



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2015

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 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 with the daily routine, I'll read a statement from myself, the Speaker.

SPEAKER'S RULING:

Dart. East MLA: McVicar Conversation - Recording Produce
(Resolution by Hon. M. Samson [Hansard p.5896, Nov. 19/15])
Update

Outcome of warrant issued (11/20/15) pursuant to the direction of the House contained in Resolution No. 2455 (11/19/15). The member for Dartmouth East delivered three items to the Chief Clerk of the House of Assembly. The warrant has been complied with.

I want to report to the House the outcome of the warrant I issued on Friday pursuant to the direction of the House contained in Resolution No. 2455, dated November 19, 2015.

Yesterday morning, the member for Dartmouth East delivered three items to the Chief Clerk of the House. The first was a compact disc, and the other two were a letter and an affidavit.

The letter and affidavit explain that, notwithstanding the member's affidavit and advice to the House on Friday that there were no recordings of a conversation between him and the Premier's Chief of Staff on February 12, 2015, other than the two he had previously provided to the Chief Clerk, he had since been able to locate the file containing the entire recording he had made. He advised that a file was found on Sunday afternoon on a cloud backup system he had not previously considered as a possible location for the recording, and that the file contained the entire recording he had made of that conversation.

Given the member's sworn affidavit that he has provided the entire recording sought by my warrant, I conclude that the warrant has been complied with.

We'll now move on to the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: 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. 122 - Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act.

Bill No. 123 - Paramedics Act.

Bill No. 124 - Social Workers Act.

Bill No. 126 - Pooled Registered Pension Plans 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 member for Kings South.

MR. KEITH IRVING: I beg leave to table the 2015 Annual Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 2487

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

Whereas during the month of November, Adoption Awareness Month, public attention will be focused on the need for adoptive families for children and youth in the permanent care of the Minister of Community Services; and

Whereas children over the age of eight, children with African Nova Scotian or Mi'kmaq heritage, sibling groups, and children with special needs are waiting for a permanent loving home through adoption; and

Whereas adoptive families across the province have chosen to provide loving support in traditional, same-sex, and single-parent families;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House commend adoptive parents across the province as an inspiration for others to follow.

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 Immigration.

RESOLUTION NO. 2488

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

Whereas Canada has pledged to take in 25,000 refugees from the Syrian crisis, and Nova Scotians have shown that they are caring and compassionate people who are willing to offer our hearts, homes, and communities to refugees; and

Whereas unprecedented co-operation is taking place between the Nova Scotia Government and our partners - immigration settlement providers, municipal leaders, and other stakeholders - to prepare for the arrival of these refugees; and

Whereas on November 17th I was pleased, as Minister of Immigration, to announce that 211 would coordinate offers of support, including clothing, food, lodging, financial support and, most importantly, volunteer support for Syrian refugees and, as of November 22nd, nearly 890 offers of assistance have been made;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature encourage their constituents, friends, and families to support Nova Scotia's efforts to welcome refugees and use the opportunity to pledge their assistance through 211.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 130 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 71 of the Acts of 1993. The Community of Sackville Landfill Compensation Act. (Hon. Zach Churchill)

Bill No. 131 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 160 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Maintenance and Custody Act. (Hon. Diana Whalen)

Bill No. 132 - Entitled an Act to Establish a Financial Accountability Officer for Nova Scotia. (Hon. Maureen MacDonald)

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

The honourable Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, could I be permitted to make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I'd like to draw your attention to the west gallery where we are joined today by friends of mine who, I believe, are probably constituents of the member for Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank, an old high school colleague of mine that I only connect with on Facebook, and her husband, who are here today watching the proceedings.

Mr. Speaker, I would like them to rise - Scott MacKay and Marlene Fougere - and receive the warm welcome of our Legislature. (Applause)

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

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. REGAN: I'd like to draw the members' attention to the east gallery, to Ms. Doris Robbins who is a constituent of mine who is involved in many things: her church, the Liberal Party, and recently ran my husband's campaign. I'd like the members of the House to give her a warm welcome. (Applause)

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

STONEWATER HOMES - BUILDER OF YR. (2014)

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Stonewater Homes of Fall River. They are winners of the 2014 Builder of the Year in Nova Scotia and ranked as one of Canada's fastest-growing companies by PROFIT 500. Stonewater Homes has excelled in providing all-inclusive turnkey homes over the past nine years and has experienced a growth rate of 202 per cent, which continues to grow.

James Cowan, editor in chief of PROFITGuide and the Canadian Business said in a release that PROFIT 500 represents the highest tier of entrepreneurialism in Canada. He acknowledged Stonewater Homes for their economic contributions to their communities and the entire country through their innovation, discipline, and determination.

Please join me in congratulating Stonewater Homes for their success. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

LEBANESE INDEPENDENCE DAY - BEST WISHES

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, yesterday members of Nova Scotia's vibrant Lebanese community celebrated Lebanon's Independence Day at the Diman Lebanese Centre and I was pleased to celebrate with them.

Lebanese Independence Day is a national holiday that commemorates the end of French Colonial Rule in the country in 1943. In Nova Scotia, our Lebanese community is strong with deep roots in our communities. Members of the Lebanese community have made important contributions to the cultural and economic life of the province. We are a richer province because of it.

I am proud to stand and wish our Lebanese community a happy Independence Day and thank them for the wonderful impact the community has had on our province. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

HIV/AIDS AWARENESS WK.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, this week marks HIV/AIDS Awareness Week, culminating on December 1st, World AIDS Day. This week we honour those living with HIV and AIDS and also those who have lost their lives fighting the disease. New research shows us that early and lifelong use of HIV drug treatment leads to better health and a near-normal life expectancy, however, there is still much work to be done.

In Canada, an estimated 71,300 people are living with HIV and almost one in four of those individuals are women. We all must challenge ourselves and others to rethink outdated stereotypes and challenge myths about HIV and AIDS so that all Nova Scotians can live in healthy, equitable, and inclusive communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

**ARMOUR, MARGARET:
QUINPOOL RD. MAINSTREET DIST. ASSOC. AWARD**

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Mr. Speaker, Margaret Armour of Aerobics First was awarded the Quinpool Road Mainstreet District Association Chairman Award at their association's annual general meeting. This is the third year the association has awarded a business owner in the district with this prestigious award.

Margaret has been on the QRMDA board for the last three years and has played a vital role on many committees including the Façade Improvement, Tax Reform and the Nomination Committee. Margaret has been a very supportive colleague to her fellow business owners on Quinpool Road and is one of the biggest champions for this street. Her work on the Façade Improvement Committee has made a huge improvement. She is a true business leader.

Margaret has a degree from Dalhousie and is a former teacher with the Halifax Regional School Board. She is very active in the community and sits on many other boards, including Mocean Dance and CEED's Loans Review Committee. She was also awarded the 1994 Canadian Women Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Turnaround Category, and involved with ACCOA.

Margaret is a mentor to many in both business and life, and is an inspiration to many.

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

HIV/AIDS AWARENESS WK.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, this week is HIV/AIDS Awareness Week in Canada, the week that ends on World AIDS Day on December 1st. This is an opportunity to raise awareness about the spread of the HIV virus, to support those living with HIV or AIDS, and to commemorate those who have died from this illness. It is a time for reflection about what has been accomplished in the fight against the disease and how much more has yet to be achieved.

On a national scale, an estimated 71,300 Canadians are living with HIV and an estimated 3,175 new HIV infections occurred in 2011. The theme for World AIDS Day

this year is Getting to Zero: zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, and zero AIDS-related deaths.

Through events like HIV/AIDS Awareness week we can raise awareness and help achieve the zero goal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

PREM.: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING - ALLOW

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the Premier needs to show public sector workers of this province some good faith and stop interfering in the collective bargaining process. How will attacking workers' rights help the government keep emergency rooms open? How will strong-arm tactics help us recruit more doctors? How will floating the trial balloon of legislating teachers' contracts help improve kids' test scores?

First, the Premier passed legislation taking away the hard-won rights of home care workers. Then he took away collective bargaining rights for all health care workers. Now, the Premier has set his sights on teachers, medical residents and the Public Service. That's not good labour relations, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

NO FRILLS LOBLAW PHARMACY - FLU SHOTS

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I was glad to have participated in the October Mobile Wellness Clinic sponsored by the Loblaw Pharmacy at No Frills in Spryfield. Pharmacist and constituent Noelle David, together with the mobile clinic team, were administering flu shots. My daughter and I both received our flu shots with big smiles.

Vaccination is the safest and most effective way to protect ourselves and loved ones from the flu. Seasonal flu vaccine is available from most pharmacies, family doctors, nurse practitioners, workplaces, and through clinics offered by some public health offices.

I'd like to thank Ms. David and the No Frills Loblaw Pharmacy for their commitment to the community, and for kindly helping me and my daughter to get our flu shots this year with a smile, cookie and fruit drink in a friendly atmosphere. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

PORTER, DOUG: HEALTH/HAPPINESS - WISH

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a true gentleman, who I consider to be an outstanding citizen. A man who is generous of spirit and time, and a person that I am proud to call a friend, Mr. Doug Porter of Westville.

Doug is quick to volunteer services, regardless of the task, and he never rests until the job is complete. In the years I've known Doug, he has proven to be dependable, considerate, loyal and generous to a fault. Mr. Speaker, Doug celebrates a significant birthday this week, and I want to wish him good health and happiness, and thank him for his friendship. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

LOBSTER FISHERY: FISHERS - SAFE/PROSPEROUS SEASON

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, this Monday November 23rd, marked the starting date for the commercial lobster fishery in southwestern Nova Scotia. Seafood is a big business in Canada; last year Canada's largest export by species were lobster, snow crab, queen crab, shrimp and farmed Atlantic salmon. The lobster industry is a vital sector of the commercial economy. From pricing, to marketing, to concerns over the offshore drilling, the industry has not been without its share of challenges. I encourage the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture to work with the industry to help overcome these challenges, and I wish all fishers a safe and prosperous season. Thank you.

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

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, may I have permission to do an introduction please to the east gallery?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. INCE: Thank you. It is my pleasure to introduce two Nova Scotian entrepreneurs and to share their exciting news. Our visitors up in the east gallery are Kathleen Quinlan and Phaedra Charlton-Huskings, owners of Fiore Botanica, a company that produces natural handmade skincare products. Now Mr. Speaker, I'd like the House to just give a warm welcome to our guests. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**QUINLAN, KATHLEEN/CHARLTON-HUSKINS, PHAEDRA
- SUCCESS WISH**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate two exceptionally talented women, Kathleen Quinlan and Phaedra Charlton-Huskings, whose Fiore Botanica line of skincare products will be featured at the Golden Globes this January, and given to nominees and presenters alike. The two have their story showcased on the front page of *The Chronicle Herald* and were honoured last week in Toronto at the annual RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards, for once again placing in the top 200 of 5,000 nominated businesses.

We in Lunenburg are so proud and happy to have Fiore Botanica operating within the town and showcasing us on the international stage. I wish Ms. Quinlan and Ms. Charlton-Huskings the very best as they venture to Hollywood, and many years of continued success in our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

WILSON, NELSON - ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge one of the most gifted athletes ever produced in Pictou County. Nelson Wilson at the age of 15 left his high school team to join the Stellarton Royals of the APC Senior Hockey League playing alongside many players twice his age. His discipline, competitiveness, self-confidence and commitment to his teams demonstrated a high degree of sport intelligence.

Fans from his era would marvel at his skills. His hitting prowess while playing softball with the Trenton Scotians or baseball with the Stellarton Albions and Stellarton Keiths was simply outstanding. He played on numerous provincial and Maritime championship teams in multiple sports.

Teammates and rival athletes from across the province knew that if this former hockey, baseball, and softball star wanted to play in a National Hockey League with one of the Original Six, it was just a matter of showing up at their training camp. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MULLINGS, LES/BOYD, TREVOR
- STAND UP, SPEAK OUT DAY OF ACTION**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, Les Mullings and Trevor Boyd - two local teachers in Truro - hosted the Chignecto Central Regional School Board's "What's in Your

Backpack?”-themed Stand Up, Speak Out Day of Action, promoting healthy relationships at Truro Junior High School. The event was livestreamed to other schools in the region.

The anti-bullying initiative was aimed at the invisible backpacks people carry with them, containing things like gender, sexual orientation, class, abilities, and race. A cheque from the Director of Education Services was presented to TJHS for its successful “Stand Up. Speak Out. Student Action Grant” application. This grant is available to schools across the board to promote a positive school climate.

I would just like to take this opportunity to congratulate these two teachers, and also the students of Truro Junior High School who took part in the event. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay on an introduction.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the House’s attention to the east gallery, where we have Ms. Katherine MacDonald. Katherine is a marketing director at Destination Cape Breton. She’s in town for the TIANS conference. Lady K, as we all know her, is a great friend and true professional in Cape Breton. We’re always happy to have her here in the city. I would like to ask Katherine to rise and let the House give her a warm, warm round of applause. Lady K, everybody. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

THE JOURNEY ROOM - OPENING

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few moments to speak to you about the opening of the Journey Room. The opening took place on October 30th after a successful fundraising campaign by the Health Services Foundation. A combination of the annual Radiothon, which raised \$155,000, and the annual David Atkinson Memorial Bonspiel for Cancer have made possible a space for cancer patients and their families of Lunenburg and Queens Counties to access helpful resources in one space.

The Journey Room, one of only four in the province, is located at the South Shore Regional Hospital in Bridgewater. It has become a true community endeavour, with more than 1,000 individuals and businesses contributing. I would like to thank all who gave time to make this valuable space a reality. All those who have been touched by cancer know that a room such as the Journey Room will go a long way to relieve some of the stress of a cancer diagnosis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HERNDEN, INSP. LINDSAY - POLICE ORDER OF MERIT

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, the Order of Merit of the Police Forces is a fellowship of honour based on the highest qualities of citizenship and service to Canada, to the police community, and to humanity at large. On September 18th, Governor General David Johnson presented Inspector Lindsay Hernden, a Shortts Lake resident, with the Order of Merit.

With 27 years of service with the Halifax Regional Police, Inspector Hernden has certainly earned his honour. His list of accomplishments are extensive, but as an example, he has been instrumental in the development and implementation of many programs such as the Emergency Response Team basic training program. This particular knowledge and skill set was tested this past summer when his quick actions assisted in saving the life of his own father-in-law.

I wish to congratulate Inspector Hernden on receiving this great honour, and thank him for his years of service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

NATL. HOUSING DAY (11/22/15)

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, November 22nd of each year marks National Housing Day. On November 22, 1998, the Canadian Federation of Municipalities declared homelessness a national disaster. Unfortunately, 17 years later, Nova Scotia still faces an affordable housing crisis.

Across Nova Scotia, 4,700 households are waiting for seniors' and public housing, and last year 1,500 individuals stayed in shelters in the HRM. Research has shown again and again that the most cost-effective way to save money in the areas of Health and Wellness and Community Services is by ensuring a safe and affordable place for people to live. Investing in affordable housing now is something Nova Scotia can't afford not to do.

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

GAUDET, MELISSA - COMMUN. DEDICATION

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Melissa Gaudet from the Dunbrack Soccer Club for her outstanding work in the community, both as a soccer player and as a coach.

On August 23rd, Melissa came out to my community soccer game and was able to bring her soccer expertise to the field. She was a real asset in helping to organize the

children's soccer game in both a fun and safe manner. Her positive and energetic attitude helped make the day a great success.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Melissa for her dedication to our community, her passion for sport, and for helping make the day fun and laughter-filled. Thanks.

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

CLIFFORD ST. YOUTH CTR. - WORLD WILDLIFE FUND GRANT

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Clifford Street Youth Centre in North Sydney. The centre received one of six national grants from the World Wildlife Fund of Canada to sponsor Go Wild events.

A mini-Jeopardy was held with many community teams and was won by the youth centre. The great event was capped off with a barbecue and a sliming of selected individuals from other teams.

It's a true honour to have this opportunity to thank the organizers of this event that allowed children to engage with the community. Thank you.

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

MCNEIL GOV'T. - TEACHERS: CHESTER-ST. MARGARET'S - BULLYING

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I'm hearing from countless teachers in Chester-St. Margaret's who are saying they feel bullied by the McNeil Government. They're saying that for a government that boasts of being the most open and transparent in history, teachers are experiencing something altogether different. They are experiencing a McNeil Government that is closed off and dictatorial. Health care and home care providers have been on the receiving end of this government's cold shoulder for more than two years, and now teachers have been added to the fray.

Since the McNeil Government formed government in 2013 they've been openly strong-arming workers in our province, and it looks as though those bullying tactics are beginning to rear their head at the bargaining table . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The term "bullying" is an unparliamentary term, and I also want to remind the member not to refer to the current government as the "McNeil Government."

The honourable member for Antigonish.

**BROWN, MARTHA:
WOODLAND OWNER OF YR. - EAST. REG/PROV. (2015)**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, Martha Brown was recognized as our 2015 Woodland Owner of the Year for the Eastern Region. She was also the overall provincial winner, making her the first sole female provincial winner of the Woodland Owner of the Year.

The Woodland Owner of the Year Award recognizes outstanding woodland stewards while encouraging sustainable woodland management. Recipients of the award are nominated by their peers, and all nominations are evaluated by a committee made up of foresters, wildlife specialists, and industry representatives, among others.

Martha's 162 hectares in West Lochaber have been in her family since the early 1940s and was passed over to her in the early 1980s. Over the years, Martha has produced a variety of products including hardwood logs, balsam fir brush for wreaths, pulpwood, blueberries, and firewood.

I'm incredibly proud to have Martha Brown as one of my constituents. I truly believe she is a great example to her peers for best practices in sustainable land management. I would like to offer my congratulations to her for receiving this well-deserved recognition. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

CORBETT, KENT - COMMUN. CONTRIBUTIONS

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise and recognize Mr. Kent Corbett. Kent has been a dedicated volunteer for the annual Pictou Lobster Carnival for 25 years. He has organized and assisted with almost every event that takes place during the carnival celebrations - two of his personal favourites are the lobster boat races and trap-hauling contest.

In July, just prior to the 2015 carnival weekend, the lobster carnival committee presented Kent with a plaque honouring him for his long-time service and dedication; he was also named the grand marshal of the annual Saturday evening parade.

Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to recognize Kent for his volunteer work, for it is people like him who make Pictou West a great place to live. Thank you.

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

TIR MIN. - PAY THE PIPER

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, the term “to pay the piper” refers to one having to face the results of his or her actions.

Vendors across southwestern Nova Scotia are still owed \$200,000 for services provided to the *Nova Star*. The Minister of TIR was to oversee a financial report card of the *Nova Star* as a condition of the Nova Star Cruises contract. However, Mr. Speaker, by my report card the minister is getting a failing grade in ensuring that Nova Scotia’s vendors get paid for their services.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the Minister of TIR to acknowledge and accept the unpleasant consequence of being the one holding a red pen. It was the minister who oversaw the contract, therefore it is the minister who should ensure that everybody pays the piper. Thank you.

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

RIVERVIEW REDS - NSSAF DIV 1 GIRLS SOCCER TITLE

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Riverview Reds on claiming the Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation Division 1 girls soccer title at the Cape Breton Health Recreation Complex last weekend. The Reds defeated the Halifax West Warriors 3-1 in the championship game. Head Coach Maureen Ferguson said it was truly a team effort to claim this title.

At this time I would like to thank Maureen Ferguson and all the players on the Riverview Reds and congratulate everyone involved for all their time and dedication that goes into such a win. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

FOWLER, WAYNE - AVESTA AWARD

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, Wayne Fowler is to be congratulated on being awarded with the Sixth Annual AVESTA Award. Wayne Fowler was a driving force behind the support gained for Kingston Arena’s second place finish in a 2014 Hockeyville competition. In his efforts to gain support throughout his community and Canada alike, he was able to gain over \$100,000 which was used for the greatly needed repairs for the Kingston Arena. His dedication to help out his community’s arena was paramount in gaining the support, which Kingston needed to achieve their second place position in the competition.

I am glad to have Mr. Wayne Fowler as a member of Kings West, someone who is proud of their community and takes the effort to better every aspect of the community, through repairing the arena to bringing the citizens together, and creating something of which everyone can be proud. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MACNEIL, TRACY ET AL: BRIGH - HOSTING CONGRATS

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, this summer Strathspey Place hosted Brigh, a concert series celebrating youth and Gaelic culture. It was an in house production with 24 young performers between the ages of six and 17. It was wonderful to see how hard everyone worked to put on an exceptional show. People who attended the night I was there were very impressed. It made me proud to see these young people speaking such good Gaelic, singing passionately, dancing, and playing instruments. Our culture is in good hands.

The cast is young but they have been surrounded by the music and language since they were born and some were surrounded even before that. They included Stuart Cameron; Cullen MacInnis; Stephen MacLennan; Mairinn, Eilidh and Seonaid Campbell; Amanda and Elizabeth MacDonald; James, Stephen, Niall and Cameron MacIntyre; Jessie, Helen, Nora, Orianna, Katie Agnes and Floragael MacNeil; Maili and Allasdair Cameron; Grace MacDonald; and Sarah, Elizabeth, Annie and Mary Catherine MacInnis.

Let us acknowledge Tracey MacNeil, Joyce MacDonald and everyone involved for making Brigh a success. It is exactly the kind of production that justifies government investment in the performing arts venues in Nova Scotia.

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

EECD: SHERWOOD PARK EDUC. CTR. - OPTIONS

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, the government will soon have to make a decision that will impact hundreds of families in Sydney, Cape Breton. According to a document tabled by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, also the Chair of the Treasury Board, by November 20th she must announce what she will do with the lease of Sherwood Park Education Centre in Cape Breton. Whether the minister decides to spend millions of dollars to buy this school from the company that owns it, hundreds of millions to renew the lease, or opts to close the school altogether - none of these options are good ones.

The NDP told the previous Liberal Government that P3 schools were a mistake 20 years ago, Mr. Speaker, but they didn't listen. Now they are having to deal with the consequences of that short-sighted decision. Thank you.

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

SIMMONS, PRESTON - RBC HIST. MO. ESSAY COMP.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and congratulate Preston Simmons, a resident of East Preston, and his parents Edward and Rhonda Simmons on Preston's award-winning essay on how Black Canadians have helped define Canada's heritage. Preston submitted his essay, *Piano Hands - Melodies of Diversity*, on the life of Oscar Peterson, to the RBC Black History Month Student Essay Competition.

Preston placed 2nd in Canada and won a \$2,500 scholarship to put toward his studies. He did a special reading of the award-winning essay at the RBC Branch in Porter's Lake.

Preston attended Auburn High School and completed his Grade 12. He is now enrolled in a Bachelor of Neuroscience degree program at Carleton University in Ottawa and is planning to go to medical school.

I applaud and commend Preston on his tremendous achievement and wish him every success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MINERS MARSH - PUMPKIN WALK: ORGANIZERS - CONGRATS.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight an outstanding event organized by the students of the Nova Scotia Community College, Kings Tech, Tourism Management class, the Pumpkin Walk around Miners Marsh in Kentville. To enhance the eerie ambience during the walk, 300 creatively-carved pumpkins adorned and lit the paths. Adding to the spirit, costumed students Leah Price, Madison Forsythe, Savannah Sullivan and Morgan Bond told tales of Kentville's spooky historical past.

Since 2014, the walk has tripled in size with 2,300 walkers participating in the two-hour event this year. Students also collected and delivered two truckloads of donated foods from walkers for the local food bank.

I am so proud and encouraged to congratulate the Tourism students of this campus for organizing this successful event. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

AVALON SEXUAL ASSAULT CTR. - FUNDING CUTS

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, last week we heard unfortunate news from the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre. Their funding through the Canadian Women's Association had come to an end and the centre would no longer be able to provide a legal advocate for survivors of assault while they go through the court process. This advocate provides support for survivors navigating the court system, which can be intimidating, confusing, and in some cases can take years.

I urge the Minister of Justice to find solutions to bridge the gap left by the loss of Avalon's legal advocate to ensure that all survivors of sexual assault can feel empowered throughout their legal proceedings. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford on an introduction.

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the members' attention to the east gallery where we are visited today by some student leaders. With us today are Nick Head-Petersen of Students Nova Scotia and Matthew Rios, who is here from CASA. A number of our members met with them today.

I would like to have them rise and ask my colleagues to give them the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

BEDFORD BLUES MINOR HOCKEY ASSOC. - CHAMPIONSHIPS

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Bedford Blues Minor Hockey Association on a series of provincial and league championships to finish last season.

The Bedford Blues Pee Wee B Blue team became provincial champions with an 11-1 win at the Provincial Day of Champions. The Bedford Midget A Blue team won the Central Minor Hockey Federation Championships on the same day, defeating Halifax 3-2. To go along with these championships, the Bedford Oilers captured the Metro Minor Hockey Pee Wee League Championship with a 2-1 win, and the Atom Aces took home the win in the Metro Minor Hockey Atom B League Basin Division Championship.

The Bedford Blues Minor Hockey Association is an important asset to the Bedford community and I would like to commend all the Bedford minor hockey teams on their successes last season and wish them the best of luck this year. Thank you.

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

TOURISM N.S. - ADVERTISING CONTRACT

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, recently Tourism Nova Scotia awarded its advertising business to an agency with offices in Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto and Montreal. To say I was surprised that this substantial contract wasn't awarded to a Nova Scotia company would be an understatement.

The awarding of this contract means the bulk of the work will be done outside of Nova Scotia and that is unacceptable. Our Nova Scotian advertising agencies are second to none and they deserve our support. It is an industry that supports jobs for some of our most creative young people.

After more than a year of this government decimating our film industry, those are the last people we should be discouraging by shipping more work out of our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

PICTOU CO. UNITED WAY - THANK

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a wonderful organization. Pictou County's United Way's mission is to inspire citizens to collaborate to produce positive social changes in our community. The United Way has always been committed to meeting the needs of our county. The United Way usually supports over twenty community programs and services. They are one of the largest non-government funders of social services in Pictou County.

Pictou County residents continue to be generous with their financial support. A large thank you to Jessica Smith, executive director; Ellen Fanning, resource development coordinator; and the board of directors for their dedication and commitment to the residents of Pictou County. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid

HON. DAVID WILSON: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask if you could review your former intervention on our members using the name of the Premier in the members' statements. I would like if you could take the time to refer back to the Second Session of the 61st Assembly, when at the time Speaker Parker ruled in the same manner as you have just done in the last number of days, Mr. Speaker.

After reviewing Hansard and realizing, just by doing review, that there were well over 273 times that the Premier and the Premier's name were used, as in "former Hamm Government, former MacDonald Government, and Dexter Government," Speaker Parker did overrule that, and permitted the use of "Dexter Government" in the last session of the

House prior to the last election. I would ask if you could look at that and please rule accordingly. I'll provide that information.

MR. SPEAKER: I'll take that under advisement and bring it back to the House.

The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

BRANSCOMBE, DOUG - RETIREMENT

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Doug Branscombe, Area Coordinator of HRM Community Recreation Services, who will be retiring at the end of this calendar year after 40 years of providing recreational opportunities for countless thousands of people.

Doug has helped countless community groups and local organizations to develop playgrounds and tot lots and to build parks and trails. His expertise in creating partnerships and designing programming to meet community needs is second to none. In addition to Doug's career in recreation, he has a passion for and dedication to the Special Olympics, in particular basketball. Doug is the assistant coach for the Halifax Warriors, and he leads the recreational and development areas of the Warrior program, which he founded in 2006.

I would like the members of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Doug on his retirement, and wish him all the very best for the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness on an introduction.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction. We have a former MLA with us today in the west gallery. He was MLA for Inverness South from 1988 to 1993. Please stand, Mr. Danny Graham, and perhaps the members could give him a round of applause. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

NORTHUMBERLAND NIGHTHAWKS: HOCKEY TOURNAMENT - CONGRATS.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, the Northumberland Nighthawks high school hockey team turned a lot of heads with their drive and determination when they played in the 25th Annual Birthplace of Hockey high school tournament in Windsor recently.

The Nighthawks under head coach Harry Knoester, assistant coach Richie MacDonald, and manager Jennifer Dykstra went to the tournament's semifinals Saturday

evening, taking a 2 to 0 lead over Horton High only to lose 3 to 2. The Nighthawks had advanced to the semifinals, blanking Central Kings 1 to 0.

The play of Briden Hawes was recognized when he was chosen MVP for his team in all three Nighthawk round-robin games. Briden is the team's leading scorer.

The team will be hosting their own tournament in January, and we wish them much success and luck. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

DND 404 MILITARY DRIVER'S LICENCE - ACCREDITATION

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, often as soon as someone who has served our country takes their uniform off, they lose recognition of their skills and the training they received while being an active member, and that's just not right

I'm calling on the Liberal Government to join Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec in giving accreditation for a DND 404 - the military driver's licence - to allow veterans to obtain drivers' permits for applicable Nova Scotia licences and transition to a civilian career. Five thousand people in the Canadian Forces have the DND 404 licence, which allows drivers to operate tractor trailers, five-ton trucks, and armoured vehicles. This change would help retiring veterans quickly find jobs with trade unions who are looking for qualified drivers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

DOVE, CHRISTINA/SMITH, BRENT/NEWFOUNDLAND CHOCOLATE CO.: MIC MAC MALL - WELCOME

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: We have just celebrated Small Business Week in Nova Scotia and as the Premier so aptly noted, there's nothing small about small businesses in Nova Scotia, so I'm very pleased to announce that from our largest Atlantic Canadian neighbours, I wish a fond welcome to the Newfoundland Chocolate Company to Dartmouth North. What began as a home-based business in 2008, the Newfoundland Chocolate Company now boasts four locations, the newest being at Mic Mac Mall. Their opening was marked not by a ribbon-cutting ceremony, but a ribbon-biting ceremony as the entire ribbon was, of course, made from chocolate.

Founders Christina Dove and Brent Smith now employ dozens of people and their stores offer Atlantic Canadian themed chocolates, truffles, gelato, and my personal favourite - chocolate bars with Newfoundland sayings on them.

I ask all my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Christina and Brent on their newest store and encouraging everyone to visit the Newfoundland Chocolate Company at Mic Mac Mall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

KIRK LOGAN OLD TIME FIDDLING CONTEST - ANNIV. (20th)

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, the annual Kirk Logan Old Time Fiddling Contest just celebrated 20 years of fiddling at the Musquodoboit Valley Bicentennial Theatre on September 26th. The contest was named for Kirk Logan, champion fiddler who represented the Musquodoboit Valley at old time fiddling contests throughout Eastern Canada for over 50 years.

This 20th Anniversary edition of the contest had competitors ranging from ages five to 93, in four different categories. Lifelong fiddler, 93-year-old Mel MacPhee, was recognized for his contribution to the Down East Coast fiddle experience with a certificate of appreciation. This year Kirk's children - Clarence, Deanna and Brittnay - presented the awards.

I'd like to thank the organizers of this event for their efforts in keeping the tradition of fiddling alive and congratulate them on achieving a 20-year milestone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**BURSEY, FRANKIE: NEW WATERFORD SPORTS COMMN.
- COMMITMENT**

MR. DAVID WILTON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the late Frankie Bursey for his time and commitment to the New Waterford sports community. Mr. Bursey was an influential part in the development of athletes, sports teams and programs in New Waterford. In his youth Frankie played minor baseball and was a member of the BEC High School soccer team which took home the provincial championship in 1975 but his true passion was coaching and growing the athletic teams in his home town.

Frankie coached a variety of minor baseball teams over the last 15 years, during which time his teams took home five provincial titles at the mosquito and peewee level. His love for baseball was not only as a coach, he also served on the New Waterford Minor Baseball Board of Directors for over 15 years and he was provincial coordinator for the Slo-Pitch National Program for 10 years. He was truly an inspiration to many athletes and his legacy will live on in the kids he coached. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

NAKILE HOME FOR SPECIAL CARE - ANNIV. (25th)

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, on May 14th, Nakile Home for Special Care in Argyle held its official grand reopening. Residents and their families, employees, friends and invited dignitaries all celebrated together. Nakile Home for Special Care has been in operation since 1989 and has always been at full capacity.

Nakile Home for Special Care now has 48 beds and employs 80 full-time and part-time employees. The celebration also presented an opportunity to mark the important occasion of their 25th Anniversary of the facility.

Please join me in congratulating the administration, the staff and residents of Nakile Home for Special Care.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

MCTIERNAN, NANCY & GREG - SWEET SPOT CHOCOLATE SHOP

MS. MARGARET MILLER: It is interesting to note how businesses can evolve, that one can lead to another. Nancy and Greg McTiernan bought Hardwick's Greenhouses in 1997 from her parents and opened a store in Elmsdale. The business needed to increase revenue so in the evenings Nancy industriously made fudge. It was a great hit, selling very quickly.

The McTiernans decided to purchase a machine to increase their fudge production and Nancy and Greg went to school to learn further the art of candy-making. Two years later they expanded, closed the greenhouses, and changed their names to the Sweet Spot Chocolate Shop and moved to a larger location.

Recently the shop has started an online catalogue offering a select amount of their items online. The Sweet Spot Chocolate Shop is thriving and Nancy and Greg believe that their success comes from the small business' hands-on mentality that the shop embodies. The chocolates are made in small batches which ensures maximum freshness.

Mr. Speaker, if you have not already had the pleasure of trying these delectable chocolates, you should really treat yourself to their awesomeness.

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

**HULL, ANGELA/CANTWELL-KERR, SANDY
- KRAFT PROJECT PLAY**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: I rise today to salute Angela Hull and Sandy Cantwell-Kerr of the Northside Soccer Association.

These two women entered the national Kraft Project Play contest that had a \$250,000 grand prize to upgrade a community sports facility. After making it to one of the four semi-finalists, voting began and Capers stepped up from around the world, and Munroe Park soccer field won.

It's a true pleasure to have this opportunity to congratulate Angela and Sandy, and their army of volunteers, for harnessing the Northside's great community spirit for this great cause. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

SPIRITED AWAY - CRAFT DISTILLERY FEST. (LUN.)

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Spirits were flying high recently in the Town of Lunenburg. Earlier this fall, distillers from across the province gathered in Lunenburg to enjoy Spirited Away, Nova Scotia's first-ever craft distillery festival.

The event brought people from all over the province to experience the growing industry. There are now nine small distilleries in the province, including Lunenburg's own award-winning Ironworks Distillery. It was, by all accounts, a successful event and will hopefully become an annual one that grows as does the industry.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to take time today to congratulate the organizers of Spirited Away, and wish all those involved a prosperous future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**GERRIOR, STEVI/MACDONALD, JESIAH
- PICTOU CO. PRIDE WEEK ORGANIZERS**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I'm pleased to rise today to recognize Stevi Gerrior and Jesiah MacDonald, who were co-organizers of the Pride Week celebrations that took place June 22nd to June 28th in Pictou County.

Much planning and preparation went into the week, and Stevi and Jesiah made every effort to make the events both educational and fun. Panel discussions, concerts, and a family fun day were all part of the celebrations. The pair feel the Pride Week celebrations are important in making people feel comfortable in the community where they live, contribute to a positive change in attitudes, and keeps an open dialogue about the issues facing the LGBTQ community.

Support for the 2015 celebrations was higher than ever, ensuring the celebrations would continue in years to come. Congratulations, Stevi and Jesiah. Thank you.

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

TEXTING/DRIVING - DANGERS

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the dangers of texting while driving. Throughout the month of October, RCMP Traffic Service units across the province continued conducting enforcement and educational initiatives on the dangers of distracted driving.

Distracted driving remains one of the leading causes of serious and fatal injury on Nova Scotia's roadways, and we must all remember it only takes a few seconds of distraction to result in a tragedy. Motorists are encouraged to place hand-held devices out of reach - such as in glove boxes or in the back seat - so they are not tempted to use them while driving.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all members to visit leavethephonealone.ca and take the pledge to LEAVE THE PHONE ALONE while driving. Leaving the phone alone makes all roads safer for all Nova Scotians. Thank you.

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

WEATHERBEE, WAYNE/SYDNEY MEM. CHAPEL - ANNIV. (40th)

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Wayne Weatherbee and Sydney Memorial Chapel on celebrating their 40 years in business.

Wayne Weatherbee is not only a strong businessman in Sydney and surrounding areas, but also a strong advocate for many charitable activities. He is well known for his generosity to people in need.

I would like to thank and congratulate Wayne Weatherbee and Sydney Memorial Chapel for serving Sydney and all surrounding areas for the past 40 years, and hopefully they will be continuing their work for many years to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

PORTLAND ESTATES/PORTLAND HILLS RESIDENTS' ASSOC. - ANNIV. (20th)

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to speak about Portland Estates and Portland Hills Residents' Association. For 20 years, the residents' association has tirelessly worked on improving the ever-growing neighbourhoods of Portland Estates and Portland Hills, whether through community events or launching initiatives like their annual Spring cleanup.

I was glad to assist in the most recent Spring cleanup of litter and debris throughout the walking paths and parks throughout the neighbourhood. It was a pleasure seeing all those who came out to help, the many folks of all ages - young people and so on.

The association also takes the lead in bringing to light environmental issues . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time allotted for Members' Statements has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

PREM. - CHIEF OF STAFF: MLA MED. INFO. - DISCLOSURE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Yesterday in media reports the Premier's chief of staff repeatedly and publicly disclosed sensitive, personal, private medical information about a member of this House. On whose authority did the Premier's chief of staff "tell-all" about a member's private, personal medical history?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Official Opposition would know that the member for Dartmouth East has filed a complaint in relation to the issue that he refers to. As the result of the fact that there is a complaint filed, we will certainly respect that process and not make further comments on it.

MR. BAILLIE: Well, Mr. Speaker, that is not acceptable. Whether what happened yesterday was illegal or not, that will be decided in the courts, but whether such a despicable act, whether such an immoral act is given the stamp of approval by this government or not, that is the question I have every right and ability and responsibility to be clear, as a government, about whether they agree with giving out private medical information of an employee when it's someone they don't agree with.

Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Premier a very simple question. Does he truly believe it is okay to give out private medical information on an employee of the government or a member of this House just to save someone's job?

MR. SPEAKER: I will remind the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition that the term "immoral" is unparliamentary, and "despicable".

The honourable Government House Leader has the floor.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, again as has been pointed out, the fact is there has been a complaint made in relation to this matter. We will certainly respect the complaint process, ensure that it is dealt with, and it would be inappropriate to make further comments, until such time as that complaint has been addressed.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the government comes here to this House in Question Period to answer for its own responsibility in these matters and it cannot hide behind the courts. I am not asking the government or the Premier to give a legal opinion. I'm asking them to express whether or not they agree with what was said publicly, yesterday, in the release of private medical information.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that there is a Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act in this province, and in Section 20 it says, “. . . personal information is presumed to be an unreasonable invasion of . . . privacy if . . . the personal information relates to a medical, dental, psychiatric, psychological or other health-care history . . .” - and that's exactly what happened yesterday. Why did the government ignore this important piece of legislation, when they went into damage control mode yesterday?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated previously, there has been a complaint that has been filed in relation to this matter. As a result of that we will certainly respect that complaint process and it would be inappropriate to comment any further on the matter.

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

PREM. - CHIEF OF STAFF: MLA MED. INFO. - DISCLOSURE

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Under Nova Scotia's Personal Health Information Act passed in 2010, health care providers are explicitly prohibited from releasing an individual's personal health information without their consent. There are severe penalties for breaching this Act. My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, would the Minister of Health and Wellness please explain why it is important to not release personal health information without a patient's consent?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as indicated earlier, there has been a complaint that has been filed in relation to this matter. It would be inappropriate to comment further until such time as the complaint has been dealt with. We will certainly respect the processes that we have in place in this province, in order to ensure that this complaint is dealt with appropriately.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, apparently the Minister of Health and Wellness isn't allowed to talk about policy in his department. Perhaps he's no longer going to be the

Minister of Health and Wellness, but nevertheless, this question will go again to the Minister of Health and Wellness.

The Premier's chief of staff yesterday, unprompted, released personal health information of a member of the Legislature without this individual's consent. My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, would he please explain whether or not he agrees with the release of personal health information without consent by the Premier's chief of staff?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as previously indicated, there has been a complaint that has been filed in relation to this matter. I believe that the Acting Leader of the NDP knows full well, having been in this House for as long as she has, that it would be absolutely inappropriate to make comments in relation to the fact once a complaint has been filed. As a result of that, we will continue to respect the process until it is finalized.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I have a final question that is not about the complaint that has been filed - I see the member for the Amherst area is very happy that there's a question that is not about complaints. There are so many complaints about members of that government and the Premier's staff, it's hard to keep them straight. So I can see why he'd be excited.

My question for the Minister of Health and Wellness is, why should there be a double standard where health care providers who disclose a person's personal health information are punished, but the Premier's chief of staff apparently can do no wrong?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I would point out to the honourable Acting Leader of the NDP that a Saturday, May 22, 2010 article says: Dexter's chief of staff anonymous story critic. The headline goes on: O'Connor denies, then admits to sending comments to *The Chronicle Herald* website panning article about costs of energy strategy rollout.

If I'm not mistaken, following this story (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. The honourable Government House Leader has the floor.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, if I'm not mistaken the Premier of the day maintained confidence in his chief of staff for a further three years.

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

**PREM. - GOV'T. EMPLOYEE:
MED. HIST. DISCLOSURE - CONSEQUENCES**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, there is precedent here. In 1990, a Minister of Health in this House released private personal medical information about a deputy minister, an employee of the government. That case ended up in court and that minister lost his job. Disclosing a person's personal, private medical history because you don't agree with what they have done is just wrong.

Does the Premier today agree that that same consequence should happen when an employee of his government goes ahead and releases private medical information just like happened back with that minister, in 1990?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, a complaint has been filed in this matter. I believe it is the duty of the House to respect the process to see to it that this complaint is dealt with under the structures that we have here in this province. I believe the Leader of the Official Opposition knows it would be completely inappropriate to be discussing matters of this specific nature. In light of the fact that a complaint has been filed, we will continue to respect that process.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, what we know is that a government that campaigned to be open, transparent, and accountable, daring to call themselves the most open in Canada, won't answer simple questions about what the chief of staff to the Premier did and whose approval he had to do it - perfectly open and legitimate questions in this House. That minister who is answering today is a former Minister of Justice and he knows that employers have an obligation to keep private medical information from their employees, yet the government flagrantly violated that principle yesterday, ignoring their obligation to their own people. This is just the latest in this long-running drama.

So I will ask the minister directly, in light of this most recent revelation, why does Kirby McVicar still have his job?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I know that I've had the privilege to hold a number of portfolios during my career and even at times I may get confused as to those portfolios, but I have never served as Minister of Justice or Attorney General, as pointed out by the Leader of the Official Opposition - at least up till now. I'm sure he would not want to be accused of misleading the House by making such allegations.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that a complaint has been launched in regard to this matter, and as a result of that, we are going to respect that process and see it dealt with appropriately.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - MENTAL HEALTH:
STIGMA - ELIMINATION**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Mental illness among Canadians is quite common. Statistics show that one in five Canadians experience mental illness at some point in their lives, and it has long been known that the stigma associated with mental illness is one of the biggest reasons people fail to seek treatment.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder, could the Minister of Health and Wellness explain what steps he has taken to ensure that the stigma associated with mental illness is reduced or eliminated?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that as recently as last week, when Michael Wilson was attending the luncheon for the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia, he pointed out how strongly the work is going on in our province in terms of dealing with the stigma around mental health, and in particular the program The Working Mind, which now over 2,000 government employees have engaged in, and that is already seeing its value in the workplace. Over 200 instructors at the Nova Scotia Community College have also taken part in this program, and there are others that the Mental Health Advisory Council of Canada sees as being very strong and active in our province.

MS. MACDONALD: Yesterday the Premier's chief of staff disclosed, without permission, a mental health diagnosis in an attempt to embarrass a person who was in a very public fight with the Premier and his government. So, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, what justification is there for stigmatizing a person with a diagnosis for which we want people to seek treatment?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the Acting Leader of the NDP knows very well that a complaint has been filed in regard to this matter. It would be inappropriate to be having these types of discussions on the floor of the House, or even outside the House, when such a complaint is yet to have been properly dealt with. We will respect the process we have in place in our province and allow the complaint to go through its normal courses.

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

PREM.: MCVICAR CASE - ACCOUNTABILITY

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, in 2006 the press secretary to the Premier of New Brunswick released a letter containing personal information about a constituent. That press secretary lost his job; he resigned. He admitted that he had made a mistake, and his

own Premier gave him credit for owning up to his mistake but he accepted his resignation. My question to the Premier today is, who should hold Mr. McVicar responsible for doing the exact same thing here in Nova Scotia?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I believe the Leader of the Official Opposition is aware that a complaint was filed this morning. As a result of that, it would be inappropriate to be discussing the specific matters of this case. We will respect the process and allow the complaint to be dealt with.

MR. BALLIE: Mr. Speaker, there is no reason, in law or otherwise, why the government can't answer very direct and simple questions about who holds the chief of staff responsible for his actions, what the role of the Premier is in taking responsibility for this whole sorry mess, and who gave the authority to do such a horrible thing as to give out someone's private medical history, in an attempt to embarrass that person and save the chief of staff's job.

Mr. Speaker, that is just wrong and there is nothing that holds the government back from saying so. Here we are: we have a chief of staff who under someone's direction took direct action to try to embarrass a member of the House who doesn't agree with the government on a pretty big issue. I would like to ask the minister, does he agree with the Premier's action today to basically do nothing and thereby condone this whole sorry episode?

MR. SAMSON: The Leader of the Official Opposition will forgive me if I don't accept his legal advice that he wishes to offer to this House. Mr. Speaker, instead I would say that we have a complaint, which has been filed. As a result of that, it would be inappropriate to be discussing this matter either on the floor of this House or outside.

We will respect the process and allow the complaint to be heard and dealt with.

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

PREM.: CHIEF OF STAFF - CONFIDENCE CONFIRM

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, let's be clear: there is no legal advice that the minister has that says he can't talk about it. He may have political advice or damage control advice, but he does not have legal advice. If he did, he'd know he could be answering these questions today.

On November 19th - just a few short days ago - in a media interview, the Minister of Energy was asked, does Kirby McVicar still have a job? His answer was, absolutely. Then he was asked, does he still have the confidence of the Premier? The minister then said, absolutely, and he has the confidence of the Cabinet and our entire government. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, is that statement of November 19th stating that the chief of staff has the confidence of the Cabinet still true today?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the Official Opposition is aware, a complaint was filed this morning regarding this matter. It would be inappropriate to be debating this issue on the floor of this House or even outside of this House. We will respect the complaint that has been filed and allow it to work through its normal course.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, we'll take that as a "no" - and no wonder, because today, November 24th, that same minister was asked, do you still have full confidence in the chief of staff? His answer changed from what it was just five days ago. His answer was, the relationship between the chief of staff is with the Premier, therefore I am not in a position to comment.

He was in full position to comment five days ago that the chief of staff had the confidence of the Cabinet, of which he is a member, but conveniently he dropped that part of the confidence in his answer to the same question today.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister get up and just state the obvious - what the chief of staff did yesterday was wrong and he should lose his job because of it?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the Official Opposition is aware, a complaint was filed this morning regarding this matter. He knows full well that it is completely inappropriate to discuss this matter on the floor of this House or even outside this House. We'll respect the complaint process that has been initiated, and we'll wait to see the results of that process.

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

**PREM. - CHIEF OF STAFF:
OFFICIAL/UNOFFICIAL CONVERSATIONS - DIFFERENTIATE**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Deputy Premier. The Premier's chief of staff told several media outlets yesterday, including *The Chronicle Herald*, that his conversation in February with the member for Dartmouth East was an "unofficial conversation." I can't help but wonder how Nova Scotians can tell the difference between an official and an unofficial conversation with the Premier's chief of staff.

My question to the Deputy Premier is, could she please clarify for us what the difference is between an official and an unofficial conversation?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as the Acting Leader of the NDP is well aware, a complaint was filed this morning in relation to this matter. I believe she has been in this House as long as I have, which, for those who are counting, is 17 years. During that time she has been a minister of different portfolios, and she is well aware of the processes we have in place in our province. When she was a minister she would have taken the same approach in indicating how inappropriate it would be to be debating this type of complaint on the floor of the House before the complaint had been dealt with.

Nothing has changed from when she was a minister to when we are ministers in respecting the processes that are in place.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I've been here long enough to know the difference between a Premier, a Deputy Premier, and a House Leader. It is concerning that the Deputy Premier isn't being allowed to answer questions as well.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Premier. The Premier has told us repeatedly that his staff, in particular his chief of staff, speak for him - and that's a direct quote - yet he also maintains he was unaware of countless conversations, disclosures, and job offers made by his chief of staff over the last 12 months.

My question to the Deputy Premier is, how can the Premier's chief of staff speak for him if he never speaks to him?

MR. SAMSON: It was interesting in a scrum last week when the Acting Leader of the New Democratic Party was being asked questions relating to this matter. At one point the press challenged her and said, isn't this just you playing politics? Her response was: That's what we do. Enough said.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

TIR - TOLL HWYS.: CONSIDERATION - CONFIRM

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, my question this afternoon through you is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Mr. Speaker, there was a recent article published by *The Chronicle Herald* regarding new toll highways throughout Nova Scotia, or at least the assessment. There was a question asked by a number of my constituents, and I'll ask it on their behalf today, regarding this opinion piece, about the idea of a high-speed rail network throughout some of the same areas of Nova Scotia.

I would like to ask the minister, is such a thing being considered during this study, the assessment of toll highways across the province?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I thank the member for the question. The quick answer to that is no.

With respect to the capital costs associated with our railbeds, we're having a tough time keeping those we have in place on the ground now and, as the member knows, there are a number of processes for that in place.

With respect to any commuter travel or passenger travel, Mr. Speaker, my personal opinion is that we just don't have the critical numbers. I haven't received any of those suggestions or any ideas that there is - outside of downtown here in metro, I don't know if there's a commuter model that would be viable. I certainly haven't heard that. Like anything else, we're open to information, but from our perspective, from a capital side and from a marketing side, I just don't know if those numbers would add up.

MR. PORTER: I guess I'll just follow up. He spoke about the railbeds, the condition they're in. I think everyone knows that.

The article goes on to mention the actual cost, and the minister would know the cost well, of the twinning of highways, the very expensive amount of money - very interesting, the comparison. It almost sounds like there's been some comparison done, maybe in what high-speed rail would cost, if I heard that correctly. To follow up, will the railbeds be kept in the status they're in by way of ownership as it stands today?

MR. MACLELLAN: Thank you for that question; it is an important one. I think that when you look at the different railbeds we have across the province, there are different ownership groups, obviously different business models associated with those, so really, it's case by case.

Again, when you look at what CN has here in the operation in downtown metro, there is viability in alternative services, I think. In HRM, some of the MPs, and of course at the provincial level, there's been some measure of discussion.

But with respect to the rail, again the capital cost is very significant, probably comparable with some of that major highway development, but then you're into that viability of the market and what the passenger count looks like. Take VIA Rail for example - they subsidize a number of runs for this exact reason. When you look at populations, it's hard to justify that critical mass that's required to pay the bills.

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

PREM. - CHIEF OF STAFF DISCLOSURE: FOIPOP OFFICER - CONFER

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: My question is for the robominister over there today . . .
(Interruptions)

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

MR. BAILLIE: A formal complaint about the disclosure of personal information by the Premier's chief of staff was launched today. The minister has been repeatedly referring to that, Mr. Speaker. It alleges a pretty serious breach of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

I'd like to ask the minister, so we can get on with some answers here - will he direct the FOIPOP officer to deal with the complaint right away so we can get on with answering questions that Nova Scotians deserve an answer to here in this House?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: The Province of Nova Scotia has established standards when it comes to dealing with complaints. The Leader of the Official Opposition is aware of that. That process is what will be used now that a complaint has been launched on this. He knows very well that it would be inappropriate to be discussing any matters relating to this now that a complaint has been filed. We've indicated that we will respect the complaint process, and we will await the results of that before commenting further.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Province of Nova Scotia has established standards about not disclosing personal information, but that got flagrantly violated. The Province of Nova Scotia has established standards about not offering a job to the wife of a member of the House, but that has been violated. Suddenly the government wants to enforce a standard about the Freedom of Information Officer when all we are asking is that person deal with the complaint right away so we can get on with the answers that Nova Scotians deserve to know.

I will ask the minister - there is no standard that says the rulings of the Freedom of Information Officer can't be made public. Will he commit today on behalf of the government that the findings on this complaint will be made public at the earliest possible opportunity?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the complaint was made this morning, mere hours ago. That complaint will be dealt with throughout our existing systems that we have here in the Province of Nova Scotia and will be dealt with as all other complaints are. Any Nova Scotian who feels they wish to issue a complaint, I believe everyone should be treated fairly when it comes to that. That is how the system is set up to deal with those types of complaints. We will respect the process and we will wait to see the results of that complaint.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition on a new question.

PREM. - CHIEF OF STAFF: FOIPOP OFFICER - FINDINGS RELEASE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, disclosing private, personal, medical information was not the only interesting thing that the chief of staff had to say yesterday. It turns out that when he offered the wife of the member for Dartmouth East a job, he said he would talk to the deputy minister about it; however, yesterday he said he was considering a job in the Liberal caucus office. Well, we all know deputy ministers do not hire people for political Party caucus offices. They are making up their defence as they go along.

I'll ask the minister directly, why would the chief of staff need to talk to a deputy minister, if the job was merely one in the Liberal caucus office?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I believe it has been indicated by the chief of staff that the recording is not reflective of the entire conversation. What we have, and what you have ruled today, is that you have accepted that the member for Dartmouth East's statement that he provided what he recorded. It has been stated that there was a further conversation that did take place that we do not have the recordings, therefore only two individuals were party to that specific discussion. One of those has launched a complaint this morning, as I have indicated. We have a process in place to deal with such complaints. It would be inappropriate to be discussing this matter further until that complaint is dealt with, a process we will fully respect.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the government wasn't satisfied when we had a snippet of this conversation. Then they weren't satisfied when we had two snippets of this conversation. Now they have 12 whole minutes where the chief of staff lays out his plan to make sure that the member for Dartmouth East's wife has a personal services contract. They can say it's under investigation. We have an RCMP investigation now, we have a complaint to the FOIPOP Officer now. How many investigations have to be launched before someone is held accountable over there for the actions of this Premier's Office?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I would remind the Leader of the Official Opposition that his entire caucus voted in favour of the motion from this House to obtain the full recording - the Official Opposition Party, with the NDP, voted in full support. It was a unanimous motion of this House, asking for that full recording. You have made a ruling today accepting that what was recorded was actually disclosed. It has been indicated that a further conversation took place that is not recorded. Again, since a complaint has been filed this morning, it would be inappropriate to discuss this matter further, until such time as the complaint process has been concluded.

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

DIS: HEALTH INFO. RELEASE - POLICY

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Internal Services who oversees much of the processes with respect to enforcing privacy and confidentiality of personal information. I have a very simple question for the Minister of Internal Services and that is, what is the policy around releasing the health information without permission of the patient for his office?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the Acting Leader of the NDP is aware that a complaint was filed this morning in relation to the matter on which she raises a question. As I mentioned last week, in a scrum, when challenged by the press on this very issue, the Acting Leader of the NDP was asked, are you not just playing politics? Her response was, that's what we do.

Mr. Speaker, what we do in the government is focus on the issues that face Nova Scotia families. We're making sure that Nova Scotians get the good government they deserve. That is what we will remain focused on.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I don't need to be mansplained to in this Legislature about what the role of the Opposition is with respect to asking tough questions. That member should be reminded of what his duty is in terms of answering tough questions and being accountable to the people of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I have an additional question for the Minister of Internal Services, and that is simply this: what penalty is there for anyone who improperly releases personal health information without permission from a patient?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the Acting Leader of the NDP again, as I pointed out last week, made it very clear what her intent was on this issue, and it was to play politics. We're seeing it on display again here today when the Opposition has an opportunity to raise questions on behalf of Nova Scotians on so many issues.

I will again reiterate, our government remains focused on providing good government to the people of this province. Nova Scotians are seeing some of the strategic investments we are making. They are seeing the results of new programs and new initiatives. We will remain focused on providing that good government.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

DIS - CONTRACTS: NON-N.S. - DETAILS

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Internal Services. There was a high-profile contract in tourism recently awarded to a company from outside Nova Scotia, and many Nova Scotians scratched their heads, wondering how such an important contract could be awarded to a company from Ontario. This was especially a slap in the face to the many local companies that spent many hours and thousands of dollars preparing their bid.

People are wondering how often this happens. My question for the minister today is, is the minister aware of how many contracts were awarded to companies based outside of Nova Scotia so far this year?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Trampoline, who was the co-winner of that contract. Trampoline is located right here on Barrington Street. I would also like to add that in that contract - it's \$6 million a year, \$5 million of which is media buying, and DDB is the largest media buyer in Canada. They do this exact same work for the Government of Canada.

I would also like to add that we put a goal in front for this RFP, which stated that we want to double tourism in Nova Scotia - which is an Ivany goal that the Opposition seems to be in favour of.

Ironically enough, every single Nova Scotia company partnered up with a larger firm so they could get that buying power and deliver it to Nova Scotians, doubling tourism. I'm not sure where this complaint is coming from, but it's not coming from the bidders, because they all had partners that were non-Nova Scotian companies.

MR. HOUSTON: Clearly the minister is unsure of something. It was a simple question: how many contracts are awarded to companies outside of Nova Scotia? He doesn't know the answer. I think Nova Scotians will be really disappointed that the minister doesn't care about Nova Scotia companies and doesn't care about jobs here, so I'll try another way.

Mr. Speaker, I thought if we got another minister on his feet that we might get an answer, but sadly, not today. Many people are asking, what sort of metric must the government be looking at when they award these things out? When I'm talking to Nova Scotians who lost their job, they often ask me, does the government think they are saving money?

My question for the minister today is, quite simply from their voices, does the government think they're saving money by sending business out of the province?

MR. KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, quick geography lesson, Barrington Street is a block behind us and the co-winner of that contract is a Nova Scotia company. Procurement in the Province of Nova Scotia, 81 per cent of all procurement goes to Nova Scotia companies. We are leaders in Canada. We balance finding the best company to deliver services for Nova Scotia, and supporting Nova Scotian companies. Nova Scotia is a leader in that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

AGRIC. - HILLATON FOODS: CLOSURE - MIN. ASSISTANCE

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Workers at Hillaton Foods were dealt some devastating news recently when they were told that Oxford Frozen Foods, the carrot plant, was closing and 98 seasonal jobs were being lost. The Municipality of Kings County Council has stepped forward and offered their support in treating waste water.

Mr. Speaker, knowing this, my question for the minister is, will the Minister of Agriculture today inform this House and residents of the Annapolis Valley what his department did, or what support they offer to prevent the closure of Hillaton Foods?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Thank you very much for that question. Unfortunately that's a decision by a private company. I am very excited to see that the municipality has worked with the company and we look forward to them keeping the facility open under a different mandate.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. I'm not sure what it was that he said that they actually did. In the Premier's constituency of Annapolis, Kings Produce Processing - situated in the Town of Middleton - gave workers two days' notice earlier this month on the closure of this business; 40 to 50 full-time jobs are vital in such a small town as Middleton. Many farmers are concerned about the loss of agricultural processing capacity in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is, what is the Minister of Agriculture doing to ensure agricultural food processing is going to continue in Nova Scotia?

MR. COLWELL: We're very dedicated to ensuring that processing continues in the province, it is added value to the province. Unfortunately, when private companies make decisions we are no longer going to run in with government money and try to bail them out because it doesn't work. The Official Opposition did it in the past and the last government did it as well, it doesn't work, we'd have to go to a free-market situation and that's what happened in this case.

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

EECD - FREEMAN REPT.: TEACHERS - CONSULTATION

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, the Education Action Plan, released earlier this year by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, is an ambitious response to address concerns raised in the Freeman report. It's clear that teachers will need to play a significant role on the front lines, implementing change, and in response to the plan NSTU President Shelley Morse said, "We want to work with the Department to ensure that the voice of active teachers is included in the changes coming forward that impact current practice and policy in public education." I'll table that.

Therefore, my question to the minister is, beyond the feedback encompassed in the Freeman report, how have teachers actually been consulted and engaged in the creation and implementation of the Education Action Plan?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Thank you for the question. I'm very pleased to remind the member that teachers have been engaged from the get-go with the Action Plan. In fact, over 5,000 teachers responded and gave us their opinions about what we needed to do within the Action Plan to make sure that public education continued to grow in this province, and that the learning and teaching environment in the classroom was improved for both teachers and students. They gave us their feedback and they have been involved every step of the way in coming into our department. We are seeking their opinion, we value their opinion, Mr. Speaker, because they are the people that drive education in this province.

MS. ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to hear the minister say that she feels teachers are the driving force, because actually what I'm hearing from teachers is they're very upset that they were not consulted properly and, in fact, they say that writing in and sending in their ideas on an online process is not called consultation.

Over the last decade there have been an increasing number of students placed on individual program plans, or IPPs. While the root causes of this result can be debated, it is clear that it is teachers who will have to address ongoing changes related to classroom curriculum. Therefore, my question for the minister is, what kind of support is provided to teachers who are responsible for the delivery of IPPs?

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, to respond to part of the question or an allegation, I guess, that was there, I think it's important and teachers know this - I'll share this with every member of the House - that it was the teachers who came in and it was the teachers who determined how we would streamline the curriculum, and it was the teachers who are committed to reducing the outcomes for kids.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

COM. SERV.: BENEFIT REFORM - UPDATE

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, my question through you will be to the Minister of Community Services. We all know the importance of what her department does and the people she serves in this province. I wonder, could the minister give us an update on the benefit reform currently happening within her department?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question. One of the highest priorities of the department is making sure that the income assistance portion of the Department of Community Services is both effective and sustainable. About 18 months ago, just after we were elected, we started a long-term process to really do comprehensive change and transformation within a system which quite frankly has not been working to meet the needs of people for a couple of decades now.

I am very pleased to say that we've moved along a major restructuring within the upper echelons of administration and the RFPs for trying to bring together the expertise in the community and also working with the people within the department who are the subject matter experts, hit the streets about 30 days ago, and we are moving along at the pace that we had determined.

MR. PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that answer. Moving along - could she be a little more clear on a time frame, perhaps, on such a reform?

MS. BERNARD: Absolutely. We had said from the onset that this was going to be a three-phase approach. We have just finished Phase I, which took about 18 months. We are now beginning Phase II, which we consider will take another year or a little more than a year. We're looking for a complete, comprehensive overhaul of a system that hasn't been meeting the needs of people for many, many years. We are looking at an end date for that to be 2018.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

FIN.: NATL. SECURITIES REG. SYSTEM - MEMBERSHIP

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board. Many provinces have made the decision to become part of the national securities regulatory system. Having our own system simply duplicates what the national system could do and it is redundant and creates red tape for business. The previous Minister of Finance and Treasury Board was quick to point out that having our own securities commission generated \$15 million in revenue for the province. My question today is, will the minister admit that revenue is the only reason for refusing to join the national securities regulator?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. With respect to the national securities regulator, since I've started in my position as Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, I have been on the public record that we are considering and haven't closed the door on that option, but for the vast majority of time that I've been in this position, the federal government was busy with the federal election campaign which kind of put any discussions on hold.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to hear that there's investigation and research going on. It was 406 days ago that I stood in this House and asked the then Minister of Finance and Treasury Board about it and I heard at that time that there was a lot of time being investigated, looking at this particular issue. So here we are, 406 days later, we have more collaboration between the Prime Minister and the provinces and the provinces with each other. On this issue Nova Scotia is standing on the outside looking in and I'm wondering why. If the minister and the department haven't had enough time to determine whether the advantages are worth it, I would ask the minister today, can the minister tell us what disadvantages of joining the national system they have come across?

MR. DELOREY: What I'd like to advise the member opposite of - I believe actually on the order paper for today we'll be talking a little bit more about what we do in the Province of Nova Scotia to work on a national scale to harmonize our securities regulations, a lot of work that exists in reducing the red tape and the regulatory burden in the securities area and we're continuing to proceed in that vein.

With respect to joining the national securities regulator, what we've committed to, what my predecessor committed to, was ensuring that if we enter into such an agreement we'd make sure that it's in the best interests of all Nova Scotians. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

COM. SERV.: N.S. CHILD POVERTY RATE - EXPLAIN

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: It has been 26 years since the House of Commons vowed to end child poverty. Today a report called End It Now, by Lesley Frank, professor at Acadia University, provided a report card on child and family poverty in Nova Scotia.

In Nova Scotia child poverty rates are alarmingly high. Nova Scotia is home to the third-highest child poverty rate in all of Canada, with one in five children living in poverty. These numbers increase when you look at Cape Breton, where one in three children lives in poverty - shocking. Young children under the age of six in the Cape Breton census area have a poverty rate of 42.7 per cent . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Does the member have a question?

MS. MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain how Nova Scotia has one of the highest rates of child poverty in Canada?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Thank you for the question. Child poverty is something that as a government and as a province we all have a responsibility for. I am so encouraged by the recent announcements coming from the federal government that look at stopping sending cheques to millionaires - unlike the two Parties across the way from me that they wanted to do and had continued to do federally - but will actually focus child poverty tax credits on the families that need them, lifting hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty. I'm looking forward to working with my counterpart federally on that initiative, specifically as it pertains to the children of Nova Scotia.

MS. MANCINI: Over the past two years, however, child and family poverty is on the rise. Last year, Lesley Frank, the same author who published this year's report, released a similar report on child and family poverty - and I will table that.

The numbers haven't changed; in fact the number of children using food banks has risen by two per cent. In addition, 51 per cent of food bank users are women, up five per cent.

Can the minister outline what specific steps her department is taking to address these high levels of child and family poverty and food insecurity?

MS. BERNARD: One of the most positive steps that I've seen happen over the last two years while we were in government is investments within the women's community, specifically family resource centres which had been under-resourced for at least a decade. Every single family resource centre now has at least \$75,000 in investment - they have been doing programs like food security; they've been doing financial literacy; and they've been doing crisis counselling.

I still look forward to the time when the child tax benefit federally works hand in hand with the work that we're doing in benefit reform in Nova Scotia, in actually making substantial change for families in Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

OMBUDSMAN: POSITION - FILL

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: My question is for the Minister responsible for the Office of the Ombudsman. It has been 21 months since Dwight Bishop retired. We know the government has advertised for this position. They've had 81 applicants; they held interviews; they even had a successful candidate, but they've held off on hiring. And I'll table that information, Mr. Speaker. My question is why?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: It's certainly a concern to us as well, and I appreciate the member bringing up that issue, that having an effective Ombudsman Office is very important. We do have a very good Acting Ombudsman at the moment, so I'm very confident in the current service that's available. Thank you.

MR. MACMASTER: I can appreciate that there may be an Acting Ombudsman, but it puzzles a lot of people. This government said they would be the most transparent province in the country, but it is two years later and we have no full-time Ombudsman in place . . .

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 128.

Bill No. 128 - Labour Standards Code.

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

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 128, an Act to Amend Chapter 246 of the Revised Statutes of 1989, the Labour Standards Code, be now read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians shouldn't have to worry about what may happen to their job if they call Labour Standards to ask a question or to gather information for themselves or a colleague. The proposed amendment to the Labour Standards Code will clarify and enhance protections for employees who make Labour Standards inquiries or provide information to Labour Standards officials.

Section 30 of the Labour Standards Code protects employees from employer reprisal for pursuing their Labour Standards entitlements and/or testifying in a Labour Standards matter. It's a fundamental protection under the code, but it was narrowly interpreted recently, and it doesn't plainly articulate the kinds of reprisal situations

employees could face. The proposed change will ensure that employees are protected in a range of possible reprisal situations.

The amendment I tabled last week will clarify and enhance protection for employees who ask about their rights under the code; initiate an investigation or other proceeding, like appealing a Labour Standards decision; make a statement or give information to our Labour Standards Division; ask or require their employer to comply with the code or regulations; help a colleague who is concerned about their employment rights; participate in a proceeding, such as giving testimony; or have shown they intend to take or whom the employer believes will take a leave to which they become entitled.

The Labour Standards Code exists to protect workers, and our Labour Standards team is available to help employees understand their employment rights. If employees are deterred from asking questions about their employment rights or for pursuing the things they are entitled to, then the spirit of the code is defeated.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendment adds clarity and will make sure that employees are protected. Thank you.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise and say a few words today about Bill No. 128, amendments to the Labour Standards Code. It's very important that all Nova Scotians, regardless of where they work, are afforded protection under the Labour Standards Code of this province.

There are a number of provisions in this bill that appear to be worthwhile. Nova Scotians should not have to worry about their job security if their employer discovers they have contacted a Labour Standards official. I am sure that in many cases employees contact Labour Standards officials for no reason other than to make inquiries, not necessarily to put forward formal complaints.

Last year the Labour Board itself ruled on a case concerning this issue, where an employee was let go because the possibility of an employee contacting the Labour Board was discovered by the employer. It is also true that when there are real concerns regarding an employer's operations that might potentially harm the worker, there should not be any deterrent from Nova Scotians coming forward to express their concerns.

One question I do have, though, Mr. Speaker, concerning these amendments, would concern the rights of the employers in cases where numerous complaints which appear to be beyond truth in nature have been brought forward and dismissed by the Labour Board by an employee over a period of time.

I look forward to hearing any commentary on this bill from the presenters at the Law Amendments Committee and seeing this bill go there.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I too want to stand in support and our caucus' support of this bill moving forward through the process. It's always important to recognize the need to engage legislation that might need to be updated to ensure that individuals and employees have the protection when they make a complaint to the Labour Board.

We know that this change definitely will attempt to do that. We know there had been a complaint to the Labour Board from an employee which resulted in the firing of that individual, which is not how Labour Standards should be interpreted within our province. I look forward, as does our caucus, to having this piece of legislation move forward and encourage the government to continue to look at ways to improve labour standards so that we protect employees here in our province. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to speak on an Act to Amend Chapter 246 of the Revised Statutes of 1989, the Labour Standards Code.

Before I had the privilege of representing the people of Halifax Atlantic, I would wake up every morning at the crack of dawn, put on my work boots, grab my hard hat and go to work. I had the privilege of working with a great group of hardworking men and women; we were a family of utility workers. Our work was not glamorous. None of us were getting rich doing what we did but we gave, and they continue to give, an honest, hard-day's work.

Our work included working with and beside heavy machinery, working with pipe saws, jack hammers, picks and shovels, just a name a few things. You depended on the person next to you to be well-trained, honest, experienced and mindful. In my years doing the job, this is exactly what I experienced with my co-workers like Jan-Michael Kidd, Troy Blackmore, Jason Barkhouse, Jerry MacDonald, and Graham Hagland just to name a few. (Interruption)

The member for Pictou East can stand up if he has a problem with my speech. There is another part of the job site that is equally as important as the men and women who work arm-in-arm with you and that is a competent employer, one who realizes that the greatest asset is their employees, that they keep their employees up-to-date in training and the latest technologies, that they put them in safe situations, and that they ensure that they return home to their families and loved ones.

The majority of employers in Nova Scotia are fantastic employers who respect their employees and see them as their greatest assets, but not all employers are created equal. Unfortunately there are times when employees are put into circumstances where they are uncomfortable, where they question their training and sometimes their safety. The employees of Nova Scotia need to be comfortable with approaching the Department of Labour and Advanced Education without fear of discipline or dismissal from their job.

The Minister of Labour and Advanced Education had this to say:

“Nova Scotians shouldn’t have to worry about what might happen to their job if they call Labour Standards to ask a question or gather information. These changes add clarity, and will make sure employees are protected against retaliation by their employer for asking about their employment rights. The proposed amendments will clarify and enhance protection for an employee who:

- initiates an inquiry, investigation, or other proceeding
- makes an inquiry about his or her rights under the code
- makes a statement or gives information to Labour Standards officials
- asks/requires the employer to comply with the code/regulations
- helps another employee who is concerned about a possible violation of their rights under the code
- participates in a proceeding
- has shown an intention to take, or whom the employer believes will take, a leave to which they will become entitled.”

Once again, this government consulted. We consulted with CFIB, Restaurants Canada, Retail Council of Canada, Restaurants Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour. I wanted to take a moment to thank the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education and her department for once again looking after one of Nova Scotia’s greatest assets, its workers. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it’s a pleasure to rise and speak to this bill today and I think it is an important bill because I do agree that employees should always feel comfortable in dealing with their employers. I think this bill could have gone a bit further to encompass facts where employees disclose sensitive information to their employers, possibly about their health situation. They should always have the confidence that their employers will maintain confidence on issues like that.

This is an example where, if employees are concerned and they want to talk to the Labour Standards Board about that, they should feel that they can do that safely. They should also feel they can have the right to expect their employers to maintain their confidence over other sensitive issues and things that concern them.

I would say that I do look forward to this bill going to the Law Amendments Committee and hearing what the public has to say about that, but anything that will make Nova Scotia a better workplace is something that I support. So with those few words I will take my seat. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable members for their comments about this particular amendment and I promise to give the comments of the honourable members the due consideration which their comments deserve. I rise to close debate on Bill No. 128.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 128. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 129.

Bill No. 129 - Securities Act.

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

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 129 be now read a second time.

I'm honoured to rise in the House today to speak about Bill No. 129, which includes amendments to the Securities Act. The amendments in Bill No. 129 will ensure our legislation remains highly harmonized with securities laws across Canada. These amendments will ensure securities legislation remains modern, up to date, and consistent with other Canadian jurisdictions, specifically, these amendments will support a national initiative called the Point of Sale Disclosure project which is in its final stage of being implemented.

This initiative is intended to improve disclosure provided to investors or potential investors at the point of sale of investment fund products. These amendments will also support the expansion of filings that can be made using the coordinated passport system. This will reduce the regulatory burden on market participants consistent with the

government's commitment to support the private sector through regulatory excellence and red-tape reduction. Finally, these amendments will enhance investor protection by expanding the scope of a number of tools available to the Nova Scotia Securities Commission to conduct its compliance and enforcement activities.

These amendments will ensure investors are protected on a consistent basis, will facilitate innovation, reduce regulatory burden through the expanded use of the passport system, and increase national harmonization of securities laws. I look forward to hearing what other members of the Legislature think of this bill. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise today and speak to this bill for a few moments.

This bill falls under a provincial/territorial memorandum of understanding regarding securities regulations that was signed back in 2004. That MOU from that time, it's an agreement between the provinces and the territories to ensure that the investment industries in those areas remain vibrant and competitive, while safeguarding the rights of businesses and consumers.

The MOU from that time also points to maintaining low costs and efficient regulatory infrastructure. Section 8.3 from the MOU from that time says:

“Options for further reform will be consistent with the original goal of the provincial/territorial securities initiative: to develop a provincial/territorial framework that inspires investor confidence and supports competitiveness, innovation and growth through efficient, streamlined and cost-effective securities regulation that is simple to use for investors and other market participants.”

Emphasis added in that case to “efficient, streamlined and cost-effective securities regulation”. I know in his opening comments the minister used the words modern, up to date, and consistent with other jurisdictions. He left the word out that would have properly described it, parallel. He could have said that our system is parallel to other systems.

That's a bit of a shame to me because this is a situation where we could be in with everyone else as opposed to on the outside running a parallel system that we are using time in this Legislature and in the office of the commissioner and everyone else, and the participants - using their time to try and make a system that is, in the minister's words, modern, up-to-date, and consistent.

I ask the question, if those are our goals, why are we maintaining a parallel structure? We are continuing to duplicate the work of a national securities regulator - why? Why are we continuing to do that? There's no good answer for that, Mr. Speaker.

Nova Scotians want to know if we're in with the national regulator or out. We heard this week that the Premier at the two-year point - he's very interested, at the two-year point of this government, as to who's in and who's out. We're asking the same question here today about the national securities regulator, are we in or are we out?

As long as we are out, which certainly seems to be the case - we on this side have been asking questions about this. The last time I asked in Question Period was 406 days ago. At that time there was a degree of optimism from the government that they were investing a lot of time into understanding a national regulator system and looking at the pros and cons of joining it. Now 406 days later, another minister later, we are still investing time looking at that system - but we're going one further, Mr. Speaker, we'll actually pass some legislation to buy some more time.

It's a simple question, in or out? As long as we're out, which we seem to be, we're duplicating other efforts. We're creating another system of red tape, another layer of bureaucracy, and all of those things have costs.

Worse than that, Mr. Speaker, as long as we're out we are lagging behind those jurisdictions that are in. We're lagging behind them in terms of regulatory updates, because by virtue of the separation we're always going to be behind them. As long as we stay on our own we will be behind all of those that are united and together and moving forward. We're always going to be playing catch-up; we are always going to be out of step with the federal practices, and that's because we are separate from them. Maybe when the minister stands up, on his closing comments, he can explain what value this government sees in that, because the government obviously sees value in maintaining a separate system.

At one point, we heard it's a revenue generator, but I don't think that is an argument that holds water. I think it's a short-sighted argument. We know that the feds had offered a compensation package to provinces that joined. In fact, Mr. Speaker, you may remember - I think it was five years' worth of revenue.

We're just wondering, why? If we had an answer to the why - that's why today I was wondering what the disadvantages are. Maybe if somebody could shed some light on the disadvantages, then we could have a good discussion on that, but still nothing.

So maybe we'll start to hear as to why this government is reluctant. If they can start to share some of their reluctance, then maybe it has merit. We just don't know. We need to have that discussion. I would look forward to, maybe at closing of second reading later today, hearing some of the reluctance and some of the reasons for the reluctance.

If not, maybe the Law Amendments Committee, when we get to hear from Nova Scotians. Maybe they're going to flood that hall and come in there in droves to talk about why they're reluctant. Maybe there'll be a big mass entry. The people should probably phone up now and book their spot to talk to the Law Amendments Committee on the joining of the national securities regulator and share with us why they're concerned.

I haven't come across many Nova Scotians who say, you know what, I have a great idea for us as a province that's progressive and wanting to move forward, I have a great idea: let's stay out of lockstep with everyone else. Let's not join the norm. Let's stay on our own. That's essentially what we're hearing here today, that we need to be on our own, and if you ask why we need to be on our own, well, there's no answer. If you ask, what are the disadvantages to being on our own, well, there's no answer.

You know what the answer is, Mr. Speaker? We're looking at it. We're investigating - 406 days just since I started asking, and these questions are from well before my time, but it's 406 days just since I asked. The research continues, but nothing substantive. Maybe we can dribble a little bit out, maybe in little segments of a minute or two minutes at a time, and then eventually we'll get to the full story. Maybe. But for the interim, I'd be happy with a little one-minute blurb on something, just a snippet, out of context or maybe not, just as to what the reluctance is.

I do believe, Mr. Speaker - and you might not have got it from my comments so far, but I do believe that Nova Scotians would be better served by joining a national securities regulator. It would allow businesses to deal with the same regulation across the country, instead of a piecemeal approach endorsed by separate governments. Well, what are we looking at today? More piecemeal, more of an effort to be modern, up to date and consistent - catch-up. More of an effort to run a parallel system. Why? Why, Mr. Speaker?

This government is being faced with a great opportunity to reduce red tape for business. It's a great opportunity to reduce red tape for business and make sure that businesses are dealing with the same regulations all across the country. Well, when faced with an actual opportunity to reduce red tape, what do we see? We see them saying no, we're not going to reduce red tape. In fact, we're going to put another bill through the Legislature to talk about how we can keep our own separate system and our own red tape, but it comes with a promise that they will always endeavour to be consistent and up to date - mind you, one step behind.

So we bring this bill forward, and we do talk about some efforts in this bill. The passport system may reduce red tape, but in the face of an opportunity to abolish red tape from this area, we go with a plan to possibly reduce some. That goes back to the 2004 MOU. That's an initiative that was started in 2004 - 13 years ago, Mr. Speaker, or 12 years ago, I guess - I don't know, 11 years. I'm a little ahead of my time, maybe.

The national securities regulatory system will provide better and more consistent protection for investors across Canada. That's one of the advantages of the national system, and might not be compelling enough for this government, but you know, maybe there's disadvantages. I am still optimistic that we'll hear about some of that today, but having - I don't think it can be disputed, and I'll be curious if anyone does dispute it, because I really take it as indisputable that having a regulatory body centralized and united would always be a better environment for business. Any time you can provide business with more coherent, consistent reporting regulation, it's better. It's better for the consumers, it's better for the businesses, it's better for everyone.

So I do think that that would be a good thing, because it also would help in criminal enforcement, to better fight securities-related crime. Now, you can imagine, Mr. Speaker, if you have some securities-related crime, it's probably some pretty sophisticated crime. If you had our own independent body here trying to take on that investigation, and the national people trying to take on that investigation, you can just see the duplication of effort that would be required there.

The national system would allow for faster policy responses that we should be expecting from our regulator, particularly where emerging markets are concerned. If you have the national body doing that, and the provinces - the ones that are on the out - trying to catch up, these are all questions for which we haven't seen an answer.

I find it worrisome. It's either one of two things, Mr. Speaker: either the government doesn't know the answer or they don't accept the answer. One of those might be true, and I'd like to hear which one it is.

Better governance and more efficient business conditions should not be held hostage from increased revenue, and I'm curious if that is what is happening here, if we're pushing away those possible improvements because we see a possible revenue stream which we're worried about. I don't know if that's a good concern, but it is certainly not a good practice. It's a very short-sighted practice.

I had been optimistic that this government would have learned from some of its past short-sighted decisions. Members of this House may be familiar with the situation that happened with the Film Tax Credit, where this government circled a line item on the financial statements - the \$25 million tax credit - circled that number and said, look, we can save that. We can save \$25 million if we just cut that. We know what happened. There was a corresponding line item on there that they hadn't considered. That was the actual benefit of spending that, and it was over \$100 million, depending on who you ask.

I worry that this was a case where the government would circle a line item on the financial statement's \$15 million from revenue from the securities regulator and say, we have to keep that, we have to maintain that. I think it is short-sighted for a lot of reasons.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that if this Liberal Government wants to make real change to the economic state of the province, it means that they will need to make it more affordable for businesses. They will need to make it more attractive for businesses to operate here, and it's going to require some changes. Here we see more of the same with respect to the regulator. Even that MOU from way back in 2004, even back then the writers of that MOU understood that we should always be looking for efficiencies, that we should always be looking for low-cost options.

It's interesting to me, Mr. Speaker, that that was recognized back in 2004 by the writers of the MOU, but here we have the current-day Liberal Government that doesn't recognize those simple principles and is unwilling to explore ways to achieve those goals of efficiency and low-cost options.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that if the current government is really interested in modernizing our system and making our system up-to-date and making it consistent, if that's really what they want to do, then they should heed my advice, which I am giving so freely to them today. With those few words, I will take my seat.

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

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I won't be taking a great deal of the House's time on Bill No. 129, but I did want to stand for a few minutes and make a few remarks on these amendments to the Securities Act.

Mr. Speaker, in no way do I have any expertise or any great knowledge about securities legislation or law, not like my former colleague. I found it very interesting listening to his points because I had a very short narrow window when I was in the Finance office, when this was a bit of a conversation about whether or not Nova Scotia should join with the national securities commission.

Former federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty was a huge proponent for a national securities commission. Some of the provinces at that time had signed on, or they certainly were moving in that direction, but some of the smaller provinces were reluctant to move in that direction.

As it was explained to me by government officials in the department and at our local commission, the benefits of joining a national commission might not, in fact, accrue to the Province of Nova Scotia; they would be minimal. It was the larger provinces, which had much greater activity and stock exchanges, the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario that would see a great benefit. In fact because there is such limited activity here in Nova Scotia, there could be some disadvantages for us.

I confess I don't have a great depth of knowledge in this area. In fact, I think this is a very specialized field in terms of securities law. What I do know is that we do need to

have protections. We have seen, for example, the Knowledge House case go on and on, drag on, and I think it's still in front of the courts. I ask myself, if we had had better regulations and standards and procedures, whether or not these kinds of situations would occur.

I know that recently I believe a prominent member of our finance and business community, Mr. Bill Black, has been appointed to a very important position with respect to these matters. I'm sure that he would be offering his expertise and his insight and his advice to the government and to probably all members of the House who were interested in these matters and in drawing on that. I don't know whether we will have the opportunity to see Mr. Black or others of his expertise and knowledge in the Law Amendments Committee speaking to the features of this bill.

I hope that if there are people who have concerns and insights, who have suggestions for things that we could do to enhance and improve protection for those who are impacted by securities regulations, they would come forward and help lay people like myself have a better appreciation of the implications so that we can have the best regulatory framework, a regulatory framework that both protects and also has the flexibility to allow for business opportunities and for businesses to grow and invest in our province.

I think that ultimately, unlike the direction of this government, a government that is only interested in damaging and harming economic activity and cutting the public services that make a great contribution in communities across the province and doing little to nothing around growing the economy, we need to look at every opportunity that we have to grow the economy in our province, and if in some small way dealing with the regulatory aspects of securities law would help in any way, then I think it is incumbent on us to be open to that and to look at that.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks I'll take my place.

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

MR. DAVID WILTON: Mr. Speaker, a couple of days ago I had the opportunity to address the Legislature for the first time, and I am quite happy to get up again and share my few thoughts on this important piece of proposed government legislation.

As I mentioned the other day, Mr. Speaker, I have some experience in the business world and I have been fortunate to have had a successful career over the past three decades here in Nova Scotia. Investors in Nova Scotia look to Nova Scotia's Securities Commission for confidence and protection in the provincial security markets.

The proposed legislation includes amendments to the Securities Act, supports harmonization efforts across the country, strengthens protection, and better serves investors. It's important that our province makes these necessary changes to the Securities

Act to keep up to date with the legislation in other jurisdictions across Canada. Back in 2004, Nova Scotia committed to work with Canada's 12 other jurisdictions to develop harmonized security laws.

Harmonized security laws will benefit all provinces and will benefit Nova Scotians. These efforts are in line with other initiatives we have recently undertaken, such as the Premier's recent collaboration with P.E.I. and New Brunswick to reduce the red tape in the Atlantic region. By working together and aligning our regulations, we can help each other meet our individual goals faster and more efficiently.

These proposed amendments also support expansion of the passport system and other additions related to implementing the final stage of the point of sale project. This is to ensure that jurisdictions across Canada are expected to adopt similar legislation by Spring 2016.

On those brief notes I'll sit down. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I took interest in the passport piece where a company files to have their status changed in the registered province and pays a fee only once. Just a small point, I know that investment advisors have to be registered in each province in which they have a client. That cost is somewhere between \$300 and \$400 per year and, if you have clients in 10 provinces, that's in the neighbourhood of \$3,000 a year.

So just a thought that it's maybe something the government could look at to make life a little easier for the advisers out there - and they are independent business people in most cases and if there's not a need to be registering in every province, if this same information could be passed around to the other provinces, I think that would be an improvement and something to save these Nova Scotia business people money. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the members who have taken the time to share their thoughts on this piece of legislation with these amendments before they move on to the next process, in Law Amendments Committee.

I guess it was the member for Pictou East who took the most time, shared the most thoughts on this particular set of amendments, although I think the majority of the time was not actually spent talking about the amendments in this particular bill but rather about a

larger question with respect to whether or not the Province of Nova Scotia would enter into the national securities regulation as a member of the national securities regulator.

Just a quick clarification on a point he made, Mr. Speaker, I believe he said at one point that the last time he got up in this House and asked a question was 406 days ago. I'd like to just correct the record, I believe it was only about an hour ago when he last stood in the House to ask a question about the province joining the national securities regulator.

To go on to address the question about why and how long, what the status is, whether we are in or out of the national regulator - I believe I answered that question earlier today during Question Period, but I'll repeat it for the member's benefit. We are currently not signed on to the national securities regulator. The way that the member opposite had been speaking about the national securities regulator, he has been speaking and certainly alluding to the people of Nova Scotia and the members of this Legislature that that is a regulatory body that is up and running and governing regulations for all of those securities commissions that have signed on.

That is not exactly accurate, so the suggestion that we are somehow laggards and behind, and that if we didn't move forward with these amendments, we alternatively should be part of the national securities regulator - that this amendments package, this bill, would not be necessary or required - is misleading. Or perhaps the member opposite could take the humility of the member for Halifax Needham and acknowledge that the area of securities regulations is fairly specialized.

I just want to reiterate that whether we currently were a part of the national securities regulator, signed on or not, this work we would be doing here in Bill No. 129 would still be going forward, that these harmonizations would still be needed, while the work of the federal government and the provincial bodies that have signed on to the national securities regulator - that work would be working in parallel, because the full scope of the national securities regulator, and that system has not been established in its entirety.

In fact, while the member for Pictou East stressed many times the 406 days that have elapsed since he perhaps first stood in the House to ask about the province's position on the national securities regulator, I would like to point out to the member opposite that the Chair of that regulatory body was only appointed in July of this year - near the end of July, July 23rd or 24th - and that a Nova Scotian, Mr. Bill Black, was appointed to chair that regulatory body. Clearly that organization is still in the early stages of getting established. Again, the suggestion that the province is somehow laggard, somehow disadvantaged, are not accurate.

I would like to highlight that since July 24th, about 100 or 120 days have lapsed, and over 70 of those days we were in a federal election. There was not much opportunity to work and continue the dialogue and the discussion on whether or not our province would enter into that agreement with the federal government during that point in time.

Again, I just wanted to clarify, with respect to those 400 and some-odd days that the member for Pictou East was so concerned about, that we continue our discussions. With respect to entering the national regulator, we'll ensure that the interests of Nova Scotians are addressed in any agreement that we would enter into - which would certainly be the case, that myself or any of my colleagues would do our appropriate due diligence before entering into any agreements of such.

In closing, I would just like to highlight and clarify for the members of the Legislature and the members of the public that the amendments being brought forward in Bill No. 129 and the question of whether or not we would enter into the national securities regulator are separate questions. Contrary to the member for Pictou East, I certainly wouldn't encourage people who want to come to Law Amendments Committee to talk about entering into the national securities regulator. This bill wouldn't be the point in time to have those discussions, because again, this bill would be moving forward even if we were a signatory already with the national securities regulator.

With that, I close debate on Bill No. 129.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 129. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, as you will note, our business has moved quite quickly throughout the House today. The House is scheduled to sit until 6:00 p.m. this evening. There are a number of members who have advised that they would still like to read some member statements that they didn't get to do earlier. I would ask, with the unanimous consent of the House, that we revert to the order of business, Statements by Members.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

I hear one lonely No.

The motion is defeated.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, it would appear the NDP aren't interested in continuing to work today, but so be it. With that Mr. Speaker, that does conclude the

government's business for today. Tomorrow being Opposition Day, I would call upon the House Leader for the New Democratic Party to give the hours and business for tomorrow.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I could comment on work of the House by not answering questions, but I won't go there. Tomorrow the House hours will be between 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. After daily routine, our caucus will be calling Bill Nos. 132 and 111.

I move that we rise now to meet again between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again tomorrow, November 25th, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried

The House now stands adjourned until tomorrow, November 25th, at 1:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 3:36 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**(Tabled November 20, 2015)****RESOLUTION NO. 2477**

By: Hon. Stephen McNeil (The Premier)

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

Whereas World War II veteran Alvin Ellis is the oldest and longest-serving member of RCL Branch No. 21 Port Royal; and

Whereas this long-serving commitment earned this 95-year-young veteran his 50-year service medal and his 55-year service bar from his Legion's president at a ceremony held in May; and

Whereas Mr. Ellis, having been engaged in the action for two and a half years as a member of the 10th Field Company Engineers, was more than happy to return home to Annapolis Royal to become a husband one month later;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking Mr. Ellis for his service and congratulate him on being recognized as a dedicated Legion member.

RESOLUTION NO. 2478

By: Hon. Stephen McNeil (The Premier)

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

Whereas paramedic Brad Reid from Middleton was presented with the Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Services Medal by Lieutenant Governor J.J. Grant during a ceremony at Government House on Thursday, October 29, 2015; and

Whereas Brad, who has been a paramedic for over 20 years, was lauded for providing top-notch emergency health care to those in crisis, often at risk to his own safety; and

Whereas only 14 paramedics were recognized throughout the province this year for the medal, making it a highly coveted award in the health care community;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Mr. Brad Reid on being recognized as one of the best in his profession and thank him for his significant contribution to health care.

RESOLUTION NO. 2479

By: Hon. Stephen McNeil (The Premier)

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

Whereas “If it doesn’t tick, tock to Dave,” is the clever motto of Bridgetown’s David Beckner; and

Whereas Mr. Beckner discovered there is a creative side to his predominantly analytical brain when his expertise in building and fixing spare clocks expanded into a new enterprise of building motorcycle models from spare clock and watch parts; and

Whereas his unique models earned him an award as “Best New Product and One of a Kind” from the Designer Craft Council in Halifax;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in wishing David continued success in his new business venture.

RESOLUTION NO. 2480

By: Hon. Stephen McNeil (The Premier)

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

Whereas Commander Guy Adams is already a highly decorated veteran for his acts of bravery during World War II; and

Whereas Commander Adams was presented with the Knight of the Legion of Honour medal at a ceremony at Commander Adams’s home Legion in Bear River this past summer; and

Whereas the Legion of Honour, France’s highest decoration, is awarded by the Republic of France to those who helped liberate the country during the Second World War;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Commander Guy Adams on his well-deserved recognition and thank him for his more than 60 years’ service with the Bear River Legion.

RESOLUTION NO. 2481

By: Hon. Stephen McNeil (The Premier)

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

Whereas accomplished visual artist Heather Horsfall is the first Artist in Residence with the Annapolis Region Community Arts Council since 2006; and

Whereas Horsfall is more than qualified for the position, having been awarded the 2008 Visual Arts NS Arts Educator of the Year award, which resulted from combining her love for education and visual arts; and

Whereas Horsfall often uses clothing from family and friends as material in her rugs, which depict meaningful events in her life;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ms. Horsfall on her designation as Artist in Residence and wish her many more years of creativity in her chosen art form of rug hooking.

RESOLUTION NO. 2482

By: Hon. Stephen McNeil (Premier)

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

Whereas Andrew Cameron and Own Ritchie combined their entrepreneurial spirit to create a new kind of spirit in the community; and

Whereas the two professional divers traded in their wet suits for a wet permit and out of that Still Fired Distilleries was born; and

Whereas Still Fired Distilleries is the first artisan distiller in the Annapolis Valley and the first distillery in the Province to be designed and built from scratch for commercial use;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in wishing these two enterprising young men best of luck in their business venture.

RESOLUTION NO. 2483

By: Hon. Stephen McNeil (Premier)

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

Whereas famed British Chef Jamie Oliver was in the Province recently promoting healthy eating and buying local; and

Whereas business owners Howard Selig and Wendy Rodda of Middleton's Valley Flax Flour had the enviable opportunity not only to be the celebrity chef but to have their own flax flour featured in his new cookbook *Everyday Super Food*; and

Whereas an esteemed chef himself, Howard and co-owner Wendy were invited to attend a cooking demonstration in Merigomish with Chef Oliver preparing recipes with fresh Maritime-sourced ingredients;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing Howard Selig and Wendy Rodda for their business success in producing healthy, top quality flax products and Atlantic Canada's only producer of gluten free flours and wheat free mixes.

RESOLUTION NO. 2484

By: Hon. Stephen McNeil (Premier)

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

Whereas the Clean Annapolis River Project has been actively supporting a healthy Annapolis watershed for over 25 years; and

Whereas trees became the organization's focus during National Forest Week when a variety of trees were planted by community volunteers throughout the watershed as a part of CARP's Growing Ecological Health in the Annapolis River Watershed project; and

Whereas restoring riparian habitat, creating agricultural shelterbelts and diversifying tree species not only contributes to a healthy watershed, but also to a sense of community ownership and pride;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating CARP on their active participation in keeping the Annapolis watershed cleaner and greener.

RESOLUTION NO. 2485

By: Hon. Stephen McNeil (Premier)

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

Whereas Bridgetown's freelance writer Rachel Brighton was named the gold winner for Business Reporting: Any Medium at the Atlantic Journalism Awards in Halifax in May 2015; and

Whereas her article "Big Dairy Comes East: Consolidation makes Local Elusive," published in *Rural Delivery*, earned her the coveted award; and

Whereas Brighton is known for her knowledgeable, no nonsense approach to issues in her business column in *The Chronicle Herald* and other rural publications;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ms. Brighton on her achievement and wish her well in her future endeavors.

RESOLUTION NO. 2486

By: Hon. Leo Glavine (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas Gerry MacDonald was inducted into the Bridgetown Area Sports Hall of Fame on November 14; and

Whereas Gerry has run 67 marathons and a number of ultramarathons and has distinguished his running career by winning the 110 km Rum Runners Ultramarathon on three occasions and second twice; and

Whereas Gerry has run the historic and world famous Boston Marathon nine times, he is also known for his inspiration and encouragement to get others into running as a positive lifestyle;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly extend congratulations and best wishes in future running endeavors.

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**(Tabled November 24, 2015)****RESOLUTION NO. 2489**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas the Halifax Christian Academy has expanded from their initial seven students in 1975 to now having three campuses and an Early Childhood Centre; and

Whereas on November 26, 2015, the Armdale Campus will host an open house and ceremony to celebrate the grand opening of the middle school's 21st Century redesign; and

Whereas a delegation from the school went to Australia to learn about the most innovative approaches to education and have now remodeled the Armdale campus to reflect this research;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Halifax Christian Academy for the outstanding achievements, and wish all staff and students success.

RESOLUTION NO. 2490

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas since 1922 the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair has taken place in Toronto, Ontario, in November and showcases Canadian agriculture, equine excellence, and food; and

Whereas 4-H goat enthusiasts from across Canada compete in the East National Goat Show; and

Whereas Kelsey Morehouse of Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia, is a member of the Shu-Mil 4-H Club;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Kelsey on winning: Premiere Toggenburg Breeder; 1st place Toggenburg Herd Class; 1st

place Toggenburg Dry Yearling; Champion Junior Toggenburg; 1st, 2nd and 3rd place for Three-Year-Old Milker; 2nd place Toggenburg Doeling; 1st place in Youth Division; and Top Youth Showmanship at the 2015 Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.

RESOLUTION NO. 2491

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas since 1922 the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair has taken place in Toronto, Ontario, in November and showcases Canadian agriculture, equine excellence, and food; and

Whereas 4-H dairy cattle enthusiasts from across Canada compete in the Canadian 4-H Dairy Classic; and

Whereas Lesley Anderson of Lantz, Nova Scotia, is a member of the Shu-Mil 4-H Club;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Lesley on winning Top Ayrshire and Reserve Champion Dairy Coloured Breeds at the 2015 Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.

RESOLUTION NO. 2492

By: Ms. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Canadian Cancer Society's fight against cancer is only possible with dedicated and hard-working volunteers who selflessly give their time and talents; and

Whereas on April 14, 2015, the Hants East unit of the Canadian Cancer Society recognized those who have been instrumental in raising funds for research and improving the quality of life of people living with cancer; and

Whereas Carol Goswell of Mill Village, Nova Scotia, received her 10-year pin for her dedication and commitment to the Canadian Cancer Society;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the many years of service Carol has devoted to bettering our community.

RESOLUTION NO. 2493

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Cassidy Megan is an ambitious, bright youth in our city with a goal of working toward epilepsy awareness; and

Whereas Ms. Megan is the founder and creative mind behind Purple Day, a worldwide epilepsy awareness day celebrated every March; and

Whereas Ms. Megan also recently established the Purple Hike for Epilepsy, which held its inaugural event this past October in Halifax, and along with Purple Day will continue to make a tremendous impact toward research and discussion on epilepsy;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Ms. Megan on her remarkable accomplishments in bringing awareness to epilepsy disorder, and encourage her to continue the notable work she has already begun.

RESOLUTION NO. 2494

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Dalhousie University is renowned for its scientific research studies, many of which take place at the university's Brain Repair Centre; and

Whereas Dr. Victor Rafuse and his team of scientists, Dr. Philippe Magown, Dr. Ying Zhang, and master's student Basavaraj Shettar, recently made a discovery that could be an avenue toward improving quality of life for those afflicted with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, commonly referred to as ALS; and

Whereas Dr. Rafuse and his team determined that using genetic manipulation and an LED light, they were essentially able to bypass the nervous system in mice and activate unresponsive muscles, a critical discovery in ALS research, since a significant symptom of this motor neurone disease is nerve cell degeneration;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly commend Dr. Rafuse, Dr. Magown, Dr. Zhang, and Mr. Shettar, on this remarkable discovery in the studies of motor neurone disease, and ALS specifically.

RESOLUTION NO. 2495

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Dianne Hamilton, COO of Pete's Fine Foods, was recently honoured with a Star Women in Grocery award; and

Whereas Ms. Hamilton, in her years with Pete's, demonstrated tremendous passion for high-quality foods, locally made products, and supporting Maritime entrepreneurs; and

Whereas Ms. Hamilton has always strived to bring innovative and accommodating ideas to the grocery market realm, including gluten-free eateries and Pete's own brand of products, solidifying the Pete's chain of stores as a staple of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that member of the House of Assembly congratulate Ms. Hamilton on her much-deserved award, and wish her great luck with the new future of Pete's Fine Foods.

RESOLUTION NO. 2496

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Dr. Margaret Casey, an invaluable member of the province's health care field, was recently invested into the Order of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas in a nearly 50-year career as a health care provider, Dr. Casey has been a passionate educator and advocate for those suffering through social issues like poverty and racism; and

Whereas Dr. Casey is a laudable member of Dalhousie University's medical school faculty, a champion of social reform in the field of health care, a respected member of several boards and committees, and now a recipient of the Order of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Dr. Casey on her remarkable career and significant contributions to Nova Scotia's health care system, and on being invested into the highest honour our province awards, the Order of Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 2497

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas the Order of Canada is the cornerstone of the Canadian Honours System, recognizing outstanding achievement and service to the nation; and

Whereas Margaret Fountain, a long-time community leader, philanthropist, and member of the NSCAD University Board of Governors, was recently appointed to the Order of Canada; and

Whereas Ms. Fountain, a selfless volunteer and generous benefactor, has always strived beyond compare to better her community and the students in it, supporting local arts organizations with generous contributions both financially and of her own time and passion, in order help preserve youths' interest in the arts;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Margaret Fountain on her recent appointment to the Order of Canada, and thank her for playing a critical role in helping to shape our province's interest in the arts.

RESOLUTION NO. 2498

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Partners for Care is a long-standing innovative organization, with several initiatives throughout the city promoting wellness in Nova Scotians; and

Whereas one of these laudable initiatives, the Common Roots Urban Farm, recently undertook a photovoice project so participants of the garden could express the impact it has had on their lives in their own creative ways; and

Whereas through the Cultural and Youth Activities Program, our government was honoured to help fund this fantastic project spearheaded by Jayme Melrose of the Urban Farm, a project which helps re-encourage the notion that arts and culture are a fundamental part of our city's growth, shaping the wellness of our province;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Ms. Melrose, the Common Roots Urban Farm and its parent organization, Partners for Care, on such a creative, inspiring project.

RESOLUTION NO. 2499

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission and Internal Services)

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

Whereas the Order of Canada is the cornerstone of the Canadian Honours System, recognizing outstanding achievement and service to the nation; and

Whereas Bill Black, an outstanding community businessman and recent recipient of the Order of Canada, has demonstrated exceptional corporate leadership in our Province; and

Whereas Mr. Black's laudable career include being president and CEO of Maritime Life; chairman of the IWK, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and Symphony Nova Scotia; lead director of the Bank of Canada; as well as serving on Dalhousie University's Board of Governors;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Bill Black on being appointed to the Order of Canada, and thank him for the tremendous career he has led and the contributions he has made to our province's corporate landscape.

RESOLUTION NO. 2500

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 Mr. John Cascadden (Cas) of McDonald Lake subdivision in Hatchet Lake is an active and passionate advocate for community; and

Whereas John serves as vice-chair of the McDonald Lake Residents Association, as a board member for the Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust and the Halifax Waste Resource Society, and as a member on the Otter Lake Community Monitoring Committee; and

Whereas John makes it his business to share his well thought out views through public consultation, often harnessing the power of social media through which he encourages public discourse on matters of importance, sharing information freely and openly;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in acknowledging the enormous amount of time that John dedicates to community matters and engaging others in public process.

RESOLUTION NO. 2501

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 The Osprey Archery Club was formed in the early 1990's in Shad Bay by a small group of archery enthusiasts; and

Whereas the Osprey Archery Club has a wide variety of shooting experiences to offer such as target archery, field archery, 3D archery and Olympic style archery, catering to all ages and abilities; and

Whereas the Osprey Archery Club has proven itself to be resilient and after a break-in earlier this year, the organization has come back stronger and increased its impact on community by offering additional indoor training at local schools and community centres;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly wish the Osprey Archery Club and its members continued success and growth into the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 2502

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 Angela McCarthy of Shad Bay has proven over time to be a dedicated community volunteer, involved with schools at all levels through School Advisory Councils, as a member of a number of community organizations and as the mother of Cassidy Megan, ambassador for Epilepsy; and

Whereas Angela often takes a back seat in public to her accomplished young daughter, she is always there to support and encourage, inspiring Cassidy and leading by example; and

Whereas Angela gives freely of her time and talents to make our community a better place;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking Angela for her community service and wish her and her family well in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 2503

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 Halifax County United U14 Tier 1A (Girls) County team were honoured in May when the team and head coach, Jim Slaunwhite, were nominated by Soccer Nova Scotia for this year's edition of the Ricoh Sport Awards hosted by Sport Nova Scotia at the 2015 Ricoh Sports Awards ceremony; and

Whereas the team is made up of the following players: Josie Oickle, Kelsey Keeping, Hilary Davidson, Chloe Page, Bessie Lecker-Evans, Sydney Phelan, Molly Campbell, Jessie Pynn, Elizabeth Haggar, Hayley Kardas, Ella Andrews, Madeline Walsh, Jessica Cobb Lewis, Baily Marriott, Janelle LaLeune, Ashlea Morash and Zoe Brown; and

Whereas head coach, Jimmy Slaunwhite worked collaboratively with assistant coaches Danielle MacDonald and Tim Haggar to achieve success;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly commend the team and their coaching staff on this tremendous achievement and wish them and their families well in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 2504

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas in 1997 Jeff Redden celebrated his first full year as dealer-owner of the Windsor Home Hardware store located in the Fort Edward Mall, which had been a part of Windsor for many, many years before him; and

Whereas with proven excellence in customer service and an active role in community events, Jeff Redden and the Windsor Home Hardware were nominated for and received the 2015 Communities in Bloom Home Hardware Dealer of the Year Award; and

Whereas Windsor Home Hardware has been designed, merchandised and upgraded over the years with additions such as the partnership with Bell Mobility and Bell ExpressVu and the addition of the Home Furniture Department, which features top-notch home furnishings;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Redden and all the staff at the Windsor Home Hardware on receiving this prestigious award and wish them continued success.