are left with so many questions as they wait for their loved ones to have their much-needed surgeries.

As the Leader of the NDP brought up, Carolyn Collins, a retired nurse whose mother's cancer surgery was cancelled, says she worries that the window could close on whether or not her mother's tumour is operable the longer she waits. She said, "It's not fair, it's just not fair. They screwed up, and they're just not dealing with it." I'll table that document.

My question to the minister is, if ordering some new equipment was an option, why did the minister let this drag on for nearly three weeks and cancel hundreds of surgeries?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that the QEII Health Sciences team that is involved with the sterilization issue, along with the provincial health authority, have been working to mitigate against the cancelled surgeries. They have now started to see other sites where surgeries can take place.

Currently, the VG is operating at 69 per cent capacity, and the Infirmary at 65 per cent. The ambulatory clinics are operating today at 100 per cent.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: The minister knows full well that those other sites should be working at 100 per cent, if not 110 per cent, because of the surgeries that people are waiting for today - whether it is hip, knee, or whatever long wait-list that we have.

They're still waiting for a report from the specialists as to what is going on in the sterilization process. I think the minister said yesterday that he was waiting for a report yesterday about what that substance was.

Can the minister maybe provide us a little more of his plan of what the product is and what he's going to do to rectify it for Nova Scotians who are waiting for their surgeries?

MR. GLAVINE: I thank the member for a very important question; this is one that concerns all Nova Scotians. People come from all over the province for their necessary surgeries and while those surgeries that require immediate attention are being done, when people have surgery scheduled for months or years in advance, they expect that when that day comes they will be carried out.

I'm pleased to say that this is the 11<sup>th</sup> day and we know that the problem exactly has not been discovered as of yet, but the time has come and the department is committed to the purchase of new equipment.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.



**COM. SERV.: INSURANCE SETTLEMENT MONEY  
- POLICY INTRODUCE**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services. After months of unnecessary strife and pressure the government finally decided to reach a settlement with the family of Joellan Huntley regarding the insurance settlement money. This was a welcome decision. In December the minister said she would ensure that the department's policy around these issues would be reviewed. Earlier this month after the settlement was reached, the minister indicated that she would introduce changes in the coming weeks.

My question for the minister is, when will the minister introduce these policy changes to protect other families like the Huntleys from unnecessary lawsuits?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question and I also want to commend him for the continued advocacy that he is doing on behalf of the Huntley family. A decision request was brought to me within the last week or so and my department, the Department of Community Services, is working very diligently with our colleagues at the Department of Health and Wellness. There will be a policy change at some point in the future. Right now we are looking at whether it is a regulatory change or if it actually needs legislative change so that will be forthcoming. If the change needs to be made legislatively, it will happen in the Fall.

MR. LOHR: I would like to thank the minister for that answer. The strength and resolve of the Huntley family is incredible. They remained optimistic in the face of losing crucial care for their daughter. Other families have endured similar tragedies as the Huntleys and should not worry that the government will come after them for their insurance money. My question for the minister is this, has she consulted with families like the Huntleys and other families in this situation as part of her policy review?

MS. BERNARD: I have every faith in the staff that went through the policy review at my direction and the direction of the Premier because at the end of the day we want to ensure that every family doesn't have to go through this and that people who are in situations similar to the Huntleys get the care that they deserve in Nova Scotia.

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

**BUS. - BUDGET CUTS: INFO. PUBLICATION - REFUSAL**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Business. In the budget through its newly created Department of Business, the McNeil Government cut \$17 million in grants to companies that help support Nova Scotia jobs. Instead of telling the public which companies these cuts impact, the Minister of Business has decided to keep the details a secret. This is creating a great deal of uncertainty

in the business community. As Nick Langley of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business says, “It’s almost like you have to be a sleuth to find out (about the grants) . . .”

My question is, why has the Minister of Business refused to make this information public?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. We’re actually working on the information the member opposite asked for. My focus primarily is on the development of the new Department of Business. We understand the concerns my colleague has expressed are of interest to the public and the first opportunity we are able to, we will share that information with the public.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Thank you for the answer from the minister. The minister has had three weeks since the budget was tabled to inform affected companies. He now has an obligation to inform taxpayers; after all, it is their money. So my question to the minister, through you Mr. Speaker, is why is he withholding this information from Nova Scotia taxpayers?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, the work that we have undertaken is very detailed and it deals, in many cases, with application-based funding for multiple programs across multiple departments. It’s a lot of work. We are working towards that outcome and at the first opportunity we will share that information.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

#### **MUN. AFFS. - VOL. FIREFIGHTERS: RECRUITMENT - DETAILS**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Service Nova Scotia. Aging demographics are impacting volunteer fire services across Nova Scotia. In HRM alone, volunteer firefighters’ numbers continue to decrease, with places like East Ship Harbour and Grand Lake-Oakfield lacking enough volunteers to staff stations in their areas.

My question to the minister, considering the decline in volunteer firefighters, what is the minister doing to ensure there is adequate fire protection across Nova Scotia?

HON. MARK FUREY: I thank my colleague for the question. There are a number of initiatives ongoing within the fire services. For the benefit of my colleague, that falls under the responsibility of Municipal Affairs.

The initiatives that we are undertaking - and I’ll give a very good example - recognizing that the circumstances my colleague has referenced are, in fact, a concern for many volunteer fire services around the province, one example is in Lunenburg County. It was led by the municipality where they actually amalgamated three different fire services

under one and captured the membership of those three under one department. They continue to provide a very valuable service to the community.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, a number of Pictou County's 22 fire stations are constantly recruiting volunteers. The City of Halifax understands what it means not to have enough volunteers to man a rural station.

My question to the minister is, what is the minister planning to do to recruit and maintain an adequate number of volunteer firefighters in Nova Scotia?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I would certainly do whatever I could, engaging our municipal partners in the area of fire services as a municipal responsibility. I would challenge my colleague and his colleagues in Pictou County to work closely with their communities in the consolidation of fire services so that we are able to sustain that service and that Nova Scotia volunteer firefighters can work to do what they intend to do through their training and their commitments to their community.

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

#### **TIR: RAIL ADVISORY COMM. - UPDATE**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of TIR. The future of rail is on the mind of many Cape Bretoners as we move forward into the summer where we can finally start to see the tracks.

This House passed legislation supported by all Parties in favour of making sure that this company did the right thing. We need to keep the rails in place. The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal struck a Rail Advisory Committee and set out some very specific terms of reference for them. The mandate was “. . . to ensure Cape Breton continues to have . . . necessary transportation links . . .”

I'd like to ask the minister if he could give us an update on what is going on with the committee and what topics they have examined thus far.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, we're coming on a year now since the Rail Advisory Committee for our department and for our government has been struck. There has been tremendous collaboration among three levels of government; we've got the stakeholders, the private sector companies who are impacted by the rail service, and other community representatives across Cape Breton, not just for the industrial area, so it has been great collaboration.

What the committee is working on now is finalizing details for three particular studies: truck versus rail options and how intermodal transportation impacts the economic opportunities that exist for particularly the Sydney port, but for Sydney as a whole; about

the liabilities that will be left should abandonment take place; and also what it will require to get that rail up to an acceptable level of service should there be increased traffic.

There's lots of work. It's still not a puzzle that we've solved yet, but certainly working together as Cape Bretoners and as Nova Scotians, we'll do our best to get there. Thank you very much.

MR. MACLEOD: I want to thank the minister for his answer. The terms of reference specified that the committee will submit their final report this Spring. You know, Mr. Speaker, the time is travelling on.

Our community needs this vital transportation link just as much as Yarmouth needs its ferries. I know I speak for myself and for other MLAs from Cape Breton to work with the community, all the Cape Breton MLAs, and the minister to keep this vital link live.

Will the minister commit to the final report and share that with the House? Could the minister explain to us what we can tell the residents of CBRM on a meeting on Friday being held in Sydney to talk about this very important vital transportation link to our community?

MR. MACLELLAN: As the member knows we are now into 2016, with the abandonment process stretching into next year, so that our department, Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, has the opportunity to look at the abandonment filing by G&W to ensure that it meets our needs. There have been too many situations where taxpayers of Nova Scotia have been on the hook for environmental remediation projects. That's not going to happen this time. We want to know all the information is on the table so that we are not left stuck with the bill.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, we are still committed to the rail. We want to make sure that's going to stay on the ground, but as we said from the beginning and all stakeholders that have been involved in this conversation, there has to be a business case. This isn't about the long-term subsidy; this is about the long-term growth and development of the Port of Sydney, and so we are going to keep working on that. The final report will be due in early summer. The three reports I mentioned are a big piece of that so that will give us a lot of details about where we go from here. Again, this is about building a business case for the people of Sydney, the people of Cape Breton, and for Nova Scotia rail.

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

### **PREM.: FILM TAX CREDIT - ECONOMIC GROWTH**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, last week I tabled a 2008 economic impact study by Canmac Economics Limited on the film sector and in it it stated that the industry is a direct employer of skilled immigrants. The Ivany report said we

needed to grow our economy by attracting more skilled immigrants. I would like to ask the Premier, why didn't he take into account the considerable role the Film Tax Credit had in growing our economy, when he decided to gut that credit?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Screen Nova Scotia for the work they have been doing to continue to work with government to find a delivery model of the money from taxpayers to the industry that would work for them and allow them to continue to operate in this province. We are grateful for their co-operation and work they've been doing; we're grateful that we've come to a resolution that works for that taxpayers and the industry and we are looking forward to them being here and continuing to grow.

MS. MACDONALD: Whether or not it's a resolution remains to be seen. Mr. Speaker, the study also states that the high level of foreign film making in the province, along with domestic production, results in employment of many new visitors to Nova Scotia. Given the aging workforce and as a result of a shrinking labour force, why would the Premier make it difficult to attract new, younger immigrants to Nova Scotia with his decision to gut the Film Tax Credit?

THE PREMIER: I want to inform the honourable member we're actually making it easy for new immigrants to come to Nova Scotia. I'm very encouraged and grateful for the fact the federal government has raised the cap from 700 to 1,050. We've reached that cap. We are continuing to work with them to make sure that we grow that number. We know that we need more people. The work being done that allows university students to come to this province as university students to apply the nominee program, which is the first time in our history that we've allowed that to happen.

I also want to remind her that the program that has been on between the film industry and the government broadens the opportunity to take into account more activity besides just labour that takes place in this province. Other services are being distributed into the sector and that will mean more Nova Scotians will get an opportunity to benefit from that fund and the revenue that is being distributed by taxpayers to each production.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **BUS. - FILM TAX CREDIT: CUTS - EFFECTS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the Minister of Business. There is no doubt that the Liberal Government made a huge mistake with the Film Tax Credit. In spite of significant evidence and a prolonged outcry, there is a continued refusal to admit that their plan was flawed. It took weeks of turmoil, including a massive protest outside the Legislature, to make government to realize that something was wrong. My question for the minister is, can the minister shed any light on why thousands of Nova Scotians were put through weeks of uncertainty and the government didn't do their homework before the budget?

HON. MARK FUREY: I thank my colleague for the question; I am not quite sure what the question is. One of the most important things identified in the Ivany report, Mr. Speaker, was that we could not continue with status quo. It necessitated change. This government has taken that report seriously, and in the creation of the Department of Business we are on a transition to ensure that services provided in the past and a changed method of delivery will meet the needs of Nova Scotians.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, the question was about why not do the homework before, instead of after, and I think the leap to Mr. Ivany is a little bit ironic when we're talking about homework.

But there can be no doubt that the government made a mistake and all the government had to do was look across Canada and realize that their changes would destroy the film industry in Nova Scotia. Doing a jurisdictional scan is good public policy - and the Minister of Justice I think learned that the hard way back in the Fall.

So what words would the minister have for those thousands of Nova Scotians who feel that his government is acting first and talking to stakeholders later?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, there are a number of examples in government and I know I'd go beyond my 45 seconds if I were to allude to them. We've done a tremendous amount of work in Service Nova Scotia to enhance the service delivery to all Nova Scotians. We've gone from an analogue government to a digital government. We've created platforms and mediums for Nova Scotians to access government and it requires change - and if this member doesn't understand what change is, there's nothing I can do to respond to any question he might present. I'd like to have the magic wand that member believes is available to government to flip the switch.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

#### **EECD - TRI-CO. SCH. BDS.: ADULT HIGH SCHOOLS - UPDATE**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. It is my understanding that the Tri-County School Board was scheduled to vote on April 28<sup>th</sup>, yesterday, on whether or not to eliminate the board's adult high schools in Digby and Yarmouth. The board has estimated that the move could save \$177,000.

My question to the minister is, could the minister give the House an update with regard to the Tri-County School Board regarding the adult high schools?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for the question. As we know every time at budget time when funds are allocated to school boards, school boards have to make some very tough decisions. In face of declining enrolment, boards

have to look at what services and supports can they continue to provide. Tri-County has made a decision apparently that they want to look at their adult high school, but that is a board decision.

I would also add, however, that the decline in enrolment in Tri-County is significant and the decline in funding to that board does not correspond to the decline in enrolment.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, a number of former and current adult high school residents have raised concerns over the possible closures in Digby - and I'll table that. For instance, some feel that after having a family the flexibility of an adult high school enabled them to complete their studies when they would not have been able to do that in a regular high school setting. Some even suggested that without the adult high school they would have dropped out or been forced to go on social assistance.

My question to the minister, does the minister share the concerns of these students and will she ensure that the adequate services will remain in place for these students who attend adult high schools?

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I think we would all recognize the importance of adult high schools. Many students who, for whatever reason, have not been successful in the regular public schools do go back to adult high school, they do get the upgrading and the programming that they need to qualify them for further education or for employment, and I congratulate every one of them for their effort to come back to the environment and learn.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - DART. GEN. HOSP.: RENOVATIONS - EFFECTS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Health and Wellness announced the renovations of the third and fourth floor of the Dartmouth General Hospital will begin. Last week, during estimates, the minister stated that this would mean 33 beds on those floors will be closed. The minister also suggested that the system can absorb patients from these 33 beds at the Camp Hill and the QEII - not replacing 33 beds, but could absorb it, and this is despite the fact that Dartmouth General is already experiencing issues with overcrowding.

Where is the minister's plan to ensure that the closure of these 33 beds will not push the Dartmouth General's overcrowding issue into other hospitals?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, any time a major reconstruction goes on in our hospitals, we do have to make provision for the movement of patients. They do have capacity to hold on to a small number of patients that would normally be on a 33-bed transition floor. There is a provision at Camp Hill and at the Infirmary to have space to accommodate some others from the Dartmouth General.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, during estimates I asked the minister if there was any money allocated within this year's budget for the completion of the fifth floor, and the minister indicated there were no funds allocated this year.

During the announcement yesterday, they did mention the fifth floor, so I would like to ask the minister, can he explain when we can expect the empty fifth floor to be ready for use for Nova Scotians?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, in terms of the money, the \$4.5 million, plus the 25 per cent the foundation will provide, is primarily for the reconstruction of the third and fourth floors. They are able to incorporate some electrical and plumbing - in other words, an initial stage preparation for work to continue on the fifth floor. I am pleased to say that the initial design stage is now with TIR.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: PROVINCE-WIDE SURGICAL PLAN - TABLE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, in December the Auditor General released a report identifying problems in the health care system that have made wait-lists and surgeries longer. The Liberal platform said that Nova Scotians will meet the national standard for six months for knee and hip replacements. The government invested \$6 million to cut wait times, even though the Auditor General said the department determined it would require \$35 million.

The minister's own department knows that the investment will not result in shorter wait times for hip and knee replacements. My question to the minister is, why is the minister putting a Band-Aid on this problem instead of tackling the wait-lists directly?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I can tell the member opposite is how pleased I am as minister, and we are as a government and a department, that a plan has been initiated by the orthopaedic surgeons in the province. Developing capacity within the system and surgical teams will take time. The member opposite remembers that while he was minister he also allowed the list to grow.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General also pointed out that numerous committees and advisory boards had been struck by the department and DHAs to address wait times. Very little progress, if any, has resulted. Some had failed to implement even their own recommendations, and in one case, no plan was produced after two years of meetings. The Liberal platform promised a province-wide surgical plan for the first year. We have yet to see it, and we're already into year two.

My question to the minister is, why is the minister content with just the status quo, and when will he table his province-wide surgical plan?



MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased in the short 45 seconds, maybe 50 seconds, remaining to bring him up to speed. In the very first year we were in office we added \$4.2 million, which was broken down in a number of ways to add additional foot and ankle surgeries by a number of orthopaedic specialists in the province. We also did an additional 350 to 400 hips and knees. I'm pleased to inform the member opposite that we will add another 400 surgeries this year.

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

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, just before we get to the business today, may I do an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, it's a great pleasure to introduce to the House a true Renaissance woman, a very big part of the business community in Amherst, an MBA who I know is here to honour Dr. Dodds, the President of Saint Mary's who will be retiring - and there's a big dinner for him tonight - and that is Ms. Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin of Amherst. I ask her to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House of Assembly. (Applause)

### **OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: 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 New Democratic Party.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 72.

#### **Bill No. 72 - Fair Drug Pricing Act.**

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

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, this is a very important bill to speak about for the fair price for seniors. As we know, we have a growing population of seniors. In fact, in Nova Scotia every month, approximately 1,000 people turn 65.

We have to work much harder to be prepared to support and serve the seniors who have given so much to our society. Unfortunately, there are a lot of gaps in the system that don't allow for that. We, as decision makers and as an Opposition Party, want to ensure that we keep the government accountable, that they are continuing and increasing support for our senior population.

This particular bill will do that. We have to make sure that there's a fair price for seniors when it comes to drug purchasing. We do know that in our society, people are living longer. We have many more drugs that are available to keep us alive longer, so it's very important that our society moves along with that.

The senior population has so many burdens that are upon them in our world. Can you imagine even just living in this world of technology when if you think back like with my mother and father - they probably are watching now, but they won't be watching it on the Internet because they don't even know how to turn on a computer. I respect that for my mom and dad because of the generation that they were brought up in.

I do know that they have worked all their lives. My mom, in particular, has looked after her three children and it has been a rough life for them. My dad, a very hard-working gentleman - a number of jobs. My colleague is asking which child was the worst in the family. Well, I can tell you that my older brother is very stubborn and that my other brother unfortunately passed away a couple of years ago from a massive heart attack, which was really difficult for our family to deal with and still is today.

Of course, I was the youngest and the only girl, so I would say I was spoiled with a great deal of love. One thing that my parents did teach me is about respect and to have respect for others and certainly our elders. That's why I am very privileged that my life course has been able to bring me into this House so I can stand and represent seniors, not only within my constituency - I can represent seniors in Nova Scotia.

I had the privilege of being the Minister of Seniors during our mandate. One thing that I do know is that with all the burdens that seniors face, it's very important as a society that we ensure there is a parameter around the prices of drugs because they are so costly. I know even in my own family how challenging that is in terms of maintaining a budget when you're on a fixed income. There are no increases in income or any raises that are happening for thousands and thousands of seniors.

As we know, the cost of life and our daily living seems to go up actually on a daily basis. If you have visited the grocery store lately, it's amazing - the cost of food. I find it very nerve-racking myself if I go for groceries, I can't imagine those people in our society who are of lower income and how they are dealing with it. I'll use one example, which is not a commercial for Becel butter or anything, but I remember seeing the larger containers of Becel being sold, for quite some time, for \$6.99. I went to a grocery store not terribly long ago and saw the price of \$9.99 on the same item, and then just last week I saw it in

the same store and now it is \$12.99. I'm talking within a less than three-to-four-month period.

So how do seniors, especially seniors on those fixed incomes, deal with all those increases and the way our society is today with the many pressures that are put on them? They want to stay in their homes longer. There are not the resources there to provide that, and we're looking at long-term care facilities not being rebuilt when a commitment was made to them.

When you look at what the senior population need to pay to cover their drugs, we ensured that there was a 75 per cent to 25 per cent cost so seniors would pay 25 per cent of the cost, the co-pay, and then the government assumed the remainder. That would fluctuate between 22 per cent and 28 per cent each and every year. We basically had a cap on it, and trying to work out that 75 per cent could be challenging to balance every year so it did fluctuate. Some years it would be around 22 per cent or up to 28 per cent.

That protection is vitally important because when you're on a fixed income the surprises that can face you in terms of costs can really take you off track when you're looking at your budget and you only have so much to use to feed yourself, to pay for rent, or to pay for your heat or your lights if you own your home. There are so many things that cost and as my example about the grocery store, in such a short period of time, those things add up.

I am disappointed that the Liberal Government has taken that cap off. I do know that probably the theory is behind more seniors in the population paying into the plan. However, those dollars should be reinvested - that actually would create a decrease for seniors. What the government is doing in taking that cap off, they're going to provide themselves with the opportunity of paying less but the senior is the one who is on the wrong end of the teeter-totter; the seniors are going to have to pay more because there's not the protection of a cap there.

That's why this particular legislation that we are bringing forward is very important. It's a protection plan for our seniors. It is unfortunate that the government does not see that and why they're playing around with a drug protection plan that has been in place, has proven to work, and the unfortunate part is when you start slicing and dicing it, it's a way, behind the scenes, to create more revenue for the government and make the seniors pay when it's necessary to pay.

I know, like I said, the argument will be, well, we have an increase of seniors because of our aging population. Well, those seniors who have worked so hard over the years deserve to find themselves in a position, at some point, where maybe that co-pay is decreased. Because there are more seniors paying into it, shouldn't the senior population in Nova Scotia deserve receiving the benefit of paying into that program over the years? If there are more seniors, they're the ones that receive more benefits.

Unfortunately, what it reminds me of is almost like - I've often said, the ones that seem to run our world are banks and insurance companies. The fact is, it doesn't seem to matter with a huge, big insurance company when you see the revenues that are brought in from insurance companies; they're always putting up your insurance. If you use your insurance or if there are more people in society using the insurance, they'll say, oh well, we have to. There have been more floods, so we have to put the price of insurance up. They don't give the consumer the benefit of the doubt and reduce their insurance when there are fewer floods, but would certainly as soon as there are more floods or if there have been more break-ins and so forth.

The actions of the government almost remind me of that. As we all know with insurance companies, it doesn't matter. If you say one thing to try to make a claim, they'll say, oh well, we would have covered that; however, because of this, we can't. You wonder if they just do the opposite of what you've explained to them. I remember one time when a rock hit my vehicle. The insurance company said, where did the rock come from? I said off the back of a truck. Well, for some reason, that happened to be an act of God and so forth. They wouldn't cover it.

I remember the time when I was a young girl at home and I had many cats because I wanted to look after the stray cats. My poor parents - I think at one time I had about 12 or 13 cats in their house and they started to forget the names. Dad would say, is that a new cat? I would say, no, no, no, that's one that's been here for a while. They were so good to me in terms of allowing me to do what I needed to do and explore and support me in what my interests were. I wanted to look after the cats. I used to babysit to pay to have them neutered and fixed and go to the vet.

One day, one of the cats had happened to get out on top of - if people remember - the video machine. The little thing kind of got sick on top of the video machine. The insurance company said, well, if it would have been your neighbour's cat, we would have covered it. Well, that's what it makes me feel like. Like the insurance company, it doesn't matter what you say; it's the opposite. That's unfortunately the way it seems to be with the government and this particular drug plan for our seniors.

The fact is, if we do have more seniors who are paying into the program, shouldn't they deserve the break when it comes to calculating the numbers out at the end of year? That's the basis of our bill being brought forward, because we want the seniors to have that protection. We don't feel that it's right for the government to dig deeper in the pockets of seniors when there is an opportunity to reduce the co-pay because of the number of seniors in the program.

It's very simple what's happening here. The government has decided to take the cap off for a reason. The reason is: we know we have an aging society, we will get more seniors who are paying the co-pay, and that means on the government side, there will be

savings. What we would want to express through this legislation is that the savings should go to the seniors. They deserve those savings.

We ask the government to support this because they shouldn't have taken the cap off. They shouldn't be in the pockets of seniors. They should be actually giving the money to the seniors because they deserve it for all they've done for each and every one of us in our society and we need to respect them. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place today to speak on Bill No. 72. For many years, Nova Scotia has had in place a 75/25 per cent cost-share rule for seniors. This rule was brought in during a time when the drug pricing program enrolment was fairly consistent.

The program today does not accurately reflect today's environment. Baby boomers with higher incomes are starting to enroll in this program. The influx of more generic drugs, the province's Fair Drug Pricing Strategy, and its participation in the Pan-Canadian Competitive Value Price Initiative for Generic Drugs are all working to help contain the cost of drugs. But, the fact remains, costs continue to rise.

What we do know for sure is that the old model is not sustainable for the long term. The risk of doing nothing is that tomorrow's seniors will be left without a program at all. Low-income seniors will continue to pay reduced premiums and co-payments; in fact, more than half the seniors in the program pay no premiums at all. Annual maximum premiums and co-payments for the Seniors' Pharmacare Program will be maintained for 2015-2016.

The reality is the health care system must continue to modernize and innovate to meet the growing needs of Nova Scotians. That means the province must look at ways to do things differently while still providing the supports that people need. To continue to stay stuck and fund an outdated system is not the answer; Nova Scotians expect more. Ensuring that vulnerable, low-income seniors are supported and can afford the drugs they need is important and will continue. Removing the outdated ratio means that costs can be affordably shared across the growing numbers of new people joining the program, and it means that there will be a sustainable Seniors' Pharmacare Program for future generations. It means vulnerable seniors will still be able afford the drugs they need; it means the health care system will continue to modernize and meet the challenges ahead.

The bill represents the old way of doing things that has produced the worst health outcomes in the country - that is why this side of the House cannot support this bill, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, we once again see the disdain of the government towards any Opposition bill coming forward in this House. I've been here for some time - maybe not as long as some other people - and I remember a day when all members would take the opportunity to take their time and speak to a bill so that you could get their true ideas and feelings about a bill. To stand here in this House and say "we just don't agree with you" is not good enough, because you didn't explain what was important to you and what was not important to you.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I want to remind the honourable member not to refer to members opposite directly with the word "you."

MR. D'ENTREMONT: The members know full well - even though I say this with a little bit of smile on my face - that it is insulting I think, to the democratic process, the legislative process that we use in this House. Every time we as an Opposition, or the NDP as Opposition, bring a bill to the floor of this House for wholesome debate - whether you are for it or against it, we take the time to talk at least about the bill for more than 10 seconds - (Interruption) We're talking about 10 seconds - about our life experiences which I know that the member for Halifax Atlantic has lots of great life experiences that we love to hear about. We should stand here and give it at least a little bit of time and thought to the bills that are here before us.

AN HON. MEMBER: Are you going to talk on the bill or tutor us?

MR. D'ENTREMONT: No, I'm not going to blow it this time. I know that the member would look at me and say you blew it, and I don't think that's the case here. I'm going to speak to the NDP bill and whether or not I agree or disagree with the total premise of the bill before us, I respect the topic that is before us, which is fair drug prices. And prices to drugs that all of us have to purchase on occasion that many of us, as MLAs, continue to hear from our constituents about the challenges they have with the Pharmacare Program.

The bill enshrines the Seniors' Pharmacare Program in law. It also enshrines the cost-share ratio used to fund the program of a 75/25 split between the government and seniors. I can go back for many years on that promise that other governments have made, including the Liberal members who were in Opposition at the time who promised seniors that the ratio would remain at 75/25, and that through consultation with many of our seniors' groups, the Group of IX and others . . .

HON. LEO GLAVINE: They're fine, they're fine.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: They are fine this year, minister, while they are not paying any more, but if they are going to pay more next year, look out, minister because they are not going to be very happy with this ratio that has been changed on them.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I do want to remind the honourable member for Argyle-Barrington to keep his comments directed through the Chair and speak to the bill, please.

The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington has the floor.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but I did hear the voice of discontent coming from the minister and I thought I could remind him of that promise that I know even he made when he was in Opposition, when he talked to the Group of IX, when he talked to seniors, and trying to keep that ratio.

Now, I can say that when we spoke to the minister during estimates, I did bring this issue up. I talked about his consultation with those groups through his Department of Seniors. I did hear his commitment of the drug plan not getting more expensive for seniors this year. I hope at some other time the minister can say that it will not increase for seniors going into the future. I don't think he can guarantee that to us right now because of the challenge that we have with expensive drugs for some seniors.

We know full well that therapies are becoming an essential part of treatment for many ailments but much of the cost of the latest and most advanced treatments have soared in price. Gone are the days when a blood pressure pill or some kind of other anxiety medication, or just add up the number of drugs that individuals tend to use, that as we get into these therapies not only are they a few dollars a pill, they are hundreds of dollars a pill in some cases. I know the minister is concerned about that, in trying to keep his plan affordable for government, but we also need to make sure we're keeping it affordable for seniors.

Prescription drug spending exceeds \$25 billion annually and almost half coming from the public purse. That's from *The Globe and Mail* - I wish I had a copy of that. The Canadian Institute for Health Information tells us that most seniors in Canada are taking at least five drugs. They also found that drug use increases with age with more than 40 per cent of those Canadians aged 85 or older taking more than 10 drugs a day. The cost of those drugs can add up.

We don't believe that after contributing their whole lives, seniors should have to choose between the drugs that they need to be healthy and other necessities. We know many times that drugs are starting to get prescribed to our seniors that are not on the drug formulary. That creates a whole other problem that is not considered when we look at the 75-25 split. I don't know how many exception forms I've filled out over the last number of years for seniors who continue to come and say, listen, the doctor prescribed this drug and they weren't able to get it through the formulary.

That's tough because they have to make a decision whether they're going to be paying for a tank of oil, whether they're going to be buying groceries - which the member

for Chester-St. Margaret's was talking about in her speech, talking about the challenges seniors have just making ends meet. That's why the Seniors' Pharmacare Program is in place. Nova Scotians who are 65 years of age and over are eligible, unless they have coverage through another plan.

For those of you who are newer MLAs, if you haven't had the opportunity for it now, there are many seniors who believe that as they go by the age of 65 that, listen, I'm okay, I don't need to pay for the plan, I'm going to stay off of it and then all of a sudden they get sick and actually have to pay the penalty to get back into the plan after they get sick, so we need to have ways to manage those issues as well.

About 123,000 seniors are currently enrolled. Seniors contribute to the Seniors' Pharmacare Program in two ways: by paying a premium and paying a copayment. Both have an annual maximum - except for those who are on GIS, who, of course, don't pay the premium at all. Nova Scotia's seniors aren't rich, as I said earlier. More than 17,000 seniors receive that Guaranteed Income Supplement.

On January 30<sup>th</sup>, under the cover of holidays, government removed the 75-25 cost-sharing formula that is used to calculate the premiums and copayments seniors paid each year. I'm sure the news was confusing and frightening to seniors on a fixed income who are struggling to make ends meet.

We in the PC caucus understand that difficult decisions have to be made to get the province's books back in order. However, governing is about priorities. Courier charges for one department are \$222,000, but bus passes for Community Services clients are taken away; \$42,000 for renovations done for the Premier's office, but seniors are being asked to pay more for drugs. Cuts are being made to organizations that deliver services for visually-impaired Nova Scotians, mental health services and Eating Disorders Nova Scotia. That speaks volumes about the priorities of this Liberal Government.

In 2011, the NDP introduced the Fair Drug Pricing Act. Now, it was a bill that sounded good on the surface, but that rushed a new business model for pharmacists through the House with minimal consultation and little advance notice. It was the legislation that destabilized many small businesses, particularly in rural Nova Scotia. We concluded at the time that the government's motivation solely and only was to save government money, even if it was at the industry's expense. So there are some parallels between how the NDP acted in government and how this government is behaving now - when in power, both put the needs of the government first; when in Opposition, another set of priorities emerges, so I thank the NDP for bringing this one forward today.

Back in 2011, when Bill No. 17 was debated, the now Premier was concerned about the cost of drugs for seniors. During debate on second reading, he complained that the bill would not make drugs cheaper for Nova Scotians, and we can reference Hansard for that. The now Minister of Finance and Treasury Board was worried about how seniors would



fare under the NDP plan as well. She spoke at length on this one, but she said, “. . . as I look at this bill and if it does impact on losing pharmacies, it would be our seniors whom I would have the greatest concern for.”

The now Minister of Finance and Treasury Board said, “You’re losing the independence and you’re getting a consolidation into bigger stores and into places where the seniors and others have to travel a lot farther to get the service they need. Mr. Speaker, I think that’s another cost that will come down on all Nova Scotians and on seniors, if they have to travel farther.”

Every member of this Legislature has respect for seniors. I know they do. I have no doubt of that. But we must all remember our responsibility to them when we create public policy.

Again, I think this bill is one that needs serious consideration from the government. We know how it works here. This bill isn’t going to be getting passed during Opposition Day. The Rules are such that we can’t vote on this bill. We provide these bills as, of course, information or at least ideas to have a debate of ideas of the floor of the Legislature, to talk about the things that we see as constituency MLAs and to be able to echo them here on the floor of the Legislature. If any MLA in this House says, I don’t see these issues, or people have not brought the issue of high Pharmacare costs to my office, I would say that they’re not open enough, because every day in my constituency office I hear these things.

Not only do I hear the issue of Pharmacare on a regular basis; we also hear of housing, we hear of accessibility, we hear of many things impacting our seniors. Seniors in southwest Nova Scotia are mounting a plan to get a dialysis service in southwest Nova Scotia, in the Barrington Passage area. Why is that happening? It’s because they are finding it too expensive to travel, to pay for their drugs, to be able to access a service that we, as Canadians, have as a right. Health care is a right for Canadians and for Nova Scotians.

If we have the opportunity to make that easier for our seniors and for our constituents who are unable to help themselves, that’s what we’re here for. That is why I take offence to a government that sits there when there are good ideas that come from Opposition. They can think of it as they want, but to at least extend their ideas forward as to how they would want to deal with these things when bills like this come forward. All I can say is shame on them for not speaking to such a good idea.

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

**MS. LENORE ZANN:** Mr. Speaker, I’m pleased to rise to my feet to discuss Bill No. 72, an Act to Amend Chapter 7 of the Acts of 2011, the Fair Drug Pricing Act. First of all, I have to say that when I was a backbencher in the former NDP Government, the Fair

Drug Pricing Act was brought forward by our then-Minister of Health, who is now our Leader, from Halifax Needham.

I was so proud to be part of a government that took care of its seniors the way she did. To have to go from paying 85 per cent for generic drugs, to go toe-to-toe with the pharmaceutical companies, which is not easy, and stick to her guns, to be able to bring that price down to 35 per cent, was amazing. I really want to commend her, because she is sitting here right now in the House, and I have to say that I am so proud of her for that.

This is because our government did care about seniors and we tried to make life easier for seniors. We still care about seniors now, so this is why we have introduced this Act to amend Chapter 7. We feel that seniors are already put upon enough. I have to say that, from hearing my colleague from the Liberal Party talking about seniors and how many of them are actually not living in poverty, that's true; not all of them are living in poverty, but many of them are. When he talks about the "middle range," what he is talking about, for viewers and anybody who might be paying attention to this, is probably around the \$20,000 range, which is not much at all. In fact, I would say they need as much help as they can get from their government, and this is why we are suggesting this change, this amendment.

I think it's also going to be very difficult for our seniors when the government tries to privatize home care. This is what is on the agenda: privatizing home care. Well, that's going to cost them a lot of money, a lot of money that many of them can't afford. So long-term care beds are fewer and farther between, and the government doesn't seem to be too interested in creating that many more of those. That means that people are going to be in their homes, and most people would prefer to be in their homes, but in order to be in their homes they need help. They need support systems. They need people to be able to shovel their snow, to be able to clean out their driveways so that people can come and visit them or, if they are still driving, so that they can get in and out.

My parents - my dad just turned 82 last year, and he had a health problem. They were housebound for the whole winter, and it was really horrible. My family all tried to help as much as we could, but they didn't have anybody helping them, and they were basically stuck inside the house for three months.

My parents are not at the lower end of the scale. They are retired teachers. They've saved their money and they've looked after themselves and their health, but we all know that death and taxes are the two things you can be sure of in this life. As you age - as Bette Davis once famously said, old age ain't for sissies. I have to say, old age ain't for sissies and we're all going to be there one day.

The fact that there are more and more people turning 65 every day, every week, every month in Nova Scotia means that there is a large part of the population who are going to be in need of our help and our compassion and kindness. I think it sends a very bad

message to those people if we're not prepared to help them and to try and help them make ends meet.

Some people live alone. A lot of women live alone because, sadly, the rates of mortality for men are quite high and many women are left as widows, living alone. Some people might say it's not so sad but that's why I have dogs, Mr. Speaker. I digress and I'm joking.

The thing is that many older ladies live alone and they are lonely and many of them have depression problems. A lot of seniors suffer from depression. Again, I think we need to help these folks in order to create a life that is enjoyable for them for what we would call their golden years. The harder and harder we are on a population like that, they are not so golden and they certainly are not rosy.

I have to say I want to put a shout-out to all the home care workers out there, all the home support workers who work so tirelessly on behalf of our seniors, getting out there in all kinds of weather to look after them and to make sure that they get fed and to make sure that they are put to bed at the right time and that they have somebody to come and talk to them once or twice a day.

I heard recently from one of those ladies and she let me know that she's not happy about the changes that are coming. She told me that she actually was one of the people who was hired to come and look after my grandmother when my grandmother was in her own home, in an apartment, and she lived to be 97 years old. She was feisty to the end but she was lonely and we visited her as much as we could but we couldn't be there all the time and that's why these home care workers are so important.

Most of those workers are women. They are older women, apparently they are the oldest workforce in Nova Scotia and most of them are women. When they came here to the Legislature last year to protest because they wanted a raise of \$2 extra per day, they were sent home packing by this government and told that not only were you not going to get the \$2 raise but by the way, we're going to make it illegal for you to strike because you are an essential care worker, you are essential. Well if they are so essential, why weren't they given the \$2 extra is what I have to say.

As far as I am concerned, it's all a complex problem. We are an aging population; we have a lot of women who are out there in the workforce trying to help our seniors and we need to have some compassion, I think, in order to move forward. That's why this bill is so important. I think we should support Bill No. 72.

We've just heard, as I said, from the Liberal caucus saying that they are not going to support it but I can't see why anybody in their right mind wouldn't support something that is supposed to enshrine the Seniors' Pharmacare Program in the Fair Drug Pricing Act,

enshrine a cost-share ratio range for the funding of the Seniors' Pharmacare Program and require that surplus funding be invested in health initiatives that benefit senior citizens.

Obviously the government is basically, I would say, trying to balance the budget on the backs of seniors. I have to say that is shameful. I know they want to try and make some money; they want to shave some money; they want to save some money. We've seen what they've already done. They've already made despicable, terrible changes to the film and television tax credit. We've seen thousands of people protesting around this Legislature about that. I'm still getting emails and Facebook messages from people who are extremely angry, extremely disturbed, extremely disappointed that this has happened. Even though the government is scrambling and trying to fix it, I'm sorry but it's not as good as what we had in place.

Our government actually improved the film and television tax credit and made it so that it was a viable and competitive tax credit so that people would come to Nova Scotia and make their films, and television, and animation, and that we would have people coming in from around the world who would want to settle here and make Nova Scotia their home, as our interim Leader suggested earlier today.

I have to say that I am very disappointed with this government and these choices because again they are trying to balance the budget on the backs of the vulnerable, people who really need our help, and also on the backs of creative people, as if the arts aren't important. So seniors aren't important; union workers, workers aren't important; nurses, homecare workers, health care workers aren't important. I think that's really sad.

The fact that *The Chronicle Herald* today had an article about the government basically trying to balance the budget on the backs of all the most vulnerable, it also says a lot about what the . . .

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: What about when your government balanced the budget on the backs of people on social assistance?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island will come to order.

MR. KOUSOULIS: What about when you cut . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island will come to order.

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: We didn't cut anything. What are you talking about?

MR. KOUSOULIS: Our government reversed it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. KOUSOULIS: I'll explain it to you, Denise, you probably don't remember.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island will come to order and I'll remind everybody on this side of the House that they had plenty of time to get their comments into the record.

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

MS. ZANN: Thank you Mr. Speaker, what a gentleman, I truly appreciate that. As I was trying to say, when our Party was in government we did put our priorities on the most vulnerable citizens and we did do a lot of very good things to try to help the situation. In fact, one of the very first things we did was we added a fifth tax bracket for people who make over \$150,000 and we took the money from that and we helped to pay to the poor. We added a Poverty Reduction Credit and an Affordable Living Tax Credit.

Now some people would call that the Robin Hood style of existence, taking from the rich and giving to the poor. You know what? There are a lot of people out there who say good on ya, good on ya because there are so many people suffering right now.

In the States many people used to say that Obama was a wealth spreader. This was before the last election; they were trying to call him a wealth spreader, as if that's a bad thing. The Republican Party was jumping over themselves trying to say how little they would do for the poor and the most vulnerable and trying to say how terrible Obama was because he was such a wealth spreader. This was at a time when people were losing their homes; they were losing their possessions. The banks had basically ruined the economy, some greedy investors and people like that and the people who lived on Main Street, as they say, were suffering - so guess what? He won.

He won that election and he won the next one and that's why I say that I'm disappointed that this government is constantly trying to do things for privatizing things, for private corporations and the fact that they are going to make more money now from this and not give it back to those who need it most is really and that is not the kind of Nova Scotia that I believe in. With that I will take my seat.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 99.

**Bill No. 99 - Continuing-care Accountability Act.**

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: I'm glad to stand and speak on Bill No. 99. I hope the government will welcome this piece of legislation. I look forward to their comments when they have a chance to stand and speak either in favour or against this piece of legislation. I hope they do that and I hope they take the time.

As my colleague mentioned on the previous piece of legislation, this is an opportunity on Wednesdays for Opposition Parties to bring forward ideas and changes and proposals that we would hope government would have a serious look at, that they evaluate it, and if they don't agree with it or if they do agree with it, explain to Nova Scotians why. We don't seem to get that on Opposition Day, Mr. Speaker.

I know, even when we were in government for four years, we took the time to explain why we were going to support a piece of legislation of the Opposition Party or not support it. We did that and we used the allocated time that was provided to the government caucus to do just that. I know there are many new members in the government caucus, but I hope as time goes on that they take that opportunity to tell Nova Scotians why they do not agree with the Opposition proposal or suggested legislation that's before them.

Bill No. 99, the Continuing-care Accountability Act, is something that I think should be welcome by the government; I would hope that they would. This bill calls for the tabling of an annual report by the Minister of Health and Wellness to inform Nova Scotians of the state of continuing care here in our province. We have similar reports that are delivered on behalf of the government, and one is the ER Accountability Act that was passed and that government, the previous government and now this government, lives up to it. Each year they provide an account of what the ER closure rate is like, what the issues are, and where the issues are around the province and really, that's being accountable to taxpayers, that's being accountable to Nova Scotians, and that's what we're asking for here with this piece of legislation.

Statistics consist of information related to wait times for long-term care beds, for example, home care services and other continuing care facilities, both public and private. The government has a responsibility, I think, to reduce wait times replacing persons in residential care facilities and nursing homes. It has been a priority for a number of governments and I would hope it would be a priority for this government to continue on that trend. That is why it's important for Nova Scotians to have timely access to facilities and homes for those most in need. These are Nova Scotians who find themselves in a time of their life that they need the support of the government and the need the support of the services that are provided. I believe that it's an onus on the government to provide them with the accountability for the government to do that, and I think by this piece of legislation that allows that to happen and, as well, to ensure the effective financial management of government funds.

We have to remember every day that we're here, the funds that go into providing services like home care, like long-term care, come from the hard-working men and women

of this province through the taxes that are generated. I think it's important for the government to recognize that and be accountable to that. Hundreds of millions of dollars each and every year go into home care and long-term care, providing that care to Nova Scotians. I believe with that amount of money being invested that Nova Scotians should hear and the government should be accountable on improvements, hopefully, in providing those services.

Currently, if an individual wants access to this information about wait-lists for a long-term care facility, for example, there are a number of opportunities for them to get that information. Most of all it's through a freedom of information request. I know as the Health and Wellness Critic for our caucus, often we ask for that information and we have to pay for that request. If a resident in our province wants to see what the wait times are and the information, the stats around that, they would have to follow the same suit, they would have to pay to get that information. As a caucus, for example, we have to do the same.

Every now and then, I must admit, we do get that information without having to pay for it through estimates, for example. I know recently in the Budget Estimates I was able to obtain some information around the wait times. But I think it needs to go more than that, it can't just be the number of people waiting in hospital for long-term care placements, it can't be just the number of people who are waiting to access home care. I think more information needs to be provided to Nova Scotians; in the end they're the ones paying for it. I believe there should be the number of people in each county on the wait-lists for placement in long-term care or a residential care facility, nursing homes, for example; that information should be provided.

The reasons why individuals have been removed from the list - and one reason that's in there is because we know recently the government has made changes to that wait-list for long-term care, that they are going to review that wait-list and they will be removing people from that wait-list. I think it's upon the government to indicate to Nova Scotians why they're going to be removing them. The government wants to be open and transparent, and here's a great opportunity for them to embrace Bill No. 99 to do just that. If they want to introduce a new bill, Bill No. 150, they can do it themselves. I know that it's not often that you see government take an Opposition member's bill and pass it, but I think here's an opportunity to do just that, to make sure that this information is available.

Another thing in this piece of legislation: it will require the government to give the average wait time. I'll give an example. Currently in Yarmouth, individuals are waiting up to 200 days to access these services, and we wouldn't know that unless we paid for that information, which to me sounds absurd. I believe people in Yarmouth, people in Sydney, people across this province deserve to know what the wait-lists are so that they can understand how the system is working and they can understand if their tax money is going toward improving services.

Ultimately, that's what we want to see. We want to see government improve services to Nova Scotians. That's what we're here for: to make life better for people in our province and make sure they gain access to services like home care and long-term care and other facilities.

We also believe the costs associated with keeping people waiting to access long-term care services in hospitals should be accounted for. We have hundreds and hundreds of Nova Scotians who wait an extreme amount of time in a hospital bed, waiting for placement in long-term care. That's a huge cost on the health care system. I know that over the years people have put a number to that, around how much it costs to have someone in a hospital bed compared to a long-term care bed. These aren't exact figures, but I know that it's in the vicinity of around \$1,000 or more for someone to occupy a hospital bed than compared to a long-term care facility, where it's in the couple hundred dollar range.

Also, taxpayers should have access to the costs associated with home care services. We know that just in the last six to eight months, home care wait-lists have increased by over 80 per cent. That's a huge jump from years before. There has been a wait time for a number of years now, but there have been attempts to try to address that. I think that if government is standing up and making announcements that they're going to invest money into home care, then they should show what the result of that investment is.

Bill No. 99 will do just that. It will allow taxpayers, the people that are actually funding the ability for the government to make these announcements, to see if there is improvement, and if the money and the investment is spent wisely. I think that's what taxpayers want.

I talked to many people who don't mind - I know people don't like paying taxes, but they don't mind paying taxes as long as it's accounted for, as long as it's shown that it's going toward what it's meant to be. I think this piece of legislation would help with that, and I think government, definitely in the eyes of voters and residents would have a better outlook and a better understanding of what happens in government and how those investments go to improve their lives, how the taxes that they pay go to improve their lives. I think this legislation does just that.

Each month, 700 Nova Scotians turn 65. I think as we see in the next few years, by 2026, that number is expected to double. Government has to be willing and ready to ensure that the services are there for those seniors - 700, every month, turn 65. I have parents in their 70s - and I know they will be upset, because my mom just turned 70, but they're both in their 70s. They're still quite healthy, but you never know what's going to happen. All it takes is one illness, one chronic disease that manifests into the ability for maybe my mother or father not to take care of each other, and they may have to turn to a long-term care facility. They may have to turn to home care. They've spent most of their life here in Nova Scotia paying taxes, raising a family here in Nova Scotia, and I think they deserve to know where that tax is and where that tax's funding goes, and how it will improve their outcome.



I'm not criticizing the government for not doing this, I'm just suggesting that they should look at this because I think it goes along with what they've told Nova Scotians their approach was going to be when they're in government. I hope that through this they look at this seriously and consider possibly looking at either passing Bill No. 99 - I'd love that, it would be good - or bringing in a similar piece of legislation. It's about accountability and every Nova Scotian would expect the government to be accountable. That's why we knock on their doors during elections; that's why we talk to them on a regular basis as MLAs.

We as individual MLAs are accountable to the constituents we represent, but government ultimately is accountable to all those constituents, even the ones who don't vote for them. By showing initiatives like bringing in legislation like Bill No. 99 and adopting the principles that are behind Bill No. 99, I think that would go a long way in either getting re-elected or having the confidence of our taxpayers and our residents in the province. I know that relationship needs to improve - we all hear that from our individual residents that we represent.

I hope that over time the government will consider Bill No. 99 and look at the possibility of introducing and ensuring the accountability for the taxpayers is there when we're talking about continuing care. We're talking about long-term care, home care, and those associated with the facilities that we have around the province.

Now there are upwards of 130,000 seniors in our province currently, and as I said, by 2026 that is expected to double, so well over 250,000 seniors by 2026 over the age of 65. The demand on services is going to be there, and I think this is a great opportunity for the government to show Nova Scotians that they understand that shift in demographics that we're going to have with that increased age population and that they want to be accountable when they collect the revenue they do through taxes and the services they provide.

So I look forward to the government's comments on this, and I hope they recognize the importance of a piece of legislation like this. Thank you.

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

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise to speak to the bill brought forth by the member for Sackville-Cobequid. It's another health care bill that is obviously a very important topic and I am impressed that both bills are health care. I think being half the budget, that that should be the main focus in the Legislature for us.

One interesting thing that I've noticed running through this is that it does go after the new structure which was just implemented this month, so you're bringing a bill forward that seeks accountability from something that has just started April 1<sup>st</sup> - I just wanted to note that. Going through the clauses, you're asking for accountability in the amount of persons who are in each county, in every jurisdiction, and particularly with Clause (c) you not only want the metrics, but you want the reasons.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I just want to remind the honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect not to refer to the members opposite directly as “you”.

MR. RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, the intent of the bill requests that they not only want the metrics but the members want the reasons for the removal of persons from the wait-list referred to in the other clauses. The reason why I’m not in agreement with that is because what you’re doing is you’re getting involved in the micromanagement of the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I want to remind the honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect not to refer to the members opposite directly as “you”.

MR. RANKIN: Sorry, my debating background comes at the kitchen table; I apologize there.

I do think that the bill comes from a good place. I understand the reasoning why an Opposition Party wants more information from the government. I do understand that and I think the reason why it’s brought forth is because they are fundamentally against the change in strategy. It won’t come as a surprise that I’m not suspicious of the impetus to actually manage the wait-list. We’re looking at managing who’s on the wait-list because we all know that people go on it well before they need it and we wanted that practice to stop. We want to know who is on that wait-list and how we can get people into the appropriate type of care as soon as possible.

Nova Scotia is well-known for making available health service wait times data; in fact, we are a national leader. Let’s be clear: information about long-term care wait-lists is collected now. Opposition has access to the data. In fact, in Public Accounts Committee, which the member opposite is part of, the Health and Wellness Department is coming next week and he can ask all these questions - the following week, they are coming to Public Accounts Committee. They were there probably less than a month ago where you could have asked these questions.

Part of our plans in the future will be to develop a continuing care section on our wait times on the website, but it will take time and this isn’t our highest priority. Our priority today is focusing on improving the home care and long-term care system and services for Nova Scotians. We invested \$30 million last year with home care and another \$5.7 million this year for home care. We don’t need legislation to make this information available, so I won’t be supporting it.

I recognize that in the last government, there was some investment in home care and that is a positive thing. I know the members recognize that they are required to get this type of investment from other areas to make this investment. The choice is simple: you either find savings in other programs or you add it to the debt.

We believe that consolidating and streamlining administration is the way forward. I haven't heard one suggestion from the members opposite where they would find savings to make these types of investments. I have heard intimations as to where it could come from. The Yarmouth ferry was mentioned. I would submit that if that is the position of the NDP (Interruptions) Okay, all right. The member for Chester-St. Margaret's said it, all right?

I would submit that if that is the position of the NDP, they should let Nova Scotians know. Maybe it's education where they would find savings; they had no problem cutting \$65 million from that system. But the bottom line is that you can't make any cuts without affecting someone.

The member for Argyle-Barrington, who castigated us for cuts - he says it speaks volumes of our priorities. Let me tell the member opposite our priorities. The health care system should be centred on the patient, not on the institutions or practitioners in the system. That is a fundamental paradigm shift with this government. The system should not be about supporting the union leaders or protecting 50-plus bargaining units. We're focused on the patient - just like in education, where we're focused on the student; just like in Community Services, where we're focused on the people receiving the service.

With the worst outcomes in health over the last four years, we saw 7.5 per cent increases for the people who are delivering health care. With all due respect to the nurses, it doesn't make sense when you are not investing in front-line care. It's the quality of care; it's not just about the wages. The system should focus on the coordination of services for patients in a fully-integrated, system-wide approach. To that end, we cannot fully integrate without having access to pertinent data. Access to data will make analysis more effective, enable improvements, coordinate decisions, and allocate funds to reflect regional needs.

I heard the member for Sackville-Cobequid agreeing with the deputy minister, Dr. Vaughan, about quality assurance in the bill that I believe is now in Committee of the Whole, saying that they created quality assurance practices - they were the ones who implemented it. That's great that he agrees with them. I just wonder if he agrees with the deputy minister, who says the amalgamated system will save money, create more efficient health care, and lead toward greater public accountability. While we were at Public Accounts Committee, which the member sat on, he said that savings will amount to \$5 million in the first year, which will make it all worth it in the long-term. I'll table that.

Collecting, analyzing, and using data to make informed decisions across a provincial health care system as opposed to DHAs and hospitals working in silos is about coordination across the hospitals, CECs, primary care physicians, and the entire health system. At a provincial level, the system must be able to carry out health care capacity planning. It must look at the health needs of the population and project future needs for facilities, services, funding, and HR utilization. With this data, policies can be based on

empirical evidence that provides salient guidance on what services, procedures, devices, and drugs are effective and efficient.

There are other things we can do. I believe that the health care system should be focused on home care, as we're doing; preventive care, as we're doing; and also alternate system deliveries. We should be able to provide better information to individuals and families to facilitate self-care for conditions such as diabetes, which has grown exponentially over time.

Preventive care is also a key part of this. I want to commend the NDP and the former member for Sydney-Whitney Pier for bringing forth that initiative. With better data with the new system, we can look at attempting to construct a mechanism to identify spot markets for goods and discretionary services such as diagnostics, infusions, and specialist consultation services.

Just briefly on the pharmaceutical front: I want to commend the minister for working towards a deal in bulk purchasing. I believe that we could go further on creating a national plan for bulk purchasing and attempt to set a common price for pharmaceuticals, because that is all about equality of opportunity.

The new, more modern and strategic approach to system-wide provincial planning is in the public interest of Nova Scotians. It's in the public interest of the patient. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to get up and talk about the Continuing-care Accountability Act, Bill No. 99, as put forward by the NDP. I want to congratulate the member for Sackville-Cobequid on bringing this forward today for discussion in the House. I also want to say to the member for Timberlea-Prospect, thank you for getting up and actually using your time to speak about a very, very important issue.

But there's something that I've noticed about this when we got into our discussions in this House, something that I think troubles me and would probably trouble a lot of the members here. One of the statements made by the member for Timberlea-Prospect: he said it's all about savings and debt. I heard the member for Sackville-Cobequid talk about numbers and costs.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, for Nova Scotians, for families, for people whom we care about, it's about our seniors and how we treat them and how we respect people. It's not about dollars and cents - it's about the people who built the very fabric of the Province of Nova Scotia to allow us to have the opportunities that we have.

What do we do? We start saying, well, we're going to change around the numbers and we're going to penalize you if you're on a list and you're too healthy to go into the seniors' home. We're going to penalize you. We're going to take you off the list and we're going to make you wait for another 100 days.

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Or we could spend too much and penalize the future population.

MR. MACLEOD: Now, if the member for Timberlea-Prospect has more to say, then he should have used all his time instead of sitting down in his chair and not continuing on with the conversation. But the reality is . . .

MR. RANKIN: Everybody else is allowed a chair.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I really like the guy from over there from the other side, you know that? I'm really impressed by the fact that he has a lot to say now when he had the opportunity to say it and he didn't bother. But I am willing to give him some of my time if he has something else to add to this conversation, because if you think there is something more important than the seniors of the province - yes, I used the word "you."

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I would implore all members here to keep the topic of debate on the bill at hand and not on the use of the time. That's a conversation for another place and another time. I would be happy to mediate that discussion between the House Leaders to see how we could best make use of the Opposition time.

The honourable member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg has the floor.

MR. MACLEOD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for your wise and sage advice. I appreciate that very much. We will get back to the bill because it is an important bill, a bill that talks about what we're going to do with seniors.

I do take exception to the fact that the new method that was brought in by the Minister of Health and Wellness and the Province of Nova Scotia actually says if you're on the list, you get a call, and if you can't go to the home, you come off the list. At the same time, governments of all stripes have said time and time again, the most important thing we can do for our seniors is make it possible for them to stay in their homes. You would think we would take some refreshment out of the fact that when you call someone - it's not time for me to go into the home, I can stay in my own home and I can look after myself. Well, it appears this government really doesn't know what it wants. But that's not what we are here to talk about today.

We are talking about how we treat people. How do we do this in a good way? It's a very important institute that affects families from one end of our province to the other. Our ability to provide proper care for our seniors when they need it is one of the measures

of a government's competency. These seniors have worked and contributed their whole lives yet at any given moment thousands are on a wait-list for long-term care and hundreds are waiting in hospital beds.

The intent of the bill is good. Whenever a government can be more transparent to its citizens, it should be. People waiting for long-term care and their families do not understand the wait. They do not understand what is moving so slowly so it would be beneficial to them to be able to see exactly how the system works. They would take comfort in knowing that something is being done to address their loved one's issues.

What is particularly confusing about this bill is that it was introduced by the very Party who, when they were in government, would not have wanted their wait-list figures made public. They let the wait-list grow to a record high when they were in the government benches of this House. The NDP campaigned on seniors' issues and long-term care in 2009 and then when they formed government they completely ignored the Continuing Care Strategy and the wait-list increased by 1,000 seniors - 1,000 more Nova Scotians added to the wait-list while the NDP was in government. It goes without saying that if this bill were introduced by Opposition when they were in government, they would never have allowed these dismal numbers to be made public.

The Continuing Care Strategy introduced in 2006 laid out Phase I of the plan to address the needs of seniors in Nova Scotia. It made sure that long-term care beds were going to be available for them in their communities and in the areas where they needed them the most. In 2010 we were supposed to move into Phase II of that strategy which was designed based on the needs at the time and which communities were most in need of new and replacement beds and facilities would see that happen.

After campaigning on seniors' issues, the NDP formed government and they didn't lift a finger, not a finger to design Phase II of the Continuing Care Strategy. (Interruptions) Oh, your turn is coming. They waited until one month before the provincial election to suddenly try to court seniors again. Now, they are in Opposition and they are hoping families in Nova Scotia will have simply forgotten their inaction.

But there were others. The Liberal Government of the Province of Nova Scotia has ignored this issue as well. I see some of the members in the back over there clapping because their members have ignored the issues of the seniors in the Province of Nova Scotia. Shame on them, shame on them. The minister changed the policy, as I mentioned earlier, on wait-list deferrals earlier this year. But all that will do is create an optical illusion for families. It bumps people from one wait-list to another - a shell game. It's a shell game with the lives and the health of the seniors of the Province of Nova Scotia.

In Opposition, the Liberals did not speak about the growing wait-lists or the crisis in long-term care for seniors. They did not address it in their campaign platform. And they have remained silent on the issue while announcing their 100-day review for the

Continuing Care Strategy - a review that has now gone 453 days, and we still haven't seen an answer to that report.

And these are the people trying to tell us that they care about the seniors in the Province of Nova Scotia? We have asked dozens of questions of both the current and former government about their plan to protect seniors and provide the care that these seniors need when they need it most. Neither the former government nor the current government have had an option or an opinion on how things should be done correctly to help those individuals.

For the hundreds of Nova Scotians lying in hospital beds waiting for placement, we know that they are not in a position to go home and receive home care. Roughly 30 per cent of the people on the wait-list live in a community that does not have publicly-funded home care. This makes the government's inaction even more difficult for families and caregivers. People who live in rural Nova Scotia deserve quality home care as much as a person who lives in an urban area.

We've asked in this House on numerous occasions: what are the standards for home care? What are the standards that people can expect in their home for home care - regardless of who is delivering it? That's not the issue. The issue is making sure that the quality of the care that they are getting is at a standard that they deserve as Nova Scotians who built this province. Time and time again, we get - I believe the technical term is "gobbledygook" - from the minister when he's replying to what the standards are.

We have an aging population in Nova Scotia, and as the member for Sackville-Cobequid pointed out - very ably, I might say - we're growing quickly. I'm getting there myself. You never know what's going to happen. You can get up today and you can think, wow, everything's great, and in a few short hours, something can happen. I know this very well. In a few short hours, something can happen that will change your outlook, your health, and where things are going for you in the Province of Nova Scotia.

What we need to do is reassure those seniors who have worked so hard to make Nova Scotia such a great place to live. We haven't been doing that. Successive governments can share in the blame, but what we need to do is we need to stop talking about numbers. We need to stop talking about dollars. Yes, it's important to keep everything under control, and I understand that. I know that. But you know what? There's nothing more important than the people of this province and how we treat them, and how we make sure that they are looked after.

When I was growing up, the seniors of this province made sure that I had a good life and that I grew up right and I got the things that I needed. So it's only right for us, as elected members who they've put their faith in, to make sure that they are being well looked after. The stress this puts on families, on seniors, and on our health care system is not something another government can afford to ignore.

We believe that the intent of this bill is good. We believe that increased transparency and information for Nova Scotians is good. It is our hope that this government is aware that people will be able to access information more easily. They will be forced to take action themselves and address this problem. So in the spirit that this House is supposed to work in, we should take a bill that is good for the entire population and move it forward. Nobody has a monopoly on good ideas, regardless of what side of the floor of this House they sit on. Thank you.

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

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, it's certainly a privilege to stand here today and debate Bill No. 99, an Act Respecting Accountability for Residential Care Facilities and Nursing Home Waiting Lists. I think it's an advantage, to some degree, to go somewhat down in the lineup; you can have an opportunity to correct certain comments that have probably been tabled or put on the floor here in the last 10 minutes so I really take the opportunity of batting somewhere deep in the batting lineup here.

Before I get into my own personal notes, first of all I never had an opportunity to recognize the member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg. I know he has dealt with some health issues and it's good to have him back. Mr. Speaker, I actually Googled the word "determination" in the last six months and I saw a nice, glossy picture of the MLA for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg, so I welcome him back to the debate.

He was doing so well in his initial comments as he led into this discussion, I really made note of it. He talked about how government should treat people. I actually had that in my notes and we'll talk about it later. He talked about recognizing the seniors who have worked their full life and as they move towards long-term care, this is something that all Nova Scotians, and especially the families of those seniors who are in that vulnerable state or as they are introduced into health care, they want to understand the system and how wait-lists work.

The member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg was doing so well to that point and I acknowledged it but this is the issue that I took note here: it's the previous time when the PCs were in government, somewhere around 10 years ago, it was their inaction on long-term care and this particular issue that I am standing in this House today. It was their inaction.

I have an opportunity to bring this to this member's attention. In fact the very first speech that I did in this House, Mr. Speaker, was back in 2006. I actually tabled the actual blueprint to Bayside Home where our community has waited somewhere between 35 and 40 years for long-term care. I was sat down - you are not allowed to use a prop but I can assure you that the inaction of that PC Government for 10 years is one of the reasons why I am here, so it's good to step up in the lineup and get a chance to correct some of those statements.



I made good note of the Liberal comments of the member for Timberlea-Prospect. Actually you were on your feet - Mr. Speaker, through you to the member for Timberlea-Prospect - for eight minutes and 46 seconds. (Applause) I would hold the applause because the Speaker interrupted that member for Timberlea-Prospect twice and I made note of the Speaker's decision - the word "you", so I ask you to deduct probably 35 or 40 seconds from that eight minutes and 46 seconds. Now you can probably applaud your member.

One of the things that I really made note of was through the member for Timberlea-Prospect, he actually challenged (Interruption) Well, I haven't finished the speech but if you want to hold your applause, I will appreciate it. There was one point that the member for Timberlea-Prospect made, he talked about - how will you pay for this?

It was lightbulb time for me, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the rest of you got that here but I know of \$22 million that was spent by this government in the last year. That \$22 million was to the Royal Bank of Canada who had a \$9 billion profit. (Interruptions)

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

MR. BELLIVEAU: I really appreciate their attention, Mr. Speaker. The point I was trying to make was the member for Timberlea-Prospect was asked a question during this debate - how will this be paid for?

I sat here for a number of years and I have made several notes. I noticed that the Premier, when in Opposition - the present Premier today - said that they would not make any corporate handouts. Now you have \$22 million in the last year going to the Royal Bank of Canada who had - let's all say it together - a \$9 billion profit last year. There's an opportunity to get \$22 million, so I think I made the point. Presently we have the most vulnerable people in our society, over 400 people - I repeat, over 400 people - who had their surgery cancelled in the last few days. That is a serious issue.

Now I'm going to get into my own personal notes and I know that we're all excited to hear them. First of all I have to commend the member for Sackville-Cobequid. I know that he knows this file; I've seen him and I've gone to communities. I certainly want to tell you that I can stand here and I know that wait times is something that has been raised by constituents in my area and all through Nova Scotia. If you are going to socials or to community events, it's something that people want to talk about. They also want you to know that you are elected to bring their voices to this Chamber.

I take that very seriously. To me, I just see this whole - I don't think there's anything to be ashamed about, I don't think there's anything demeaning to say that we cannot accept the sitting government to accept a Private Member's Bill when it's in the common good for all Canadians. To me this is something that is common sense. Nova Scotians want transparency, they want accountability when it comes to the most vulnerable people in our

society. This very simplistic approach to Medicare, something that all Canadians value deeply.

Now I know that we'll all be judged - society will judge us by looking at us in how we deal with the most vulnerable in our society. You can have all your photo ops, you can have all your briefing notes, but they will judge you on just what I got through saying - it's the most vulnerable we are here to represent in these days.

I noticed, Mr. Speaker, and I hope you'll allow me to go to this, but I made a note that the government on the last bill, on the private fair drug policy that was introduced earlier, the bill, it was four minutes - four minutes by the sitting government to talk about a bill. To me that is crucial because people are paying attention. They want a sitting government who cares about Canadians - and something that we are the envy of the world is our medical care system.

I want to explain that one of the reasons why I'm standing here, and sitting with this Party, is because of universal health care. Now I can tell you that there was one person many years ago named Tommy Douglas. He said, "We can stand still. We can either go back or we can go forward. The choice we make today will decide the future of Medicare in Canada."

Now Medicare in Canada - I'm one of those baby boomers who was born in the 1950s, and believe it or not, that iceberg of baby boomers is moving through the society that we live in today. Medicare is going to be of urgent importance to that present sector that's moving through the system.

We heard earlier, as we talked about, each month, 700 Nova Scotians turn 65. There is a pressing need for this particular service in Medicare in Canada. To me, this is all about the common good. How many times is a Private Member's Bill introduced on this floor supported by the present government?

AN HON. MEMBER: We passed two of them.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Well, here's an opportunity to pass one more. It's as simple as that. I can't think of a better idea than the common good of improving our Medicare system. The member for Sackville-Cobequid - and I made note of his comments too - he also pointed out that the public wants more information. They want to know. They want to know why sometimes people are moved off that list. We've all heard the briefing notes; we've heard the campaign literature of the sitting government, which talks about an open and transparent process or an open and transparent government. Here is an opportunity to prove that. Improve those services. It will simply make life better for Nova Scotians.

We have an opportunity here, and to me - you can make these cases about improving these wait-lists and making life better for Nova Scotians. You have an

opportunity and the public is watching. They're watching. They've seen - I've said this many times - the cumulative effect of the cuts, especially in rural Nova Scotia.

I want to point out to the government, through you, Mr. Speaker, that the majority of our seniors are living in rural Nova Scotia. We've seen people have to travel more and more for health care services. That is certainly a concern for me and I think it should be a concern for the sitting government. You are asking our seniors to travel more for these services. I think that is uncalled for. You should be improving them.

To me, you have an opportunity to support a Private Member's Bill. The comments I've heard from the sitting government - I don't think it's going to sit well with the people who are most vulnerable in our society. With that, I'll take my seat and I look forward to the other comments. I'm sure that there will be a number of other speakers and I'll take some more notes. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: I want to thank all members for that thoughtful and intriguing debate. It brought a couple of matters to my attention which I perhaps may look into, trying to bring a little focus to our proceedings here. That concludes the Opposition business.

The honourable House Leader for the New Democratic Party.

HON. DAVID WILSON: That concludes business for the Opposition, Mr. Speaker. We'll turn it over to the Deputy Government House Leader to call the hours of business for tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the honourable member. I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. At that time, we will call for government business: Bill Nos. 97 and 98 for third reading; Committee of the Whole on Bills for Bill Nos. 89, 91, and 95, and Private and Local Bill Nos. 104 and 106; Bill Nos. 75 and 108 for second reading; and such other government business as may be necessary.

With that, I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to adjourn to sit again tomorrow, April 30<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

We've now reached the moment of interruption. The Adjournment motion was submitted by the honourable Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party:

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature condemn the recent cuts made by the McNeil Government and urge them to change course. Attacking the deficit through the most vulnerable is not acceptable.”

### **ADJOURNMENT**

### **MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)**

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

### **MCNEIL GOV'T: CUTS - CONDEMN**

MS. LENORE ZANN: I'm sure the members on the opposite side of the House will be very happy to have me continue my talk about how I feel that the government is balancing the budget on the backs of the most vulnerable citizens. I think that is shame.

I do understand what it's like to be in government; we were in government for my first four years in office and it's not an easy feat to walk between being careful and conscientiousness about how you spend the public's dollars, and also being balanced about looking after the people who need it most.

At this point I would like to talk about the fact that there are different political ideas out there about what government's job really is. Some people say that the government shouldn't be involved in practically anything. Some people say that government shouldn't be involved in business; you should just let the business owners and private enterprises run the show. That seems to be what this particular government - that seems to be the theme that we are hearing on this side of the House, over and over again, that government shouldn't get involved and that businesses should just be allowed to do their thing, which is very similar to, I think, the Republican Party in the States. They believe that.

Also there are people who believe government should be smaller and that government should not really play much of a part in people's lives. However I'm of the belief that government is there for a reason: to help make life better for people and for citizens of all ages and of all stripes and of all religions, all races, and all genders.

I do find that although the government has been doing some very good and constructive things - I'm very pleased about Boat Harbour, I'm pleased about the Home for Colored Children and I know that these cost money, but on the other hand to then strip away things that are really going to hurt the most vulnerable is problematic. When in the

same breath they give \$20 million to the Royal Bank, who doesn't need it, I'm really concerned.

As far as I'm concerned I think we need to hold the government to account and I think that members on the other side, I'm sure many of them feel the same way that I do, that they're trying to do their best. When they went into politics they did it because they want to help people and now that they are in government they see how difficult it is and how many difficult choices need to be made. Although they are still trying to blame the former government for most everything they're doing, I think that's really taking an easy way out and not being honest about their own responsibility for what they're doing.

I think I would be nice if the new members and the backbenchers could really be honest with themselves and with each other, discuss what's going on and bring it to their caucus because that's where you do talk about these things. When they see things happening that are not in the benefit or best interest of our poor citizens and the people who, for instance, do need bus passes to get around not only to their doctors and their psychologist to also just to have a life to be able to visit their families, to be able to have a day off where they can go to a park or something like this if they can't walk very far. I just think that society needs to look after these people.

One of the best times of my life was when I had an opportunity to work in Sweden, as I have talked about other times in this House, where they actually have a very strong social net, and that system is called social democracy and it does work. I found that people there were given a living wage. They never had to worry about having a roof over their heads or having food on their table. They have free post-secondary education and they have free day care so women are able to have their children, they're also able to stay in hospital longer, and they are given a personal nurse who works with them and actually goes home with them and helps them for the first few days of a new family, in looking after that child and teaching them how to look after a child - which is so civilized in my books.

They also make sure that the most vulnerable in society are pulled along and held up by the whole. They believe that the community looks after each other and it's not about who wants to be a millionaire, who wants to marry a millionaire, who wants to be the richest person in the world, but about actually caring about one another and making sure that life is not only affordable, but enjoyable.

There's a song or a chant that many of the garment factory workers used to say which is Bread and Roses, the famous Bread and Roses: "Yes, it is bread we fight for, but we want roses, too." I think that really sums up my belief about what we need to do as a government, we need to look after people - we need to make sure there are jobs for them to go to. We need to look after the environment so that the environment is protected so people have fresh air and clean water, and clean water to swim in as well as drink.

Also, they have time to enjoy their families, to enjoy their time off, and in Sweden people are only allowed to work 40-hour weeks, they aren't allowed to work overtime because the government felt people needed to spend time out in nature with their families and have time off. They said that creates a much more productive society - and I would have to agree with that.

I was married at the time and my then-husband was living in Sweden and also in Switzerland, and in Switzerland they had the same thing where you're only allowed to work 40-hour weeks. He'd been working in Cincinnati up until that point, Cincinnati and New York, he's a tool and die maker and he was working 60- to 65-hour weeks because they could make so much more money in overtime. In fact, all of them worked overtime and they were almost pushing themselves into the grave working overtime to make more money to build more decks on their cottages and buy more boats that they never had time to enjoy.

These guys would work at this factory and they never spent time with their families. So they're killing themselves all to make an extra several hundred bucks, but for what? So when he was sent over to work in Switzerland, first of all he was frustrated because he wanted to make extra money and he wasn't allowed. Then as he biked to work and he had lots of time off on the weekends, he suddenly started to enjoy it and he said, you know, Lenore, I get it now. I really understand now why social democracy works the way it works because it's all about the community, it's about enjoying life. It's about not necessarily wanting to be the richest person on the planet, but still being happy and looking after each other.

Children are taught from a very early age that it's not just all about you, it's about what you can contribute back to your society because that's what makes it all tick; that's what makes it go. I love that concept and so when I hear this government talking more and more about privatization and private enterprise and letting the government stay out of business and letting business run the show, it makes me nervous - and I know there are a lot of other people in Nova Scotia who are feeling very nervous as well.

Again, I do have to mention the creative economy, the green economy, and the knowledge-based economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century because this is the way of the future. And from recent things I've been seeing this government do, decisions that they've made, I would say they're killing that future; they're killing that future before it even has a chance to blossom.

For 20 years we had built up a creative economy, a thriving creative community and economy here in Nova Scotia that, in one stroke of the pen, was being shattered, was being destroyed, was being stamped into the ground - very reminiscent of when the Progressive Conservative Party was in power and got rid of the Nova Scotia Arts Council in a day. Suddenly they came in, and they said everybody leave - take your stuff, leave everything else, you're done. (Interruption)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really appreciate you giving me the notice that I have about a minute left. With a minute to spare, I would just say again that I know how hard it is to govern, and I know what a fine line it is to walk that balance, but it's very, very important that we look after our most vulnerable in society.

If we think we can do it by paying attention to the richest of the rich and the rich corporations, we are sadly mistaken. So I would urge the government to think about these other people in their deliberations, and think about what Joseph Howe said: What is right? What is just? What is for the public good?

With that, I'll take my seat. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Mr. Speaker, first, I'm so pleased that the member for Argyle-Barrington is here to listen to me speak. He has always been at me to speak more often in this House, so I greatly appreciate that he's here to listen to me and that he is . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd like to remind the honourable member for Halifax Chebucto, first of all, not to speak to members opposite directly, but also not to discuss who is, in fact, in their seat and who is, in fact, not in their seat.

The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto has the floor.

MR. STROINK: Mr. Speaker, I never mentioned if he was here or not, so thank you for sharing that piece of information.

As a government and as a province, we need to focus on core priorities of government and how we need to take a look at how we can continue to deliver our most important services in a most effective manner. I guess that's what we're doing with this budget, Mr. Speaker. Every day we go on in our homes and our business and we look at what we have, how much money we have in our envelope. In that envelope we have a certain finite amount of money that we can spend in our household in order to succeed within our household and within our business. Sometimes, as family members, you have to make hard choices as to what you can and cannot spend.

Unfortunately, we're in a bit of that situation right now, as we, as government, have to make those sacrifices. We know that the status quo is not going to work. We know that we need to make changes, and those changes will involve making tough decisions. Again, we do that in our lives every single day.

If we keep going this way, then I don't know what we can do to better this province. All I want to do is better my province. All I want to do is help the people of Nova Scotia. We all want to make sure that Nova Scotia has the best education, the best health care

services. We want to be working toward a brighter future for everyone in our communities. That is why I took this job.

If I look at rural Nova Scotia, I look at Pictou, and I'm going to speak to Pictou, as I have family there. That is a thriving community that will succeed. We'll work together with everybody working together within that community to make the businesses thrive, the tourism thrive, and all that kind of stuff. But in order to get there, we have to make some hard choices.

The fact remains that to get there, it is not going to be easy. Shared sacrifices are required among everyone - exactly what we do in our households every day. I would love to go on a trip sometime this year, but guess what? I'm not going to be able to, because it's not in the cards right now within our family. But that's okay, because maybe next year, when I have a little bit more money, or the following year, when I have a little bit more money, I'll be able to do that.

Today these are the hard choices that we've had to make within government. This is the pain that everybody has to feel. I guess I just want to touch on the Department of Community Services, because they are an essential part of Nova Scotia and an essential part of government. They are delivering services and charting a new course to benefit the most vulnerable in Nova Scotia, and they are making an extra effort to be more sustainable, an extra effort to deliver care to the most vulnerable.

By doing that, by being sharp with the pencil in those departments, we're going to offer a better service in the long run, because that is what is key here, in this discussion, in this room: how do we sustain the future of Nova Scotia, and how do we ensure that the vulnerable of Nova Scotia are well taken care of? Well, guess what? We're doing that every single day and we're doing that right now.

I want to remind the members of the NDP that this government has invested \$4 million in 67 organizations. These organizations include family resource centres that have not received a penny of an increase in over a decade. That is a core fundamental part of Nova Scotia where moms - young moms and mothers and families - can come in and get the support they need to understand how to take care of their family. Those are the kinds of things we are investing in.

The member for Pictou West brought up a disheartening story about a woman who could not get help when she needed it the most, and we as a government are giving \$500,000 in transitional housing to allow for more support for women.

We are also ensuring that there is a focus on a new sexual violence strategy, and that is also so fundamentally important for the future of Nova Scotia. Our women are a key foundation of Nova Scotia and we need to make sure that they are safe and they're brought up in an environment where they can get the help they need, like in family resource centers.



By taking the time with DCS to reorganize it, to focus on making it a better organization, the front-line staff have not been affected. They are still out there working hard, working with everybody that needs the support in Nova Scotia, and by doing what we've done, we've created a more sustainable thing for those people to ensure that our vulnerable are taken care of.

It's tough; it's very hard when we have to make these choices in Nova Scotia and it's very hard when we have to make these choices every single day in our lives but if we all work together, if we all stand in this room and work together, if all Nova Scotians work together to find a sustainable way for our future, then we will have a Nova Scotia where I can bring up my family and my family can bring up their family and so on.

But during that time, to get to that point, it's going to be hard and I'm proud to say that in some ways we're working towards that and it's not easy. I guess, standing here today and talking about this at first glance I was like, okay, I can do this. The more I speak about it the more I feel confident about our decisions, because they are the right thing to do. By being a member of the House and being part of this government, we've made those choices that no other government has wanted to do, and I'm okay with that because I stand over here as a proud member of the House that said, we are doing what's right for Nova Scotia. We are working towards a goal of sustainability. We are working towards a place where Nova Scotia businesses can thrive.

The member talked about the businesses - we built the Minister of Business. We built a new department that is hopefully going to create more jobs, which will create a better platform for businesses to succeed. If businesses can succeed, guess what? Families succeed because those businesses are hiring people to work within their environment. By then they are bringing in a paycheque that they can spend in the community and so small businesses in Pictou can thrive because they hired more people. That's a foundation and platform that we built and we're building towards.

I guess what I'm proud of is to say that that's what we're doing. With this new department we're going to do that, and looking at each department within government we're doing that. We're building that foundation, and through that process, I cannot be prouder. It is something we can say we are working towards the future of Nova Scotia.

I seriously hope that Nova Scotians understand that there is a light at the end of the tunnel, because I have faith in that. I see it, I see where we're headed. I know it's bumps and bruises along the way but we're going to get there and we're going to get to a place where we can bring up our family, our kids, and build a future for Nova Scotia where the environment is taken care of, where our kids are taken care of, and where the vulnerable are taken care of.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, my short little rant, I hope that the member for Argyle-Barrington enjoyed that. Thank you very much, and have a great day.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: There is no doubt that Nova Scotia has to get its finances in order. If we didn't know that already, the Ivany report set it out in stark terms. The current way of doing things, the status quo, is not sustainable. I think we all know Nova Scotians who have looked at their credit card statements or their household budget and thought to themselves, I need to change, I can't afford to continue on like this. That's a concept that many Nova Scotians understand.

When we face this situation in our personal lives, we examine what we spend with an eye for eliminating some expenses. Most of us begin by cutting the luxuries or the frills. An extra night out or some personal indulgence, that's where we cut. We start by bringing our lunch rather than eating in restaurants. None of us would start by cutting necessities like groceries or rent.

For example, Nova Scotians would put off renovations to their homes in order to buy medicine or buy groceries. That's the approach that Nova Scotians expect their government to take. Nova Scotians understand that cuts are necessary, but they expect their government to show leadership and make good cuts. They'd cut administration rather than cut programming; they'd eliminate frills or extravagance but make sure that the most vulnerable get the care and supports they need, because that's just common sense.

Unfortunately, in the last several weeks, we've seen a bill for \$220,000 for courier services, but funding to community groups dealing with mental health and addictions cut by 40 per cent. We've seen \$42,000 in renovations to the Premier's office, but a cut of \$11,000 to Eating Disorders Nova Scotia. We've seen tens of thousands spent to teach bureaucrats about soul spaces, but \$152,000 in funding to help the Canadian National Institute for the Blind deliver services that help people with travel cut. All grants to the Seniors Department were cut by 25 per cent, and bus passes are being taken away from Community Services clients, but the member for Clare-Digby laments the onerous process of submitting MLA expenses.

For weeks before the budget, the Premier warned that everyone would have to feel the pain of budget measures, and I think many Nova Scotians accepted that. But they expected fairness and common sense. They expected their government to feel a little bit of the pain too. They certainly didn't expect that the visually impaired, the mentally ill, seniors, and those with eating disorders would bear the brunt of the austerity budget.

Nova Scotians never expected cuts to come to organizations including the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Deafness Advocacy Association, Feed Nova Scotia, the HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development, the Nova Scotia Association for Community Living, the Nova Scotia Council for the Family, People First Nova Scotia, or Youth Voices of Nova Scotia - all

organizations that experienced the cuts. They certainly didn't expect that by 2016-17, five of those groups would have their funding reduced to zero.

Earlier this week, the Premier made a startling admission while visiting the Valley. The Premier said, "We don't have good choices, only bad choices. But it is critical that we fully understand that we have to have our fiscal health in order. Then, we can invest and make a hell of a lot better choices than the choices we are making now."

The Premier's right. Much of governing is about making choices, and he's also right when he points out that his choices have been bad.

The government had a choice to create jobs in rural Nova Scotia with onshore development, but their choice was to say no to good jobs. The government had a choice to support the film industry, but their choice was to drive that growing industry out of the province. They had a choice to support the most vulnerable in our province, but their choice was couriers, renovations, expensive training sessions about truth and truth-telling and soul spaces. Only bad choices indeed.

This government is no stranger to doing things twice or more to get them right. Maybe cutting funds to the groups that support our most vulnerable citizens will be just another government mulligan in the grand scheme of things. With those few words, I'll take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: That concludes the time allotted for the Adjournment debate. With that, the House will now rise until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

[The House rose at 4:51 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 1650**

By: Hon. Kelly Regan (Labour and Advanced Education)

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

Whereas Inge Sadler and Pick of the Litter Society, a volunteer organization in Bedford, rescued 367 kittens and 27 puppies in 2014; and

Whereas Pick of the Litter Society is an animal rescue organization that rescues orphaned kittens (and puppies) and provides them with safe shelter, proper nutrition, medical care, and tender loving care (TLC), eventually adopting them out to caring families; and

Whereas Inge Sadler, in addition to operating this 24-hour animal rescue organization, also fundraises through online auctions to support the needs of these kittens and puppies, and constantly promotes awareness of the plight of orphaned animals across the entire province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Inge Sadler and Pick of the Litter Society for their hard work and selfless dedication to animal rescue, and we hope that the need for their services diminishes in 2015.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1651**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Justice)

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

Whereas Ann Hallal is to receive the Immigrant of the Year Award presented by the Honorary Consul for the Maritimes at the Annual Immigrant Day event hosted by the Canadian Lebanon Society of Halifax on May 16, 2015; and

Whereas Ann has been a contributing member of the Canadian Lebanon Society of Halifax for 50 years, serving the community by helping many new immigrants and organizing many functions including the banquet in honour of former Lebanese President Bashir Gemayel, and the grand opening of the society's current facility on the Bedford Highway; and

Whereas Ann Hallal is a parishioner and a very active volunteer in Our Lady of Lebanon Parish from the first day, serving on the building committee where she played a vital part in finding the site where the church now stands;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ann Hallal on her award and accomplishments, and wish her continued health and success.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1652**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Justice)

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

Whereas *The Consulate* magazine is a valuable news source for the Canadian-Lebanese community in Nova Scotia and is a publication of the Honorary Consulate of Lebanon in Halifax; and

Whereas faith, family, humility, and respect for others, have always been the guiding principles helping the Nova Scotia Lebanese community to achieve success; and

Whereas these values are expressed in this publication by presenting history and milestones, church and community news, events and achievements;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Consul Wadih M. Fares and all the hard-working volunteers who dedicate the various skills and resources needed to produce *The Consulate* magazine, and wish them continued success in the future.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1653**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Justice)

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

Whereas Anthony Leba Zibara and Tania Tony Touma will celebrate their marriage on August 5, 2015; and

Whereas their family and friends look forward to seeing them commit their relationship publicly, officially, and permanently, at Saint Anne Church in Hasroun, Lebanon; and

Whereas Anthony and Tania are beginning a new chapter in their lives together;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Anthony Zibara and Tania Touma on their engagement, and wish them a marriage marked by many healthy and happy years.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1654**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Justice)

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

Whereas Amir Toulany is a Dal Corporate Residency MBA graduate student at the Dalhousie University Faculty of Management; and

Whereas Amir's strengths include versatile problem solving, a dynamic work ethic ignited in team settings and adaptable in a variety of environments; and

Whereas Amir's convocation ceremony will take place on May 26, 2015, at Dalhousie University;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Amir Toulany on his graduation, and wish him continued success in the future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1655**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas I rise to congratulate the 2014-15 Sir John A. Macdonald Flames hockey team on their successful season, in which they finished tied for second place in league play, which is the team's highest finish in the last ten years; and

Whereas the Flames' biggest achievement this year is that for the first time in the school's history (40-some years) they were Metro Regional Champions, and they won the title game and the banner in a thrilling 2 to 1 overtime game vs. Millwood: and

Whereas the players - Austin Munn, Chris Hann, Cam Zinck, Ryan Jewers, Joey Ramsey, Matt Wilson, Michael Anthony, Evan Rhymes, Nick Fewer, Logan Maclellan, Matt Olsen, David Worth, Josh Cunningham, Luke Spicer, Jake Tattrie, Jonah Allen, Colton Meagher, Patrick McCormick, Matt Pellerin, Adam Grimmitt, and Ryan Anthony - along with coaches and management Ian Haverstock, Justin Hulbert, Cale Wadden,

Chelsea Costa, Paul and Joyce Smith, and Art Campbell together make this team a shining example of the joint accomplishments of players, coaches, and parents;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating the 2014-15 Sir John A. Macdonald team and wish them well in the future.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1656**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas this past Saturday a group of middle school students from Brookside Junior High School in Hatchet Lake were featured on the CBC *National* radio news for their inspirational Twitter campaign; and

Whereas the campaign started as an experiment, under the leadership of teacher Barrie Walsh, to find ways to help students reduce the stress in their lives by sharing stress reduction tips and positive messages of inspiration via Twitter; and

Whereas the students work collaboratively to edit the tweets to 140 characters and they plan to post a tweet a day until the end of the school year, to inspire themselves and others;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating the students of Brookside Junior High School for their innovation and compassionate use of Twitter.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1657**

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 the Clare-Digby Acadiens Peewee A team participated in the 38<sup>th</sup> SEDMHA Honda Minor Hockey Tournament from April 2 to April 5, 2015; and

Whereas the Clare-Digby team played against the York West Hawks in the Accord Divisional Final; and

Whereas the SEDMHA Honda International Hockey Tournament is one of the largest minor hockey tournaments in North America;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Clare-Digby Acadiens Peewee A hockey team and their coaches for winning a gold medal in the Accord Divisional Final during the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual SEDMHA Honda Hockey Tournament.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1658**

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 the Clare-Digby Acadiens Bantam C team participated in the 38<sup>th</sup> SEDMHA Honda Minor Hockey Tournament from April 2 to April 5, 2015; and

Whereas the Clare-Digby team played against the TASA Blizzards in the Accord Divisional Final; and

Whereas the SEDMHA Honda International Hockey Tournament is one of the largest minor hockey tournaments in North America;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Clare-Digby Acadiens Bantam C hockey team and their coaches for winning a silver medal in the Accord Divisional Final during the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual SEDMHA Honda Hockey Tournament.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1659**

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 the Clare-Digby Acadiens Atom B team participated in the 38<sup>th</sup> SEDMHA Honda Minor Hockey Tournament from April 2 to April 5, 2015; and

Whereas the Clare-Digby team played against the Eastern Shore Mariners in the Odyssey Divisional Final; and

Whereas the SEDMHA Honda International Hockey Tournament is one of the largest minor hockey tournaments in North America;



Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Clare-Digby Acadiens Atom B hockey team and their coaches for winning a silver medal in the Odyssey Divisional Final during the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual SEDMHA Honda Hockey Tournament.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1660**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas anniversaries are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of two individuals united as one; and

Whereas it was once said that a marriage anniversary is the celebration of love, trust, partnership, tolerance and tenacity but the order varies for any given year; and

Whereas on February 27, 2015, a very special occasion took place when Edward and Danielle Surette of Lower Wedgeport celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Edward and Danielle on this remarkable milestone in their life together and wish them many more happy years together.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1661**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on January 18, 2015, a very special occasion took place when Melody and Adam Renouf welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Melody and Adam on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1662**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on February 1, 2015, a very special occasion took place when Kelly Cameron and Myles Dennis welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kelly and Myles on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1663**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on January 23, 2015 a very special occasion took place when Kate Miller and Joshua Goodwin welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kate and Joshua on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1664**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on January 26, 2015, a very special occasion took place when Shawna and Tyler Nickerson welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Shawna and Tyler on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1665**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of the very satisfying journey down a long road, where rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on November 19, 2014, a very special occasion took place when Chaila Krafve and Dillon Perry welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chaila and Dillon on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1666**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of the very satisfying journey down a long road, where rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on November 21, 2014, a very special occasion took place when Jennie and Brandon Crowell welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jennie and Brandon on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1667**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of the very satisfying journey down a long road, where rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on January 30, 2015, a very special occasion took place when Heidi and Sam Atwood welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Heidi and Sam on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1668**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of the very satisfying journey down a long road, where rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on November 3, 2014, a very special occasion took place when Alecia and Andrew MacKinnon welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alecia and Andrew on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1669**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of the very satisfying journey down a long road, where rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on February 10, 2014, a very special occasion took place when Amanda Atwood and Cory Nickerson welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Amanda and Cory on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1670**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on January 18, 2015, a very special occasion took place when Ashley Garron and Matthew Nickerson welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ashley and Matthew on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1671**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on December 30, 2014, a very special occasion took place when Tiffany Cottreau and Jordan Ross welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tiffany and Jordan on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1672**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on January 1, 2015, a very special occasion took place when Shawnnasi and Mark Nickerson welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Shawnnasi and Mark on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1673**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on January 27, 2015, a very special occasion took place when Kayla Hines and Arthur Forbes welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kayla and Arthur on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1674**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on November 19, 2014, a very special occasion took place when Brittany and Marcus Tufts welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brittany and Marcus on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1675**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas "a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities," author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on March 10, 2015, a very special occasion took place when Kassidy Nickerson and Aaron Symonds welcomed their son into the world;



Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kassidy and Aaron on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1676**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Award on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Ally MacDonald from Belnan with the King's Edgehill (KES) hockey team won the Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation Division Championship, the Birthplace of Hockey and the Moncton Classic tournaments; and

Whereas Ally, with the U-18 Team Nova Scotia, won gold at the Atlantic Challenge Cup and in the process was named to the Canada Games Women's Hockey Team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Ally MacDonald on being awarded the 18 & Under Female Athlete of the Year Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1677**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Award on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Ashlee Wheaton of Enfield competes in equestrian and in 2014 won 15 titles at various events including the Kentucky State Fair, Eastern United States Exposition, and the Blue Ridge Classic in North Carolina; and

Whereas Ashlee won the World Champion Saddlebred Junior Exhibitor Country Pleasure Championship and the title at Grand National and World Championship Morgan in Oklahoma;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Ashlee Wheaton on being awarded the 18 & Under Female Athlete of the Year Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1678**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Award on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Braden Langille of Shubenacadie won 13 races in the Bandolero racing series with feature wins at Orlando, New Hampshire and Las Vegas Motor Speedway; and

Whereas Braden took the Scotia Speedworld Bandolero Series Championship with five feature wins and an impressive 11 of 12 top-five finishes;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Braden Langille on being awarded the 14 & Under Male Athlete of the Year Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1679**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Award on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Brody Fraser of Upper Nine Mile River helped the Atom AAA Penguins win a provincial silver medal and was named to the Provincial All-Star team; and

Whereas Brody helped the East Hants Squirt A softball team win a provincial title;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Brody Fraser on being awarded the 14 and Under Male Athlete of the Year Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1680**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Awards on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Claire Warren was a goalie for Pro Cresting Midget AAA Female Penguins during the 2013-2014 season and is now a goalie for Queens University; and

Whereas in the playoffs Claire helped the Penguins win their first Nova Scotia Midget Female Hockey League title, and she was named MVP in the gold medal game at the Atlantic Championships;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Claire Warren on being awarded the 18 and Under Female Athlete of the Year.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1681**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Awards on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Drew Hubley of Elmsdale won junior badminton tournament stops at Antigonish and Sackville, while also placing second in the double portion of both these tournaments; and

Whereas Drew took home the U-19 title in singles and doubles at the Provincial Championships, the U-19 Atlantic Championship singles title, and was named to the Nova Scotia Canada Games Badminton 2014 team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Drew Hubley on being awarded the 19 and Over Male Athlete of the Year.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1682**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Awards on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas the East Hants Atom AAA Penguins won the Central Minor Hockey League title; and

Whereas the Atom AAA Penguins were the first East Hants team since 1995-96 to make it to the Provincial Championships, where they won a silver medal;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the East Hants Atom AAA Penguins on being awarded the 14 and Under Division Team of the Year.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1683**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Awards on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre Junior Girls 4x100 Metre Relay Team led by Maddison Hall, Grace Layes, Vanessa Rose, and Ireland Miller, won the district, regional, and provincial championships; and

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre Junior Girls 4x100 Meter Relay Team broke a 12-year record and are the fastest team in their division in Nova Scotia history;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Riverside Education Centre Junior Girls 4x100 Meter Relay Team on being awarded the 14 and Under Division Team of the Year.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1684**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Awards on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas the East Hants U-14 Tier II B Rednex Soccer Team won the CISL Challenge Cup and the Connor Timmins tournament; and

Whereas the East Hants U-14 Tier II B Rednex Soccer Team went unbeaten all season and won the Provincial Championship;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the East Hants U-14 Tier II B Rednex Soccer Team on being awarded the 14 and Under Division Team of the Year.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1685**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Awards on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Gwenyth Ettinger-O'Leary of Enfield was named the Chester Clark upcoming athlete of the year at Hants East Rural High for her contribution in both soccer and basketball, and was named Rookie of the Year for HERH and helped the Tigers to the Divisional II Provincial Championships; and

Whereas Gwenyth was the Team Nova Scotia U-14 development team's leading scorer during last summer's tournament, and she also is a member of the East Hants U-16 Rednex girls' soccer team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Gwenyth Ettinger O'Leary on being awarded the 14 & Under Female Athlete of the Year award.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1686**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Awards on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Maddison Hall of Enfield competed with both the Riverside Education Centre (REC) and the Chebucto Athletics track and field teams and at the Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation competition, and she placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the Junior Girls 100m, 2<sup>nd</sup> in

200m, 7<sup>th</sup> in long jump, and 12<sup>th</sup> in high jump, and she also helped the REC Junior Girls 4x100m team win gold, setting a provincial record; and

Whereas Maddison with the Chebucto Athletics is the fastest Midget-aged girl in the province and Atlantic Canada in the 100m, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively in the 200m, and was named the 2014 MVP of the club;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Maddison Hall on being awarded the 14 & Under Female Athlete of the Year award.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1687**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Awards on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Mark Sweeney of Dartmouth, President of the Enfield Rugby Football Club (RFC), was named a Nova Scotia Division 1 All-Star during the 2014 season, and helped Enfield win the regular season title and a silver medal at the Provincial Championship; and

Whereas Mark is a member of the Nova Scotia Keltics Men's Program and the first Enfield RFC player to compete at the Canadian Championship, as a member of the regional Atlantic Rock;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mark Sweeney on being awarded the 19 & Over Male Athlete of the Year award.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1688**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Awards on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Olivia Dearman of Nine Mile River was named MVP of the Nova Scotia Championships and helped the Cole Harbour Comets U-12 softball team win the provincial title and the Atlantic title as well; and

Whereas Olivia enjoys badminton and basketball and was a member of REC's volleyball team for the 2013-14 season;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Olivia Dearman on being awarded the 14 & Under Female Athlete of the Year award.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1689**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Awards on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Tyler MacDonald from Lantz helped the Hants East Rural High Tigers Men's Rugby team make it to the 2014 Provincial Championships, as well as being on the 2014 Nova Scotia U-18 team, winning gold at the Eastern Canadian Championships; and

Whereas Tyler was selected to try out for the Atlantic Rock U-19 regional rugby team and was selected as a student for the NS Keltic Academy team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tyler MacDonald on receiving the 18 & Under Male Athlete of the Year award.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1690**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Award on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas in 2014 Wyatt Sanford from Kennetcook won both the Provincial and National Boxing Championship titles in his weight class (64 kg), was named Nova Scotia Ricoh Athlete of the Year in Boxing and earned Golden Gloves status; and

Whereas Wyatt was named top boxer at the Citadel Boxing Club and was recently named to the Canadian National Boxing Team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Wyatt Sanford on being awarded the 18 & Under Male Athlete of the Year Award.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1691**

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (East Hants)

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

Whereas the East Hants Sports Heritage Society held their first annual Sports Award on Saturday, April 25, 2015; and

Whereas Adam Meehan from Rawdon Gold Mines competed in auto racing and finished 2<sup>nd</sup> overall in the Scotia Speedworld Bandolero series, was 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Petty Speedway Bandolero, was named as a TCM Short Track Draft Top 10, which recognizes top talents in Atlantic Canada under the age of 21; and

Whereas Adam is a multi-sport athlete who helped the Hants North Flames win a provincial title in men's soccer, is also a member of the Division I Tri-County Basketball Club and the Hants North Flames Men's Basketball Team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Adam Meehan on receiving the 18 & Under Male Athlete of the Year Award.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1692**

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas in 1996 Lin Cahill, Gillian Maycock and Deborah Fleming, three passionate gardeners, set up a perennial plant exchange at the Shatford Library to raise funds for a local farmers' market; and

Whereas the Hubbards Farmers' Market, now situated in a beautiful old barn in the middle of six acres of woodlands and fields, is host to over 35 vendors from the South Shore, the Valley and Halifax; and



Whereas Hubbards Farmers' Market, which sells local vegetables, meats, cheeses and wonderfully aromatic breads, cookies and pies is entering its 20<sup>th</sup> year of operation;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Hubbards Farmers' Market for successfully supporting our local agriculture industry and providing a strong, vibrant venue in its community for 20 years.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1693**

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas the Gulf of Maine is one of the world's most dynamic environments and the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment was created in 1989 by the governments of Maine, Massachusetts, New Brunswick, New Hampshire and Nova Scotia to foster environmental health and community well-being throughout the Gulf of Maine watershed; and

Whereas the Gulf of Maine Council is concluding its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year and this binational partnership of governmental and nongovernmental representatives helps create a more sustainable future by sponsoring innovative projects, coordinating environmental monitoring and educating people about critical regional issues; and

Whereas volunteer and funding support from many partners, including the Government of Nova Scotia, makes the Council's work possible;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment on 25 years of success and recognize their valuable contribution to the coastal and marine environment of the Gulf of Maine.