



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2015

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2015

Sixty-second General Assembly

Second Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Ms. Margaret Miller

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We will now move on to the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Whitney Pier.

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Veteran Affairs, I beg leave to table the annual report for 2015.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 2523

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

Whereas the Honourable Manmeet Bhullar, MLA for Calgary-Greenway was tragically killed Monday, in a selfless gesture of helping another motorist in need; and

Whereas I knew Mr. Bhullar to be engaging, passionate, and committed to his work, especially children in care; and

Whereas Manmeet leaves behind a legacy of dedication to his work and compassion for those he served in the Progressive Conservative caucus in the Government of Alberta;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join me in extending our sincere condolences to Manmeet Bhullar's family and friends, as they cope during this difficult time.

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. 135 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 3 of the Acts of 1987. The Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation (Nova Scotia) Act, and to Repeal Chapter 40 of the Acts of 2010. The Offshore Licensing Policy Act. (Hon. Michel Samson)

Bill No. 136 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 293 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Motor Vehicle Act. (Hon. Geoff MacLellan)

Bill No. 137 - Entitled an Act Respecting the Repeal of Presbyterian Church Legislation. (Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

**D'ENTREMONT, NATALIE
- HIGH FIVE TRAINER EXCELLENCE AWARD (2015)**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Natalie d'Entremont for being awarded the 2015 High Five Trainer Excellence Award. She received the award on October 15th during the Recreation Nova Scotia Awards held in Digby, at The Pines. The High Five Nova Scotia Champion Award recognizes outstanding individuals who support and inspire the implementation of the growth of High Five. High Five ensures that leaders, coaches, and instructors have the tools and knowledge to nurture a child's mental health and create positive experiences for the participants.

Natalie is the Active Living Coordinator for the Municipality of Argyle and is dedicated to delivering training workshops to front-line staff and volunteers working with both children and youth. Once again, I'd like to congratulate Natalie on her achievements and for making a difference in our children's lives.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

REGISTRIES - PRIVATIZATION: HOUSE COSTS - EFFECTS

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, for many Nova Scotians, buying a home is the biggest investment they will ever make. Unfortunately, as costs rise faster than wages, fewer Nova Scotians may ever get the chance to own their own home.

Mr. Speaker, in 2012 the previous government doubled the first-time homebuyers rebate to a maximum of \$3,000, to help alleviate the financial burden on first-time buyers.

Mr. Speaker, should the Liberal Government privatize the registries, the cost of buying a home will likely increase. Other provinces that have privatized their registries have seen an increased cost of doing business for surveyors, realtors, and appraisers, as well as for lawyers. These added costs have made it less affordable for those looking to purchase a home. That is one of the many reasons to keep the registries 100 per cent in the public sector. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North on an introduction.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, if we could look to the east gallery and I'd ask Cheyenne Hardy to stand up with her parents, Rowena and Chris. Cheyenne is a leader in the community of Dartmouth North and I'd like to read a member's statement to honour the work that she has done. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

HARDY, CHEYENNE - COMMUN. INVOLVEMENT

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, today's youth are often portrayed in an unfavourable light, and in my constituency of Dartmouth North youth fight this negativity and the stereotypes which accompany them every day. One youth in particular deserves recognition for her work, her spirit, and her determination.

I met Cheyenne Hardy last year through her involvement with her school, John Martin Junior High, and have watched as this young, brilliant woman makes a difference not only in her school community but in the community of Dartmouth North.

Cheyenne has done tremendous work within her school, most recently being appointed president of the Leadership Committee; in this role Cheyenne initiated the Lunch with Friends Program. Her goal is to provide a safe and supportive space for students who feel marginalized within the school community. Over the lunch hour, students mentor students on issues both within and outside the classroom.

Cheyenne is involved in Between the Bridges and has spoken publicly at all events of this government-community initiative representing youth. She also co-chaired the Youth Round Table organized by my office, and also took part in We Act, and was a participant in We Day.

Cheyenne's community involvement has also seen her speak publicly at Pride events where she eloquently describes the value of diversity in her role and as an ally to the LGBTI students. Last year Cheyenne was the first Nova Scotia Girl Guide to win the National Girl Greatness Award, and is also a flight corporal with the Air Cadets.

I ask my colleagues in the House to please join me in thanking Cheyenne Hardy for her efforts in making Dartmouth North a better community in which to live, work, and play. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

AGRIC. - PROCESSING PLANTS: CLOSURES - MIN. PREVENT

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, the recent loss of two processing plants in the Annapolis Valley has many impacts on our community. This loss of stable, long-term processing plant jobs is one part of a number of very significant losses. Also lost is the access to markets for farm production from the Valley; options for crop rotations are diminished.

To reach the Ivany report goals we need a healthy, vibrant processing sector, not only in carrots and salad crops, but also in many other agricultural sectors, such as the meat industries. This will require the Department of Agriculture and industry to work together to create a plan to encourage investment in food processing. Access to capital and markets are key to making this happen.

I call on the Minister of Agriculture not to stand idly by while processing plants close, but rather to start to create a plan that will bring to our province the food for our next generation. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

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

VETERANS: TIERS - CHANGE

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm following in the former NDP MP Peter Stoffer's footsteps, in calling on the new federal government to change the federal policy around the definition of a veteran. Currently the federal government has two tiers of veterans; those who served in the Korean War and WWII and those who have served after 1953.

When I asked the Harper Government to change this definition, they declined to make the change. I am hoping that the Trudeau Government has a change of heart. Once the uniform comes off, the duty and responsibility of the federal Government towards everyone that serves doesn't end. Whether it was in the Korean War, Bosnia, Iraq or Afghanistan, a veteran is a veteran, regardless of where or when they served. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

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

HART, LYND SAY - COMMUN. LEADERSHIP

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Lyndsay Hart of Timberlea for demonstrating community leadership. This summer Lyndsay sparked the imagination of many of the residents throughout Beechville, Lakeside, Timberlea, when she proposed that the community come together to celebrate Canada Day. Others soon joined Lyndsay and they formed the BLT 2015 Canada Day Committee. They are Joanne

Ewasiuk, Renee Archibald, John Bignell, Edyta Maciaszek-Gembesh and Linda Moxsom-Skinner.

Many local businesses also made significant contributions to this special day, including D & Jo's Country Market, and Timberlea Dental Clinic who host the event on their property. Affordable Fuels and Metro Home Heating provided the outstanding fireworks display and collected donations to the Parker Street Food Bank. Angus Real Estate sponsored the children's activities in the Kids Zone. More than 700 people enjoyed the event and planning is already in the works for the BLT 2016 Canada Day Celebration.

I would like the members of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in thanking Lyndsay and the BLT Canada Day Committee, for their hard work and commitment to community. Please join me in wishing them continued success in the future, thank you Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

LONG LAKE PROV. PARK - FOREST DESTRUCTION

MR. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, we were all troubled to learn about the destruction of the forest in Long Lake Provincial Park. In Nova Scotia, we have some of the most beautiful parks on earth and they need to be protected. We have beautiful forests, rivers, beaches and trails, which support wildlife and important ecosystems.

Our parks also provide valuable places to enjoy nature and promote recreation for our citizens and visitors. It's not good enough to say this was an accident. We ask and want to see the Liberal Government get to the bottom of this and take steps to make sure our parks are protected in the future.

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

WINTER TIRES - PURCHASE: GOV'T. - ASSIST

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, data released last year by the Tire and Rubber Association of Canada showed about one in two motorists opt not to put on winter tires. The last two winters in Nova Scotia have been harsh to say the least, Mr. Speaker. Driving on our roads and high ways without winter tires put at risk our safety, and the safety of others.

Many residents in Queens-Shelburne, myself included, often undertake a significant commute to and from the workplace. In fact, many of my colleagues on both sides of this house travel from their constituencies on a weekly basis to be part of the activities here. Having winter tires on your car could be a key to arriving home safely. I

ask the government to look at ways to help all Nova Scotians get winter tires and to be safe as possible on our roads this winter.

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

MCNEIL, MICKEY - COMMUN. SPIRIT

MR. DAVID WILTON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Mickey McNeil, or better known as the "Milk Man." For the last three years Mr. McNeil has been collecting canned milk for the local food banks in New Waterford and surrounding area. The idea came to Mickey when he was reading the paper and saw the article that the food banks don't usually have milk to give people because the cost is too high.

At this time, I'd like to recognize Mickey McNeil for his community spirit and willingness to help those less fortunate, a truly outstanding Cape Bretoner in Nova Scotia, thank you Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Whitney Pier.

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Pardon me. Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg.

MR. MACLEOD: I can understand you making a mistake, but I'm the one with the beard. (Interruptions) I didn't want to go there.

GILLIS, JACQUIE: EXCELLENCE IN BUS. AWARD - NOMINATION

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: I rise today to congratulate Jacquie Gillis from Grand Mira, who was recently nominated for an Excellence in Business Award from the Sydney and Area Chamber of Commerce.

Jacquie won in the Locally Yours category, which recognizes quality goods produced by a local business. Jacquie Gillis owns the Mira Stitch'n Post in Marion Bridge, which is Cape Breton's largest full-service quilt shop.

It is a great pleasure for me to thank and congratulate Jacquie Gillis and all her staff for all she does for the local community and wish her every success as she continues to grow her business.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

ALDERNEY MANOR: LEGIONNAIRE'S DISEASE - GOV'T. RESPONSE

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Last Monday, the water was finally turned on at Alderney Manor. Since the tragic outbreak of Legionnaires' disease at the seniors' residence in my constituency, which resulted in the death of Beverley Roma, the government responded with a slow and uncoordinated effort.

Mr. Speaker, seniors were not able to shower in their homes for months. Their only option was to use bottled water or take a cab to the Dartmouth Sportsplex to shower in locker rooms. This was simply unacceptable for many who have mobility issues.

I hope that this tragedy and the slow pace of the work that followed has been a lesson to this government. Seniors living in Alderney Manor deserved better.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

FLEMMING, WILLIAM "ROCKY" ERIC: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: I would like to take a moment to speak on a great man, William "Rocky" Eric Flemming.

Rocky, as we all knew him, grew up in Ketch Harbour and was a 28-year veteran of the DND fire department. After retiring, he worked at the pleasure of the Lieutenant Governor until 2013.

Sadly, after fighting a good fight, he passed away November 2, 2015. Rocky will be missed by an entire community, but more importantly by his amazing wife Joanne, daughter Paula, and his son, my good friend Matt. God bless you all.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

GUNN, DYLAN - VETERANS MARCH

MR. TIM HOUSTON: On November 11th, 10-year-old Dylan Gunn of St. Paul's in Pictou East marched with Legion members - not a veteran, not a cadet, but a young boy. Appropriately attired for the day and proudly sporting a poppy over his heart, this boy stood quietly, hardly moving during the entire ceremony. "I am remembering the people who fought for Canada," he replied, when asked why he wanted to march with the veterans.

I am proud that this young man is interested in his country, our history, and the veterans who made us safe. Dylan, you are an inspiration.

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

ENERGY - MIN.: CNSOPB - VACANCY FILL

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, a coalition of groups including the Ecology Action Centre, SumofUs, and Greenpeace protested yesterday outside the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board over the Shell approval to drill in the Shelburne Basin. A petition with over 233,000 signatures was presented. With this level of concern, it is even more important for the Liberal Government to take action to fill a two-year vacancy on the petroleum board.

Mr. Speaker, there's no need for the Minister of Energy to continually justify his inaction by blaming previous governments for not filling the petroleum board chair. It was in fact the federal government's responsibility, and he knows that full well - or perhaps the minister could ask his department for another short briefing on the issue.

Regardless, the Minister of Energy needs to get off his hands, do his job, and find the right environmental or fisheries expert to be on the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

PONEE, CST. CHERYL: HANTS EAST STUDENTS - DEDICATION

MS. MARGARET MILLER: East Hants RCMP constable Cheryl Ponee is the East Hants school liaison officer. She works with the student body and the school administration. She has had to deal with numerous disturbing online safety issues, from insecure practices to sexting.

Four years ago, she devised a talk on online safety that she takes to the classrooms to encourage students to adopt safer online behaviours. She started the program in the middle school and high schools, but because children from all grades now have access to the Internet, she is now taking it to elementary schools. Officer Ponee knows that it is important for the kids to have this information so that they can make better choices.

Officer Ponee has found a lot of success with the program. Some parents have told her that after their kids have listened to her talk, they have discussed online safety with them.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to commend and thank Officer Ponee for her dedication to the students of Hants East. She is making a difference. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HAZELTON, DON: COL. CO. SPORTS HALL OF FAME - INDUCTION

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, on November 6th, Brookfield resident Don Hazelton was inducted into the Colchester County Sports of Hall of Fame. Mr. Hazelton has dedicated much of his time to the game of softball. He has been involved in many capacities throughout his service to the game, including being a player, coach, umpire, course instructor, rule clinician, clinic presenter and mentor. He has worked all the national level and numerous provincial, junior and senior men's and women's events.

He was the provincial deputy umpire and chief of the Fundy Zone and a member of the Fundy Umpires Association. The induction was made all the more special as he was presented the tribute by his son David. Please join me in congratulating Don Hazelton on receiving this well-deserved honour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

LONG LAKE PROV. PARK: CLEAR-CUT - DETAILS

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, like many Nova Scotians I care deeply about climate change and the serious effects of global warming. Trees are, in fact, considered part of the ecosystem and natural capital that protects our planet against greenhouse gas emissions which are occurring very quickly and warming the planet.

Like many, I was shocked and saddened yesterday to hear about a mysterious clear-cut in Long Lake Provincial Park, just outside of Halifax. It is being reported that anywhere from 12 to 20 hectares of protected land was clear-cut which will undoubtedly have an impact on the ecosystem of that area.

Naturalists and environmentalists estimate that it will take at least 20 years for those trees to grow back, Mr. Speaker, so I hope that the Departments of Natural Resources and Environment work collaboratively to get to the bottom of this incident and that those responsible are held accountable for their actions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

DAVIDSON ENO, SELENA - LT.-GOV.'S TEACHING AWARD

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, the best teachers teach not for a paycheque but because they love what they do, because they care about the future of our youth, because they want to see a better tomorrow. Nobody fits this description as well as Selena Davidson Eno, a physical education and core French teacher at Bayview Community School in Mahone Bay.

Selena spends countless hours outside of school hours volunteering her time with numerous school teams and clubs, including soccer, basketball, cross-country and track and field, carrying out training even during the summer months.

Her dedication was recently rewarded as a recipient of the 2015 Lieutenant Governor's Teaching Award. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I ask you to join me in congratulating Selena for an award very well deserved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, with the unanimous consent of the House, could you revert to the order of business, Government Notices of Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, if I could make an introduction first.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, in the gallery today we have Starr Dobson, CEO of the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia and Nick Peters, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Mental Health Foundation as well. If they could stand and receive a warm welcome. (Applause) They were getting that warm applause before I even asked.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2533

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

Whereas the 24th Annual Compass Group Canada Festival of Trees drew more than 1,300 guests to the World Trade and Convention Centre this weekend for a luncheon and a black tie gala; and

Whereas proceeds from this very successful event support mental health initiatives in communities across Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the foundation ended the weekend by announcing Camp Believe, a new camp for children whose parents live with mental illness;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Nova Scotia Mental Health Foundation CEO Starr Dobson and foundation board chair Nick Peters for a successful Festival of Trees and for the work they do every day to support mental health initiatives across the province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

RESOLUTION NO. 2534

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

Whereas the Truro Police Service, the RCMP Northeast Nova Traffic Services, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), and all other partners in law enforcement and government are participating once again in Operation Christmas; and

Whereas we know that impaired driving is one of the leading causes of preventable death and serious injury on Nova Scotia's roads, and Operation Christmas is an annual campaign that works to reduce impaired driving and encourage more motorists to practise safe winter driving; and

Whereas checkpoints targeting impaired drivers will be set up in the Bible Hill and Truro area beginning today, and more checkpoints will be in place throughout the province during this holiday season;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join me in congratulating all those who are participating in this important campaign over the next month, and thank them for their commitment to promoting road safety during the holidays.

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.

MR. SPEAKER: We'll now return to Statements by Members.

[STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS]

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

MACNEIL, JENNIFER/HARLEY - C.B. HORSE CHAMPIONSHIP

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sydney Mines resident Jennifer MacNeil and her 13-year-old quarter horse, Harley. They just won Champion Senior Division and Overall High Point Horse for the Cape Breton district.

Harley was voted the Horse of the Year by the Cape Breton Western Riders Association, and the duo also achieved Provincial Champion Horse and Provincial Champion Senior Rider for 2015 at the Nova Scotia Equestrian Federation Annual Awards.

It's a true honour to have this opportunity to recognize this great pair of competitors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

LIBERAL GOV'T.: QUESTIONS - AVOIDANCE

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, a dominant theme of this session has been the unwillingness of the government to answer questions from Opposition members. It's becoming clear to Nova Scotians that beyond blaming past governments, the Liberal Government has no answers for the complex issues facing the province.

The thing about questions, though, is that they linger. While the government can ignore or deflect questions here on the floor of the Legislature, these questions do not go away. For example, yesterday the Premier was grilled by a group of Grade 6 students, in

Halifax Needham, on everything from the destruction of the film industry to teachers' contracts and school closures.

Many Nova Scotians are now questioning who they voted for, as this Liberal Government is not who they said they would be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HUCKLE BUCKLE FALL FEST (INGONISH):
COMMUN./VOLS. - THANK**

MS. PAMEYKING: Mr. Speaker, this year the Ingonish Development Society and Ingonish Activities Committee were pleased to host the second annual Huckle Buckle Fall Festival from October 23rd to October 25th.

The festival, which commenced last year with huge success, was designed to increase community spirit as well as to extend the tourist season in the Ingonish area. Many businesses and non-profit organizations like Parks Canada, the Ingonish Volunteer Fire Department Fundraisers, Ski Kids Cape Smokey, and Legion Branch 105 helped out by hosting a series of fun Fall events during the festival weekend.

I'd like to congratulate the community and all the volunteers who made this year's festival a much success. Thank you.

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

KENNEDY, DERRICK & LISA - JUDY SPINK AWARD

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Derrick and Lisa Kennedy, of Little Lorraine, on receiving the Judy Spink Award for Family of the Year 2014-15. They received this well-deserved recognition at the recent Muscular Dystrophy Walk held in Sydney. Derrick and Lisa have two sons, Coady and Dillon, and the whole family had been very active for Muscular Dystrophy Canada for the past six years.

As I know this family personally, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate them on receiving this award, and thank them for all they do for this very worthwhile cause. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

NAT. RES.: FIREWOOD - TENDERING PROCESS

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, the demand for timber in Nova Scotia has put increased pressures on buyers and sellers alike. Last year the Department of Natural Resources issued tenders to contractors to harvest hardwood trees to sell as firewood. In Kings, Queens, and Shelburne Counties, there were no bids received by the department, as there were substantial upfront costs to contractors which made the tender financially unattractive.

I understand that creative solutions must be explored if we are to solve this problem. Last year's tendering process may have been a start, but it was not without its shortcomings. I encourage the acting minister to look at ways to improve the tendering process from last year to make it more attractive to harvesters so that Nova Scotians have access to the supply of firewood. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

FLECKENSTEIN, SHELLEY - TOP 50 CEO LIST

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to announce in the House of Assembly that Ms. Shelley Fleckenstein has been named one of the top 50 CEOs by *Atlantic Business Magazine* for a third year in a row. She has also been named one of the top 100 women entrepreneurs in Canada by *Profit* magazine for a sixth year in a row.

Ms. Fleckenstein is the founder of Kings Physiotherapy Clinic in New Minas, which is a thriving and respected practice. As a business owner and as a health professional with over 27 years of experience, Ms. Fleckenstein also contributes through fundraising and volunteering throughout our community.

On behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, I would like to recognize and thank Ms. Shelley Fleckenstein for her many years of business and community leadership in Kings County and Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**SONLIGHT: MAR. GOSPEL ASSOC. AWARDS (2015)
- NOMINATION**

MR. JOHN LOHR: I rise today to tell members about the Annapolis Valley gospel group Sonlight. Sonlight was nominated for five 2015 Maritime Gospel Music Association awards, including best male vocalist, best female vocalist and best songwriter.

Sonlight's members include Gina Potvin, Roxeen Roberts, Sonny Fredericks, and Chris Palmer. On October 17, 2015, at a prestigious ceremony in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Chris Palmer was presented with the Best Songwriter award.

The group's appearances regularly benefit local charities, and each member shares both a deep faith and a commitment to help those in need. It is an honour to congratulate Sonlight for its success in raising over \$20,000 for a local foodbank and for Mr. Palmer's receipt of this award. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

TEACHERS' CONCERNS - NDP SUPPORT

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, over the past week, countless teachers have been speaking out, voicing their concerns about this government's approach to collective bargaining. Since this government took office in 2013, they've been openly hostile to public sector workers. Now it seems that that hostility has moved to the bargaining table. Like many citizens, I watched the relentless passing of Bill Nos. 30, 37, 1, and 100 in the Legislature.

I am glad the people of Dartmouth South chose to support the NDP, a Party that respects workers in this province. The NDP knows that the perceived threat of legislation is hanging over teachers' heads, but teachers need to know that we hear their concerns, and we will continue to fight to protect their rights.

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

ADSUM HOUSE - RECOGNIZE

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize Adsum House.

For 32 years, Adsum House has been meeting the needs of women and children, youth, and trans persons where they are without judgment, offering a range of services and support during periods of homelessness, operating out of four locations in the Halifax Regional Municipality. There is an emergency shelter, second-stage housing, and two affordable supportive housing buildings for women and children. Recently, they purchased condominiums in an established neighbourhood that are rented as stable housing for women-led families.

The word "Adsum" means "I am here." You can visit their website at adsumforwomen.org to learn how you can lend a helping hand. Thank you.

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

D'ENTREMONT, DENISE & EDITH - HEUREUSE RETRAITE

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Monsieur le Président, deux enseignantes de la région de Par-en-Bas et employées du Conseil scolaire acadien provincial ont décidé de prendre leur retraite à la fin de l'année scolaire 2014-15.

Denise d'Entremont a enseigné pendant 27 ans dans les écoles de la municipalité d'Argyle. Depuis 2001, elle a enseigné exclusivement à l'École secondaire de Par-en-Bas dans une variété de niveau et sujets.

Édith d'Entremont a enseigné à partir de 1982 et a enseigné dans diverses écoles une enseignement de divers sujets. Depuis 1991, elle a enseigné à l'École Pubnico-Ouest au niveau de deuxième, troisième, et quatrième années.

Félicitations et merci à Mme. Denise et Mme. Édith pour leurs années de service et dévouement à tous les étudiants qui ont bénéficié de leurs enseignements. Nous vous souhaitons une bonne retraite.

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

TEACHERS: GOV'T. DISRESPECT - FEEL

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, as NDP Critic for Education and Early Childhood Development, I've been receiving numerous letters, emails, and phone calls from teachers right across the province, all telling me that they feel disrespected by this government. They're saying that two plus two just doesn't seem to add up to four, since the government boasts of being the open and transparent in the history of the province, and yet teachers are experiencing something altogether different.

Collective bargaining and union contracts are agreements that should be negotiated at the bargaining table, by the union and the employer, free from the heavy hand of government. The Nova Scotia New Democratic Party respects the rights of teachers and they have been fought for very hard and won for years . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River has the floor.

MS. ZANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, these rights have been hard fought for and won, and in fact, my own mother marched on the Legislature during the Savage years in what was then a very turbulent time for teachers. So, I want to say that we hear their frustration and that we are here to be their voices in the Legislature. Thank you.

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

**HENMAN-POIRIER, LOUISE:
TALLAHASSEE'S WALL OF RECOGNITION - INDUCTION**

MS. JOYCE TREEN: Mr. Speaker, on October 15, 2015 Louise Henman-Poirier was celebrated as Tallahassee's 2015 Wall of Recognition Inductee. Louise has spent many years of her life giving time to various organizations and committees. Louise was heavily involved with the Bridgeway Academy as a volunteer member of the board of directors.

During this time Louise also volunteered with the Learning Disability Association of Nova Scotia, where she ran summer transition workshops, social skills workshops and parent workshops. Louise is also a member of the Association of Teachers of Exceptional Children. Louise also is involved in many groups and committees throughout Eastern Passage and Cow Bay, she has been an active member on the Summer Carnival Committee for over 20 years, the Seaside Harvest Festival and the Cow Bay Hall are also fortunate enough to have her on their teams.

Louise is an important asset for all the organizations and committees she is involved in, her energy and positive attitude is infectious. Louise Henman-Poirier, thank you for all your years of service and congratulations on your place on the Wall of Recognition. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**SUMMER STREET INDUSTRIES SOC.:
COMMUN. SUPPORT - THANK**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, Summer Street Industries Society is located in New Glasgow and is an organization that creates opportunities and a better focus on life for adults with intellectual disabilities. Summer Street is a person-centred organization, people have the opportunity to volunteer or work in the community, to learn life skills, explore personal interests, and work in social enterprises or on employment programs.

Programs at Summer Street provide education, independence, employment and pride of accomplishment. Clients benefit from vocational personal development, wellness, and literacy and work programs. We thank our community for supporting this wonderful organization. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**ENVIRONMENTAL HOME ASSESSMENT PROG.:
FUNDING CUTS - EFFECTS**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, in a perfect world every Nova Scotian with oil tanks would feel assured that their tank is fit for use. Unfortunately,

this government has put up road blocks and made it more expensive for those who use that form of heating.

The Liberals' 2014 decision to cancel a \$1.5 million expansion of the Environmental Home Assessment Program was bad news for Nova Scotian homeowners in need of oil tank replacement. As winter is approaching, Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians are feeling left out in the cold. This was a cut that hit rural Nova Scotia the hardest, and disproportionately affects seniors. This is another example of this current government putting austerity priorities ahead of those Nova Scotians struggling to pay their bills.

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

SCOTIA WINDFIELDS - SUCCESS CONGRATS.

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, it was my pleasure to join a large group of residents on a tour of the new Scotia Windfields facility in North Beaver Bank recently. The facility was built under the Nova Scotia Government Community Feed-In Tariff program that encouraged smaller wind projects that are in Nova Scotia.

The tour of the four-turbine facility was very informative and provided guests the opportunity to go inside the wind turbines. This facility generates enough electricity to power approximately 2,700 homes. It feeds directly into the Beaver Bank distribution lines to power local businesses and homes, ensuring that all the energy generated by the turbines will be consumed locally.

I would like to extend my congratulations on the success of this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

VALLEY VIEW VILLA: SENIORS GRAD. CLASS - CERTIFICATES

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, this Spring I had the honour of presenting certificates to the first graduating class from Valley View Villa in Riverton. Twenty seniors, aged 70s, 80s, and 90s, who had never had the opportunity to graduate from high school proved that it is never too late.

With caps and gowns the graduates were piped in, led by local piper Tyler Cameron. The excitement and sense of accomplishment was certainly equal to that of any regular high school graduation. For everyone who participated, I congratulate you and applaud your achievement.

Mr. Speaker, you can rest assured that it was a drug- and alcohol-free grad party that night. Thank you.

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

DIGBY & AREA HEALTH SERV. CTR. - OPENING

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, with the opening of the Digby and Area Health Services Centre last July, I want to recognize the nine-year effort it took to take the idea of having a modern primary health clinic in Digby to its opening last July.

As in many rural communities, attracting and retaining doctors in the Digby area is an issue and this clinic was presented as a possible solution. When first discussed, Digby residents quickly realized the importance of such a project and were very supportive. The Digby and Area Health Services Charitable Foundation was able to contribute an impressive \$1.7 million towards the project, money donated to the foundation or raised from the community. This is in addition to the \$1.2 million contributed by the Province of Nova Scotia, the Town of Digby, and the Municipality of Digby.

Now that doctors and nurse practitioners are seeing patients in our brand-new facility, we can pause and be proud of this accomplishment. From now on it will be a plus for our community when doctors consider their options of places to set up a practice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**ROOP'S SERVICE STATION AND TIM HORTONS
- COMMUN. CONTRIBUTION**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Ready, Set, Grow Tim Hortons is an annual conference for owners of Tim Hortons' chains. Along with networking, training, camaraderie, the conference has an awards reception to recognize those owners who go above and beyond.

This year Betty Roop and Roop's Tim Hortons in Brookfield was awarded a 20-year citation for their business and contributions to the area. Betty's son and daughter-in-law, Jack and Leah, represented her at the awards reception on Tuesday, November 3rd, in Orlando, Florida.

I would like to acknowledge the history and contributions Roop's Service Station and Tim Hortons have given to their community and to congratulate them on receipt of this award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

SAULNIER, PETER - STREET-NAMING EVENT

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform members about a street-naming dedication event in Armdale that honoured an important individual. In the Spring of 2015 the Cowie Hill connector was renamed Peter Saulnier Drive. Mr. Saulnier passed away in 2008. He was a cherished volunteer, historian, and parade mascot, appearing as Santa for almost 30 years in the Spryfield Santa Claus parade.

On September 20th family, friends, councillors, members of the Mainland South Heritage Society, and myself gathered at the sign-unveiling and cutting-of-the-ribbon ceremony, followed by a reception at the Captain William Spry library.

On behalf of the House of Assembly I wish to extend our gratitude to members of the society and Councillor Mosher, for the research and time spent to create a lasting legacy for a deserving local community volunteer, and to Mr. Saulnier's family and friends for making the event very special. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**ROMEO, EILEEN/MACDOUGALL, EVELYN:
DAVIS DAY EVENT - ORGANIZERS**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank two Florence sisters, Eileen Romeo and Evelyn MacDougall, who have remained committed to honouring the memory of those lost in the mines. The two lost their father, George Carey, in 1947.

Each day on Davis Day the community of Florence gathers at the monument in St. Stephen's Church graveyard to honour the lives of those lost in the mines. Eileen and Evelyn have organized the Davis Day event since 1999.

It is a true honour to have this opportunity to thank those women for all their dedication and organization of this Davis Day ceremony. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

STEVENS, TERRI/SOBEYS COLE HBR. - FUNDRAISING

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to congratulate the efforts of Terri Stevens and the team at Sobey's Cole Harbour on their fundraising efforts for the 2015 Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation CIBC Run for the Cure.

The run, as my colleagues know, was held this year on Sunday, October 4th. Terri is a hard-working resident of my riding. With the help of an enthusiastic team of supporters, Terri raised \$1,100 for the Run for the Cure. Terri also promoted the food bank drive at the

Cole Harbour Sobeys, where she works. I would like to express my thanks to Terri for all of her efforts and what she inspires in the community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MACMILLAN, JESSIE
- ATL. SUPER FEATHERWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Nova Scotia will see boxing action this Saturday night at the Dartmouth Sportsplex. The sweet science has a lengthy history in this province, Mr. Speaker.

West Bay Road's hard-punching George "Rock-a-Bye" Ross; Stellerton's Art Hafey, dubbed the "Toy Tiger" because of the size of his heart; Canadian champ Buddy Daye, who was once a Sergeant-at-Arms right here in this Legislature; Sam Langford, born in Weymouth Falls, rated number two in *The Ring Magazine's* greatest puncher of all time - certainly one of the greatest fighters of all time, who was never given a title shot because he was so feared.

On Saturday, Jessie MacMillan of Port Hood will be fighting for the Atlantic Super Featherweight championship. He will be using his height and reach to his advantage. He will show heart, he will punch hard, and he will be feared. May we in this Legislature wish this Nova Scotian well - indeed, may he knock his opponent straight into next week.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

DONOVAN, MICHAEL/MACLEAN, ALEX
- E&Y ENTREPRENEUR AWARDS

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to recognize two Nova Scotians who were honoured in Toronto on Tuesday as part of Ernst & Young's annual Entrepreneur of the Year Awards: Michael Donovan of DHX Media and Alex Maclean of East Coast Lifestyle.

Across Canada there were 183 finalists and 51 award winners. Alex Maclean, who started East Coast Lifestyle as a business project while studying at Acadia, has seen his company excel, selling over 500,000 units in 55 countries, and to the likes of recognizable persons such as Sydney Crosby and Ed Sheeran. Alex was given a special citation for Marketing Excellence for the Atlantic Region.

Michael Donovan, academy award-winning producer and founder of Salter Street Films and DHX Media, was the recipient of EY's Entrepreneur of the Year Award, a stunning achievement and one that qualifies him for EY's World Entrepreneur of the Year

Award amongst the winners from 50 other countries, to be given out in Monte Carlo in June 2016.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate these two outstanding entrepreneurs and Nova Scotians on their accomplishments and wish them continued success for many years to come.

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

**ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR:
FAIRVIEW FAM. RESOURCE CTR. - DONATION**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, on July 27th, Enterprise Rent-A-Car continued their overwhelming support of the Fairview Family Resource Centre by making an extremely generous donation of \$3,000 to Executive Director Natalie Brown and her team. Also on hand to accept the donation were a number of children from the community who will directly benefit from these funds, which will be used in support of resources and programming in the centre.

I would like to extend a very warm thank you to Enterprise, in particular Paul Evon and Scott LeBlanc, for the dedication and respect they have for the community of Fairview and the hard work done on behalf of the community by Natalie Brown and her team. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Just before the time expires for members' statements, I'll take the opportunity to provide my semi-annual friendly reminder about directly congratulating the great work going on in our constituencies. Members' statements, like all discourse in the Chamber, are intended to be directed through the Chair and not directly at the contents or the subject of your member statements. So if you can avoid using language and terminology that direct your congratulatory note directly to the subject of the note - in other words, use a third party - that would be greatly appreciated. Thank you very much.

The honourable member for Bedford.

EARLE, SARA: BLUENOSE MARATHON - CONGRATS.

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Bedford's Sara Earle on her success in May's Bluenose Marathon. Sara ran away with the first place medal in the women's half-marathon. As we all know, the annual Bluenose Marathon attracts thousands of competitors. The half-marathon drew 1,700 runners. Sara ran it in 1 hour, 29 minutes, and 23 seconds.

If I were allowed to, I would also want to congratulate Sara on her success in the prestigious Boston Marathon, where she was the second-fastest Nova Scotia woman with a time of just over 3 hours and 13 minutes.

I am delighted for, and rather envious of, Sara's athletic prowess, and I know all members of this House would want to wish her many more years of running a bit ahead of the crowd. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SMITH, SGT. CRAIG - ORDER OF MERIT OF THE POLICE FORCES

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and congratulate RCMP Sergeant Craig Smith on his most recent achievement as the first Black RCMP member to receive the honour of appointment to the Order of Merit of the Police Forces.

Sergeant Smith is also a chronicler of the African Nova Scotian and Canadian experience as recorded in four books he authored on the subject. He also lectured in many schools, as well as conferences in the U.S., including the National Alliance of Black School Educators in Detroit.

Sergeant Smith has received other awards and recognition for his advocacy work in the African Nova Scotian community. He is a Canadian National Griot Award winner and a Reverend Doctor William P. Oliver Black Wall of Fame inductee.

I applaud and congratulate Sergeant Smith on his many accomplishments and advocacy on behalf of the African Nova Scotian community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

STEWART, HUGH: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to congratulate Mr. Hugh Stewart of Antigonish on his retirement. Mr. Stewart has been General Manager of Purl Brooke Inc. Disaster Kleenup for 44 years, and in July 2015 he passed his business over to his daughter Candice MacQuarrie.

Like so many dedicated workers, Hugh may have officially retired as the general manager, but I'm certain he will still find ways to be involved with the business.

Hugh was also a municipal councillor, representing St. Josephs with the Municipality of the County of Antigonish. While I know he may officially be retired, I do not doubt that he will, by any means, slow down.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing Hugh a very happy retirement and pass along our thanks for his many years as an entrepreneur, as we also wish the best of luck to his daughter as she takes over this important business. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

PHARMACY ASSOC. (N.S.) - TAKE YOUR MLA TO WORK DAY

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to have participated in September's Take Your MLA to Work Day organized by the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia. MLAs and pharmacists joined ranks in pharmacies across the province.

The Mumford Sobeys Pharmacy hosted me for a chance to learn in action how the pharmacy works and to see the many services pharmacists provide. The work they do is amazing. The Sobeys Pharmacy on Mumford Road provides a number of wellness resources such as healthy cooking classes, mom and baby drop-ins, one-on-one nutrition sessions, a five-week healthy weight program, and a workshop on controlling cholesterol.

I was amazed by the pharmacy's Travel Wellness Clinic which operates out of the same location and provides consultations, immunizations, and medications. It was a fun, educational visit, giving me a new appreciation for the diverse services pharmacists provide.

I want to thank the pharmacy team for this opportunity and for the resource material given to me to place in the constituency office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

KEMP, VALDA: COMMUN. SERV. - THANK

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Valda Kemp of Terence Bay for her time and commitment over the past seven years as chairman of the SS Atlantic Heritage Park and Interpretation Centre. The luxury steamship *SS Atlantic* ran aground on Mar's Head, Lower Prospect, Nova Scotia, on April 1, 1873, the worst marine single vessel disaster to occur off the Canadian coast prior to the sinking of the *Titanic*. There were 952 souls on board and 390 were saved.

The SS Atlantic Heritage Park was developed by a group of volunteers whose mission it was, first, to restore the two burial sites and monuments and, second, to preserve the story of this disaster. The results of their efforts include an Interpretation Centre, which is home to the museum and craft shop, and a park with a beautiful boardwalk. Valda was instrumental in establishing this craft shop, and one of the highlights of the craft shop is the Nova Scotia tartan products. Terence Bay is the home of the Nova Scotia tartan. It was

originally designed by local resident Bessie Murray, in 1953, and produced by the Star of the Sea weaving studio in Terence Bay.

I would like the members of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in thanking Valda for her community service, and wish her and the SS Atlantic Society all the best in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The time allotted for Statements by Members has expired. We'll now move to the order of business, Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

PREM. - SHIPBUILDING STRATEGY: STATUS - PM DISCUSS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Despite promising to honour the shipyard contract in full, it now appears that the new Liberal Government in Ottawa is considering scaling it back. Federal briefing notes under consideration by the new Liberal Government there spell out options as part of the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy, including cancellation of some of the projects. The largest project in that strategy is the \$26 billion frigate program to be built here in Halifax.

I know the Premier has raised this with the new Minister of National Defence, but I would like to ask him if he also raised this concern with the Prime Minister when he saw him earlier this week?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As he knows, leading into the campaign, the Prime Minister was here and made an announcement that they are fully committed to the shipbuilding contract here in Halifax. I fully expect them to honour that commitment.

When I had an opportunity to speak with the National Defence Minister, who actually toured the shipyard, he spoke very highly of the men and women who are working there and the work that's ongoing. We fully expect them to continue to honour that. I think it was obvious that the former Conservative Government did not budget the appropriate amount of money associated to fulfill that contract. The current Prime Minister has committed to honouring that commitment.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Irving shipyard here in Halifax confirms that they are on time and on budget with the projects that they are responsible for. We have a new Prime Minister, we have a Premier here in this House, and the fact of the matter is that

Prime Minister Trudeau came to Halifax during the election campaign and promised that every ship would be built - all 15 frigates and all the Arctic patrol vessels.

So yes, we all have the same concern now that this is under review. I would like to ask the Premier, has he sought a guarantee from the Prime Minister or the Minister of National Defence that they will honour the commitment that Ottawa made to Halifax and the shipyard in full?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member again for the question. The Prime Minister was here prior to the election campaign and made a commitment to the people of Canada that those ships would be built. I spoke with the Minister of National Defence when he was here for the security forum and, again, talked about the great work that was happening on the commitment to the shipyard.

I read the article today in the news. I reached out to the Department of National Defence today. I'm waiting to get a return call from the Minister of National Defence, but it's my expectation, and I think the expectation of all Nova Scotians, that they will fulfill the contract at the shipyard and they'll fund it appropriately.

MR. BAILLIE: The Premier is correct. The Prime Minister, when he was running, did come to Halifax, and he committed to all of the frigates and all of the patrol ships that are going to be built at the Halifax Shipyard. But now the election is over, and the briefing notes from Ottawa say that some of these projects are under review, including the possibility of cancellations.

I'm going to ask the Premier, will he seek a guarantee from the federal government that they'll honour that promise that they made to the people of Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Again, as I said to the House, I've reached out to the Minister of National Defence. I think what the briefing note that the honourable member is reflecting is the fact that they're referring to the incompetence of the former federal government when it came to budgeting and the fact that there wasn't enough money to fulfill that contract. I fully expect, quite honestly, the Prime Minister to keep the commitment he made to the people of the Province of Nova Scotia.

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

**PREM. - CHIEF OF STAFF/ENVIRON. MIN.:
CONFIDENCE - TIME FRAME**

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nova Scotians have been disappointed about what has happened at the highest levels in the Liberal Government in recent weeks. They are upset that a Liberal Cabinet Minister invoked privilege to avoid

testifying in court, and they are concerned that the Premier's chief of staff urged the member for Dartmouth East to have a criminal matter dropped and also offered his wife a job to help bridge the gap following his removal from Cabinet.

My question for the Premier is, why did he continue to express confidence in Kirby McVicar and in his former Environment Minister after these unfortunate incidents became public?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. She is absolutely wrong when it comes to anything that is before the courts. At no time, at no time, at any time, did I ever suggest or reflect that anyone should be involved except allowing justice to be carried out in this province.

The member for Dartmouth East made a decision not to go to court for some obscure law which, as I've said to this House many times, I did not even know existed. It was a decision that he made on his own and that evening, when I discovered that he misled me on what was told to him by the Clerk of this House, I removed him from our caucus and from our Executive Council, exactly what Nova Scotians would expect me to do. And when it comes to my chief of staff, he is an honourable, outstanding man, who made a mistake and accepted the responsibility of that mistake.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, as I've said in this House and in the media, I take the Premier at his word when he says he didn't know that the member for Dartmouth East would refuse to appear in court, and that he didn't know what was said by his former chief of staff in that audio recording. Nevertheless, in recent weeks there has been a very public pattern of inappropriate conduct by top officials in the Liberal Government, and this has called into question the tone, the bar that has been set by the Premier for his office and across government.

So, my question for the Premier is this, what steps has he taken to ensure that the inappropriate behaviour by his top officials comes to an end?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I disagree with the premise of her question. I expect not only the members who work in my office, people who work across all government offices on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia, to do it with the highest level of integrity, and do it in the best interest of all Nova Scotians. When it has been brought to my attention, when that has not happened, I have acted.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I know the Premier wants to move on from the events of the past three weeks, and we would all like to move on, but there are questions that still remain unanswered, and the Premier still has not taken responsibility for the actions of the people he picked to serve in his Cabinet and to run his office.

So, my question for the Premier is this, why has he not tried to bring some closure to the entire affair and display some accountability by apologizing to Nova Scotians for what has transpired in recent weeks under his watch?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I believe I have acted on behalf of the people of this province in the way that the people of this province would want me to act. When information was brought to my attention that I believe was inappropriate, I acted quickly and swiftly to deal with it. At any time when I have made a mistake, I have no problem apologizing to the people of this province.

Unfortunately Mr. Speaker, even with you putting a ruling in this House, suggesting that the member misled this house about my language in this place, she is still unwilling to stand up and say I'm sorry. Why is it so hard for some members of this House to just apologize?

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

PREM. - DART. EAST MLA: CABINET RETURN - EXPLAIN

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, speaking of taking the actions that Nova Scotians expect, many Nova Scotians are still wondering, why did the Premier put the member for Dartmouth East back in the Cabinet in the first place in July, when there were so many questions still outstanding and so many issues unresolved? So, I'll just ask the Premier directly, why did he put the member for Dartmouth East back in his Cabinet in July, when there were so many issues unresolved?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As I've said many times in this house, last December the member for Dartmouth East was an alleged victim of an assault in a case. He had a number of death threats that had been sent to him. Members of this House would have seen the security following him around.

He had raised health issues as well, so I went to the member and at that time said to him, he either takes leave or I'm going to provide him a leave, and I told him at the time when he felt his health had returned, let me know and I would put him back in the queue of all members when it came to coming back into the Executive Council.

That's what took place, Mr. Speaker. He is no longer a member of this Executive Council, or in our caucus, because on the day that he invoked a privilege which is obscure to many Nova Scotians and used by members of this House, he gave me false information he said was provided by the Clerk. I have to be able to trust what everyone who sits around my Executive Table tells me, when I couldn't, I removed him not only from that table, but from our caucus.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the return to Cabinet in July seemed strange enough at the time, but now Nova Scotians know that many issues were unresolved at that time, including what the member for Dartmouth East would do when he was faced with the trial, which was supposed to occur earlier this Fall. That member spoke to the most senior member of the Premier's office about how he expected that trial to go away, and in fact, it did.

I will ask the Premier, why didn't he wait until the legal issues were resolved for the member for Dartmouth East before returning him to Cabinet?

THE PREMIER: Let me get this straight, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party suggests that every alleged victim in this province should be forced to sit idly by while they wait for a court proceeding to go forward. Is that what he is suggesting - that an alleged victim of anything in this province should put their life on hold?

I did what I said I would do. When the honourable member came back and suggested to me that his health had returned, I would look at him like all other members to come back to the Executive Council.

I had no idea - no idea - what was happening with the court proceeding. That is something the justice system will carry out and do its due diligence.

The honourable member in this House used an obscure law that every Nova Scotian believes was inappropriate. He misled me and this House, and I acted quickly and swiftly, as Nova Scotians expect me to.

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

PREM.: P3 MODEL - ASSOCIATED RISKS

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: When making decisions of public importance, government must ask themselves what's in the public interest? Do the benefits outweigh the risks?

Through our freedom of information request, we have obtained a briefing note on P3s prepared for the Premier's office by the Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness, which I will table, Mr. Speaker. In it, there are four redacted lines about the benefits of public-private partnerships and 45 redacted lines about the risks associated with P3 models.

My question for the Premier is this, could he please inform members of the House of the risks that are associated with the P3 model for public infrastructure?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The P3 model is a potential opportunity to build infrastructure in this province. It's a relationship between government and the private sector. We've seen where it has worked in this province and in other parts of Canada.

Are there challenges associated with it? Obviously, the contracts have to be built properly to make sure that it's in the best interests of taxpayers. We review them to see whether we go the P3 model or whether we build it ourselves. The fact of the matter is, when we've built buildings ourselves, we haven't done a great job at it. All I have to think of is the Truro Hospital, Mr. Speaker, what it was budgeted for and where it ended up.

All of these things have challenges. The appropriate thing is that the due diligence is done at the beginning, at the front end, and everyone knows what the parameters are when you go through it.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, there are substantial warning signs about the worth of the P3 model for public infrastructure. Auditors General right across the country have questioned the fiscal reasons for taking the P3 route. The new federal government of Canada has removed the Harper Government's P3 screening requirement for public infrastructure projects. Now we have learned that a deputy minister in the Premier's government has raised concerns in a briefing note to the Premier about a P3 model.

My question for the Premier is this, given the volume of evidence against P3s, why is his government considering this route for public infrastructure in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important for the honourable member to recognize that Nova Scotians gave us the privilege to govern this province. By doing so, they've asked us to look at all options when it comes to building infrastructure, when it comes to providing services to the people of this province. That's exactly what we intend to do, to go out and find the pros and the cons associated with any venture we go into.

It was their government that approved the convention centre, which is a P3 project. Why are they so opposed to P3 projects when they go ahead and do it? What happened when they crossed the floor?

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

PREM. - DEP. MIN.: TAX BREAK - EXPLAIN

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Nova Scotians were shocked this summer to learn that the Premier had hired a corporation as his senior deputy minister, B.F. Miller Services Incorporated. Everyone knows that the reason for that company was to save money, to give a tax break to that one person, a tax break that is not available to the rest of us who are

asked to pay our fair share, Mr. Speaker. Why did the Premier give such a special tax break to his senior deputy minister?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I also want to thank Mr. Miller for committing to do public service on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia. (Applause) He is doing an outstanding job on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia and to suggest that he is not paying taxes in the province is completely inaccurate. As a matter of fact, we were the ones who lowered the dividend credit that that Party complained about the fact we were doing. They were the very Party that complained in the House that we actually closed the gap.

That's what you get from that side of the House - complaint after complaint without a single reason to move this province forward. Let me be clear: Mr. Miller is paying taxes in Nova Scotia.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, everything the Premier said would be accurate if he had actually hired Mr. Miller as a person, like all the rest of us are hired in this province. But he didn't; he hired B.F. Miller Incorporated, a small business specifically designed to pay less tax than every other Nova Scotian. Those are the facts; that's what happened. Instead of just hiring the person, he created a special tax structure to pay less than the rest of us. It may be in Nova Scotia, but it is not the same amount that every other Nova Scotian is asked to pay.

The Premier once said outside this Chamber that he does not want to have two classes of workers in this province. So why did he go ahead and create two - one for Bernie Miller Incorporated and another for all the rest of us?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member knows what he is saying is completely inaccurate. We did not create any possibility. Every small-business owner in the Province of Nova Scotia can do that. Is that member saying that in this province we should be putting more pressure and closing small businesses in Nova Scotia, that no small-business owner in Nova Scotia should ever be involved with government? No small-business owner has the talent to be able to come into the Public Service and help us deliver services to Nova Scotia - is that what you are saying? Are you against small-business owners in this province? Are you against small-business people? (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

PREM.: OFFICE/CABINET ROOM - EXPENSES

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Premier. The government has been telling Nova Scotians that everyone must tighten their belts, everyone must feel the pain, yet hot on the heels of a \$42,000 office renovation for his own office

we learn that the Premier has spent \$75,000 to renovate a new Cabinet Room - this at a time when the government is cutting funding to many community organizations.

My question for the Premier today, why are snazzy offices more important than community organizations?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As I said to him - actually he would know, he visited my office with his daughter when he brought his daughter to work, and I invited him over. He should come, the only change in my office is a door - it's not \$42,000 to change to my door. There were renovations done in One Government Place. The only thing in my office was a doorway. It wasn't \$42,000.

Furthermore, to the changes in the Cabinet Room, Mr. Speaker, as you would know, the Speaker's Office required a Committee Room. We now have a Committee Room in One Government Place, where all members of this House have the privilege to come in and sit at committees and talk to Nova Scotians.

Those renovations were made, Mr. Speaker. Cabinet has to have a place to meet. He will never have to worry about that situation, but in future days (Applause) Let me be clear, there are people who will be given the privilege to be in the Executive Council and they need a meeting room.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Premier's concern over what I am concerned about. I think the Premier has plenty to be concerned about himself, sir, thank you very much.

When Nova Scotians fix up a room in their home, they try to get the best bang for their buck, and that means looking for the best price for things. Looking at the budget for the Cabinet renovation, it's hard to believe that the government looked for a bargain. The bill for painting alone in this room, \$20,000. Does the Premier believe that a \$20,000 paint job for a board room is a respectful use of taxpayer dollars or is it a snow job?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The reality is that this is space the people of the Province of Nova Scotia own. The renovations that were done were done by hard-working public servants on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia. The honourable member would know that.

Is he suggesting that the people who work for the people of Nova Scotia are incapable of renovating an office space, or would he prefer that we went out and rented a piece of space and left that one vacant?

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: CENTENNIAL BLDG. REPLACEMENT - P3 MODEL

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. The old Capital District Health Authority had a plan to replace the Centennial Building, with construction to begin in 2016. We heard from the Minister of Health and Wellness last week about a new plan with a new hospital - a plan that may be a public-private partnership, or P3 model.

I would like to ask the minister, is the P3 model the minister is considering for the construction of the new hospital, the delivery of health services, or both?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has referenced already today, in our tight fiscal times we will look at all options to provide the QEII facilities for the future. We know in this province that we have some very strong examples where P3 works very well - Scotia Surgery, and we also know that Tri-Star, the emergency medical vehicles, is again, a P3 arrangement. I believe the former government put Strongest Families in place with a private delivery of that service.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, in a government briefing note which I'll table entitled Public-Private Partnership in Health Care, there are four completed redacted lines about the benefits - four - and 45 redacted lines about the risks - 45. The Minister of Health and Wellness has already spoken about what he sees as some of the benefits of the public-private partnership in health care, but what are the risks?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, from my time in public office, but also as a citizen of Nova Scotia, we have examples in both ways of constructing buildings where the construction has been of a poor quality, the best price has not been garnered. We have examples in both areas. I think to say one can't work, if a private-public partnership can't work, is something I certainly don't believe in.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

MUN. AFFS.: WINDSOR/WEST HANTS AMALGAMATION - DETAILS

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, my question through you today is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. As is well-known by the minister, we have been having - I don't want to call it a "dispute," but an ongoing issue in Windsor-West Hants around amalgamation. We've had the citizens coalition, the ARC group, come together and put a petition together asking residents to sign in an effort to be amalgamated in our area.

I will read just a part of that: we the undersigned of the Municipality of West Hants believe our municipal governance structure cannot achieve the best results for our region due to the lack of co-operation between the Municipality of West Hants and the Town of Windsor. And it lists a number of examples.

At what point, once this bit of a unique piece is filed, where does the government get involved?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I think it's very exciting that we have seen local community groups being leaders when it comes to pushing for structural change in our province. There is no better scenario than in West Hants and Windsor why amalgamations need to happen in some areas. To see a grassroots movement moving in that direction at the community level, I think, shows a great spirit in that community to look toward the future and identify what they need to do to change. We'll be a partner with that group and all levels of government that want to be part of that change as well.

MR. PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister's answer. The document I just tabled has 2,500-plus signatures on it and I'm sure there will be more to come of those who are interested in that amalgamation to take place. Being that a third party, if you will, is part of tabling this application, is there a legislative change? I know the MGA is specific to how municipal partnerships work, but where this is a third party, is there a piece of legislation within the MGA section that could be amended or changed, et cetera, to allow the province to become a funding partner and support, as we've seen in other amalgamations or dissolutions, et cetera?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, any municipal governments that are interested in structural change, whether it's amalgamation, dissolution, what have you, they can find a partner in our government - a funding partner on occasion, as well. I know that the member opposite has been a champion for change in his community, he has been a champion for reason, and I want to thank him for pushing this issue locally.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank that member, for at a time when we have both Opposition Leaders standing up and dragging this House through a soap opera, the likes of which this House has not seen in a long time, that member stands up and speaks on behalf of his community, and all in this House could learn from his example. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney River-Myra-Louisbourg. (Interruptions)

TIR - FD TRAINING: WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS - EFFECTS

HON. ALIFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the opposite side of the House for that nice, warm welcome. (Laughter) My question will be to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Nova Scotia's fire services are instrumental to the safety of our homes and our communities. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I have 16 fire departments that serve my constituency. We understand that the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia is concerned

about a number of issues which they recently brought forward to the attention of this government.

A number of rural Nova Scotia volunteer fire departments are prevented from performing important training because of highway weight restrictions. My question to the minister is, does the minister intend to make any changes this Spring that will allow fire departments to do their training?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the member for the question. All of us in the House and all Nova Scotians would certainly agree on the importance of the fire services of Nova Scotia and the protection they give to our people.

Mr. Speaker, to be clear, those services are exempt from any restrictions when there is a fire, so it is only with respect to training and preparation for the fire services. Shortly after they met with our caucus in mid-October, about two weeks later the Fire Service Association representatives met with my senior officials like Dan Leopold to discuss some of these things. We are committed to working together and we are going to look at the changes. There's nothing that takes precedence over fire services and what they do in the community, so we are going to have those conversations, take their suggestions, and we're going to do everything we possibly can to make sure that we reflect in our policies and in our laws the exact things that the association is looking for. Thank you.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for that answer, because fire services are important, especially in rural Nova Scotia, so that's a positive answer and I appreciate it.

Another issue that concerns firefighters is the poor communications between TIR and Nova Scotia emergency providers. Knowing that a road is closed, a bridge is out, or various services aren't operating saves precious minutes when emergency providers are headed to an incident. My question to the minister is, will the minister commit to looking at ways of improving communications between TIR and emergency providers to save time and confusion and, hopefully, lives?

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that's the second issue that the Fire Service Association brought to our department. A lot of what focused around the conversation at least, was informing fire services that are maybe outside the jurisdiction, or the area of the particular fire, so bringing in and collaborating with other fire services and volunteer firefighters so that they're available and get a heads-up with respect to the fire.

Again, for the road closures, there is a process and procedure in place that allows EMO, fire services, and police services to get a heads-up on restricted roads that are closed, but certainly again one of their requests specifically was that we look at that and create a mechanism whereby they have a lot of the control over letting that service, letting the people know when there are restricted areas that they can go in and possibly open them up.

So that is on the agenda and we'll do everything we can with communications as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HEALTH & WELLNESS - HILLSIDE TRENTON: FLY ASH - UPDATE

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. I want to acknowledge and thank the minister for visiting Trenton and meeting with the Hillside-Trenton Environmental Watch group on September 28th. One week after this meeting I received a request to visit the Hillside area to once again personally witness a heavy covering of fly ash that has plagued the area of Hillside, Trenton, Pictou Landing and the surrounding area. My question to the minister is, will the minister give an update of any progress that has occurred since the September meeting?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, yes, as the member opposite has pointed out I did meet with the concerned citizens from Trenton and Hillside in particular, who live close to the Trenton plant. I certainly got a great insight into a wide variety of concerns that they presented on that occasion. On November 3rd, I met with the CEO of Nova Scotia Power, Bob Hanf, to present those concerns to him.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, following the election, this particular group met with the former Environment and Energy Ministers and they told the Hillside-Trenton group this issue was a top priority. They have been seeking help in solutions that have affected their properties, vehicles, gardens and orchards receiving coatings of fly ash. Their main concern is the possibility of health side-effects from these emissions. My question to the minister is, will the minister initiate an independent study to determine what impact, if any, the fly ash emissions could have on the health of the residents living in this area?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that question. At this point I will get a follow up from the CEO of Nova Scotia Power, Bob Hanf, in terms of what I presented. I'm sure it is information that for the most part he is very familiar with, but I certainly want to see his reaction to my meeting. I also know that the date for the industrial permit is also coming very close, in the next month or so. Again, we will be in touch with the residents, once we see where those two reports bring us.

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

TIR: P3 TOLL HWYS. - FEASIBILITY

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. I will table a briefing note prepared by the Premier's Office on public-private partnerships. It states, "An estimated more than \$300 million in tolls were produced on the Cobequid Pass for a deal in which private financiers

put up \$66 million. The Nova Scotia government is paying an effective interest rate of 10% for 30 years, twice its rate of borrowing.” Given this information and the government’s own briefing note, why is the minister contemplating building more P3 toll highways?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Certainly, with respect to the Cobequid Pass, from a funding perspective and from a policy perspective, the amounts collected through the tolls for the user fees, they pay the bills. They pay the operational costs and they go into the corporation which covers the finances of a tolling area and a corridor that is extremely expensive and extremely valuable for our safety, for our mobility of the province, and certainly for the economy.

There is no cookie cutter for P3s; there are a number of different aspects that go into policies. With respect to the Cobequid Pass, that decision was made a long time ago. I know that the people who travel through that corridor who use it, from businesses to residents to everyday users, think that’s a success in terms of its ability to pay, in terms of the safety for that roadway, the maintenance that’s done there. That is a particular policy that, I think, is a pretty strong one, but again it’s a case-by-case basis when it comes to P3 models. Thank you.

MR. BELLIVEAU: In a freedom of information response obtained by the NDP caucus, the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal provided 17 pages of blacked out information related to P3 partnerships. Those 17 blacked out pages were a presentation on tolling nine P3 highways. Will the minister make this full presentation available so that the independent body can evaluate and assess a long-term impact to Nova Scotians on going down the P3 highways once again?

MR. MACLELLAN: One of the messages that we get repeatedly from Nova Scotians with respect to our 100-Series Highways is the idea of safety. What can we do to improve safety to enhance safety for all of us - those of us in the House, the many Nova Scotians, and our family and friends who use the highways?

We embarked on a cutting-edge, first-of-its-kind feasibility study. Not only will it give us the information required, but it will also give public consultation, so the people of Nova Scotia will have their say. We’re not imposing that on anyone. We’re going to get the information, we’re going to give it to the people who put us here, and we’ll let them decide and provide the feedback. There’s nothing wrong with that approach.

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

TIR - C.B. RAIL: FED. GOV’T. - CONVERSATIONS

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: My question is also to the Minister of TIR. As we know, the St. Peter’s junction of the Sydney section of the railway has been shut down.

The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal has been doing all he can to help save the rail line. In his September 22, 2014, article in the *Cape Breton Post*, the Liberal MP for Sydney-Victoria said: “We see the government helping other short lines remain open in other parts of Canada, we should be seeing the same here.” And I’ll table that article, Mr. Speaker.

My question is, what conversations have been taking place with the federal government and the member for Sydney-Victoria now that the federal government has changed?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I thank the honourable member across the hall for that question. Look, the consistent message we have had - I certainly have had - with respect to Cape Breton rail is that the ideal situation is that we have a private sector entity operate this line and it supports a business model at the Port of Sydney and elsewhere in the Cape Breton region to provide real traffic.

We’re still there with respect to the legislation that was supported on the rail line by all parties. With all the activities we’ve done around the rail, we need to find that private sector player to run this line.

Having said that, when there are discussions with the federal government, with our municipal partners and, of course, with the province, we’ll do everything we can to support that. But where we are now is where we were on day one - we want the private sector to run this rail line.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, we know that the rail line operated with a subsidy from the provincial government and was breaking even with that subsidy.

The MP then asked the Transport Minister what she would do to save the line, and she said the federal government is not going to be involved in keeping this line open. The response from the MP at the time, Mr. Speaker, was that the minister’s answer was unacceptable.

Has the minister been given reassurances that the MP will get an acceptable answer now that the federal Liberals are in power?

MR. MACLELLAN: At this point, there is literally zero traffic on the line. There was a few hundred - 500 per year - prior to the decision of Genesee & Wyoming to discontinue and ultimately file for abandonment.

We’re a long way from talking about infrastructure investments if we don’t have traffic, if we don’t have a business model. These are moot points now. What we’re looking for - we’re working with the port authority, the port development officials, the mayor of the CBRM, and, of course, our federal partners who are there at the table with us. But, Mr.

Speaker, we have to create the case and look at what business options are out there. Then we can talk about infrastructure and we can talk about investment.

But until we get to that point, there's no one responsible for doing the infrastructure improvements and upgrades that are required on the Sydney subdivision until we have traffic on the line.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - ABERDEEN HOSP.:
MENTAL HEALTH UNIT - STAFFING**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. The short-stay mental health unit at the Aberdeen Hospital was supposed to reopen on November 3rd. Today is the 27th, and it hasn't reopened, and there's no sign that it's going to happen any time soon. Today is the 26th, sorry - little difference in what's happening here.

Yesterday, during Adjournment debate, in speaking about this unit the member for Halifax Chebucto said the NSHA told us it was a temporary closure and we expect the NSHA to recruit the professionals they need to reopen the facility. At the same time, members in the community are telling me that the job postings for the positions in this unit have been removed - so it's a little hard to recruit if you're not actually posting jobs.

My question for the minister today is, is this government recruiting for those positions or not?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: What I can convey to the member opposite is that the Nova Scotia Health Authority is responsible for the recruitment of clinicians and, as of last week when I had my briefing, I was basically informed about the work that is going on in Pictou as a result of the closure. I hadn't asked about, nor was I presented with, where the status is on recruitment.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that response. I'm concerned to hear that the minister is not checking on the status of recruitment because we have been led to believe that this is completely a staffing issue and you only solve staffing issues with recruitment. Last night in late debate we also heard that additional temporary hires are being made in the hospital to support the emergency department with mental health professionals.

So we are hearing about temporary positions being filled while the temporary closure shows no signs of stopping, so every indication really points to the fact that this government is leaving the short-stay unit closed. That's the concern. My question for the minister today is, knowing what he now knows, will he direct the NSHA to make the

appropriate arrangements and hire the appropriate staff so that the short-stay unit can be reopened just as he promised it would be?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, in terms of the overall plans of mental health delivery for the province, that is in the hands of the Nova Scotia Health Authority. I have every confidence in Dr. Courey and the work that she is doing, to know what the citizens of our province need and also in terms of the work of Dr. Vienneau in Pictou, the right solutions for mental health now and for the future. When I look at the delivery of mental health in the home - yes, a leading practice that is now taking place in Pictou - I know also that with the development of the emergency room there will be separate triaging for those in trauma and mental health crisis, which will be state of the art for Pictou County. Thank you.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: P3 MODELS - EFFICACY

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. When questioned about various provincial Auditor General concerns about the public-private partnership, the Health and Wellness Minister said that he supports them, stating that P3 models have served this province very well and cited the Scotia Surgery as an example, and I'll table that. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Health and Wellness tell us why he believes that P3 models have served Nova Scotia well?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, we know that in terms of providing health services in the province, there are only four examples that I'm familiar with. These are four that have actually served our province very well, some for a number of years, some more recently such as the Strongest Families program, which has a private deliverer of mental health service; Medtronic, again which procurement of defibrillators; those partnerships have worked extremely well in our province and I think it's important to be open to that possibility. I think that the member opposite knows that as a government we have made no such commitment but it is part of the investigative process.

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a briefing note prepared by the Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness where he writes that another criticism of the P3s where a private clinic is contracted to provide a publicly insured service is that the private clinic does simple surgeries leaving the more complex cases for the public health system. The public system is burdened with more complex care. This means that any cost savings that come from the reduced overall number of surgeries are clawed back by the increased cost of those complex surgeries.

Given that his own deputy minister has raised concerns about the P3 projects, why is the minister potentially considered a public private partnership for the new hospital or even the health care delivery in the province?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I know at this stage is that we have made a considerable change in the way that all capital construction projects will go on from this day forward. We know that we have had some situations where both the cost and the quality of the build did not have the kind of oversight whether it was private or public building. We now have put in place a process where stage gating will require a company both in terms of meeting the financials as well the quality will be required throughout every build from this time forward.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

IMMIGRATION - REFUGEES: HEALTH SERVICES - DETAILS

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Immigration. The federal government has promised 25,000 Syrian refugees by Christmas. They have since realized that is not practical. When these refugees do come they will need our help with health services, with career planning services. What specific funding will the province offer to help?

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. Nova Scotia is ready to do its part and to share responsibility and work with the federal government as well as all provinces in this country. We've had extensive discussions and extensive co-operations from all across government here in the province, as well as our settlement organizations, local groups, all our partners. We had discussions with the federal government, and at this point in time it is our expectation that the federal government will be paying for the settlement resources for the refugees that are coming. Thank you.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, it is good to hear that there are funds being made available. Those who come to Nova Scotia will need to feel valued and their first experience, when they do come here, has to be a good one.

Within two weeks, will the minister table a plan of action that shows the federal funding that will be coming forward and how the province will use that funding to retain these people as contributing citizens of our province, because I believe they deserve that opportunity?

MS. DIAB: The situation is one that is unfolding. Every single day there's more and more information we are learning. I'm very happy to say that I have had three conversations already with my federal counterpart. We also had a telephone conference call yesterday with all our federal/provincial/territorial ministers. I have officials going to Toronto this weekend to obtain more information. I've already told the media and told the public that we will be providing information as we have it, so definitely we will be doing that once the information becomes available.

We have been working across government departments - with the Canadian Red Cross, with our wide-reaching partners across the province, with ISANS, with all the service providers - so there's extensive work that's going on. Thanks very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

EECD: REFORM - COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Nova Scotia students lag behind other provinces in math and reading scores. The Freeman report in November, followed by an action plan released in January, offered the public a glimpse of possible improvements.

In a CBC article dated October 30, 2014, it states that yesterday the minister said that "... she wasn't interested in simply 'tinkering' with a system that has been through too many small changes in recent years." My question to the minister is, wouldn't a collective agreement without key education reform be considered tinkering?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for the question. I am very proud to stand here as the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development to acknowledge that education has become a priority for our government. We recognize that 19,000 Nova Scotians told us that we needed to look at change. We embraced that, we brought teachers in who are the ones who deliver the change in the classroom. The change was designed by teachers to respond to the very concerns that have been raised about math and literacy in this province and we are moving forward with the action plan.

MR. DUNN: I think education is a priority of all Parties in the House, and I'm very happy to hear that it is a priority of the present government.

The government traded everything that would positively impact students in exchange for teachers' salary increases. In the minister's own press release she is quoted as saying, "I look forward to reviewing the report and creating an action plan for change." I'll table that, Mr. Speaker.

Seeing as there has been nearly a year for review, my question for the minister is, if this deal is voted down, will the minister recommit to the educational reform that actually impacts students, as presented in the Freeman report?

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

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education on an introduction.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I would like to draw the members' attention to the east gallery where I have a couple of constituents joining us today, Peter and Hope MacIntosh. Hope is here to learn more about how government works, and I would like the honourable members to give them a warm welcome here in the House.

And, Mr. Speaker, I just want to let them know that I'll join them as soon the Whip lets me out of here, because he's really tough. Thank you.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place on a point of order. During Question Period the Premier indicated that you had ruled in fact that I had misled the House and that subsequently to that I had refused to apologize.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that was your ruling at all, that there was misleading of the House. I also believe that the allegation of misleading the House is unparliamentary, and I would ask you to look into that and review the transcripts and make your decision to the House, which is the proper thing to do.

MR. SPEAKER: I'll take that under advisement.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Apparently the two hardest words to say in the English language remain the two hardest words to say according to the Interim Leader.

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. 130.

Bill No. 130 - Community of Sackville Landfill Compensation Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 130 be read for a second time.

Mr. Speaker, in government terms these would be considered to be housekeeping amendments. The changes we are proposing today are a direct result of a request that was brought forward from HRM to clarify language around this particular Act. Specifically, HRM wants to clarify the definition of “bursary;” to authorize that funding from the community of Sackville Landfill Compensation Fund be awarded as bursaries to students in this community; and the third amendment makes these changes retroactive to 1993. So, for the sake of the House, just a bit of history here.

The community of Sackville was given a trust in 1993 in response to the fact that they had been the site of one of the old-style landfills, Mr. Speaker. It was decided by the board that’s involved in this group that the money that was given to them in trust for thanking them for being the home to this site would be given out in bursaries to community members. So, it’s been brought to our attention that HRM does not believe that the language is clear enough to ensure that future students can receive these bursaries.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that bursaries, particularly ones that are targeted to people in a community that need financial assistance are absolutely critical, so we were very happy to partner with HRM and bring these amendments forward so that this community organization can continue to provide support for students who want to seek a post-secondary education and improve their position in life. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, it’s my pleasure to rise today and speak briefly to Bill No. 130. It is my understanding that the community of Sackville invested a portion of the total Landfill Compensation Fund in 1993 for the purposes of bursaries for students pursuing post-secondary education, and has already been distributing this financial support to students. I am pleased to see that this bill officially authorizes these bursaries and allows the community to decide on criteria for the bursary for students from the Sackville area, and to continue to provide financial support to students pursuing post-secondary education.

I think we would all agree that this is a good bill to move forward, and it is more or less a housekeeping bill, but I just want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to it.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I do have just a few comments on this bill. We do support this piece of legislation. It does what the minister has indicated. I think it clarifies what the practice has been for a couple of decades now, the result of a fund that came through the community of Sackville hosting a landfill for many years.

After the closure of that site, there was \$500,000 placed in a trust that would go to future bursaries for students from Sackville High and Millwood High. That has taken place every year on graduation, that students who have graduated from the community have an opportunity to receive those bursaries to further their education.

I know it has been greatly appreciated by all those who have received that, and greatly appreciated by the community for ensuring that the compensation that was awarded because of hosting the dump for so long has gone to a great cause. I know many who have benefited from that have gone on to further their education. They have contributed immensely back to our province.

We do support this, and I look forward to it going through the process of the House.

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

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, I stand in my place today and would like to share a few words concerning amendments to the Community of Sackville Landfill Compensation Act. This week, on Tuesday, November 24th, my distinguished colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs introduced amendments to the Community of Sackville Landfill Compensation Act. These amendments are intended:

“ . . . to provide Halifax Regional Municipality with clear authority to award bursaries to graduates in the community of Sackville.

The amendments to the Community of Sackville Landfill Compensation Act will update and clarify the definitions in the Act to reflect changes within the municipality since the legislation was put in place.

The amendments clarify that the bursary fund is for the benefit of the community of Sackville and students will continue to be able to apply for support for post-secondary studies.

The Community of Sackville Bursary Fund was created in June 1994. Making the amendments retroactive will verify the municipality's authority to make prior and future awards.”

The Sackville landfill site closed - and I want to emphasize the word “closed” - in December 1996, after 18 years of operation. I would also like to add to those 18 years that they were difficult years for many residents of Sackville, especially those living in close proximity to what we referred to as “the dump.” Mr. Speaker, something good came from those 18 long years of frustration. That is the Community of Sackville Landfill Compensation Act.

In an interview, Councillor Brad Johns of District 4 said, “I think it has been a wonderful asset to the community of Sackville as a whole over the past 20 years.” There have been many opportunities for community projects that would never have seen reality if it wasn’t for the compensation money set aside. Further, many have benefited and received funds toward their post-secondary education.

Again, these amendments to Bill No. 130 “. . . will update and clarify the definitions in the Act to reflect changes within the municipality since the legislation was put in place,” and will further “. . . clarify that the bursary fund is for the benefit of the community of Sackville.” The plan is to enable students to continue to apply for support toward their post-secondary education. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for their comments and support of this bill, particularly our colleague on this side, who I know is from the area and has experienced some of the effects of the history of this bill.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move to close debate on Bill No. 130.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 130. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 131.

Bill No. 131 - Maintenance and Custody Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I would perhaps just clarify why it is that there has been a little confusion. The bill itself will be renaming the Maintenance and Custody Act, but right now until we pass it, it is the Maintenance and Custody Act. That is a great example of why we need to change this Act, its language is archaic, it’s not conducive to helping people at a difficult time in their lives when there is family breakup.

Before I begin, I'd like to move that the Maintenance and Custody Act be now read for a second time. We must put that on the record before we go on about the details in the bill, so thank you. I know the Clerk is happy when we get that out.

As I said, these amendments are going to modernize and update the language in the Act. It will also include renaming the legislation as the Parenting and Support Act. I hope that very soon that is what will roll off our tongues, rather than Maintenance and Custody as is currently the state.

The new name, along with revised language throughout, and definitions, and terminology will help to properly put the focus of the Act on protecting the best interests of children. I think everyone in the House understands that being a parent is a hard job at the very best of times, and it becomes so much more complicated and difficult when parents are separating and they no longer live under the same roof.

The changes that we are proposing in this bill will make our family laws clearer and more effective in guiding families that are navigating these very many challenges that come with a family breakup. This legislation will also give guidance to the courts and others in the legal community as they help to provide advice and support to families who are going through this difficult time.

We know that separation and divorce are difficult and emotional situations for families and they are especially hard on children. We want to make sure that the law doesn't make it any more confusing or complicated. It is my expectation that this legislation will provide families with the support that they need to ensure the best interests of their children are always put first when parenting decisions are being made.

We have consulted widely and taken the advice of our expert advisory panel, which includes legal and court representatives as well as members of the public. The changes included in this bill represent one more step in what has been a five-year process; at the department we call it the Family Law Reform Project. That is a big project, it's ongoing, and there will be more work to be done because we really want to review all of our laws that relate to family law and make it more accessible, more available to people to understand, using more regular English - if I could say - so that it doesn't become obscure and difficult for people to understand. The reason for that and I think it's important for members of the House to know that, certainly, in my new role as Justice Minister I have learned a lot about the courts, I'm learning a lot more as time goes along, but it's really very distressing to know how many people have to go to court who are unrepresented.

Although we have a wonderful legal aid system, they can't represent many of the people, they don't meet the criteria or they don't fall into that category, and we have people who can't afford to engage their own lawyers. That means they're struggling to prepare to go to court, often in very contentious times, to make their case about their children and

how they'll be cared for and who gets responsibility, or primary responsibility, and it becomes very difficult.

I hope the language that we'll be putting into the Act will make it a little bit easier, there will be more guidance, there will be more of an ability for a citizen of Nova Scotia, without legal training, to pick up the Act and understand what they need to do to prepare. I know that throughout the justice system, all of the players are doing their utmost to be able to assist people, to provide some legal advice. We have a new legal clinic that has begun once a week with lawyers providing their time free of charge to people. We are trying to do more and more on access to justice.

I want the members of the House and the public to understand that making these changes to this Act, a lot of which have to do with terminology and language, is part of that access to justice issue. We're doing our part through the Family Law Reform Project. I think that's very important.

Just to let members know, previously there were amendments to the Act in 2012, and again in the Spring of 2014. In 2014 under our government, those were changes to grandparent access and application provisions, which were introduced and passed at that time. Many members of the House will know that grandparents have spoken out loudly and had in the past wanted to have more recognition in law when it came to family breakup, and that was done in 2014.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, this is another step in that continuum of changes that we've made to the Act. These amendments highlight the importance of clarifying the responsibilities of each parent. They also bring Nova Scotia in line with what many other Canadian jurisdictions have already done. We're modernizing our Act and bringing it up to a higher standard.

One of the areas that is dealt with in this legislation is the question of relocation. We live in an ever more mobile society. More and more people are moving for work, or for other reasons - for education - and they leave our province and go elsewhere.

With that in mind - it's happening in other jurisdictions as well - we've actually addressed the question of relocation when the parents are going to be living in different locations. As you can appreciate, and I know all members can appreciate, this has a tremendous impact on children. The legislation now, for the first time, will provide guidance to families and courts faced with the challenges that arise when one parent or guardian wants to relocate with the child or children. As we can all appreciate, Mr. Speaker, this is especially traumatic for the children and for the parent left behind, especially if that parent is substantially involved in their children's lives.

Currently there are no guidelines to address how to factor in the child's best interests when it comes to relocation. What the bill will do is ensure that the maximum

notice be given for any plan to move. It will put the onus on the parents to ensure that a relocation considers the best interests of the child. These provisions would make Nova Scotia a leader in Canada, so they're very important. Right now, as was said, there is no guidance, nothing to guide you in terms of what the parents can do in the case of a relocation. Somebody really could up and move suddenly and not give any notice to the other family members, to the other parent, and not even discuss how this is working for the children.

Now if the parents can't come together and come to an understanding, there is now a recourse to come before the courts and make your case as to why you believe the family should not move and the child should stay. Or if you're the parent who wants to move with the child, you would have to make a case as to why you were taking the child and why it's in the best interest of the child.

You'll hear me say that quite often in my remarks about this bill and many others if they have to do with children; we are talking about what is in the best interests of the children. That has become enshrined more and more in our legislation. It's a term we're using here. We're using it in the bill that has come before us from the Community Services Minister as well. It's very important. I think it's a shift in how we think about children. So much of the language that we used previously related to property issues, and we want to personalize and humanize the language that we use when we're talking about children and our access to children, our time spent with children.

The relocation, as I say, is very important. I want members to know that we would be among the first to address this, and we have addressed it in a way that is different than the other provinces that have started to. We think we're using best practices in this regard.

With our amendments, we're also introducing provisions for the use of parenting plans. I know anybody who has worked in the legal world has worked with these. They have been called for in practice. People have been asked to present parenting plans, but they've never had any recognition in our law. We've added that provision here so that they're defined and understood. Really, it's our law catching up with some of the practice that is being asked for by the courts. What it will do is encourage parents to go through the list of what should be in a parenting plan and address the issues around the children's health, their education, and their general well-being, and decide how that's going to be managed going forward.

By doing that, they arrive before the courts better prepared, having worked out some of the issues and having had a chance to think about some of the issues before they come before a judge and get to court. So it's really helpful in the cases that they've thought of these things early on and it's not left to the end when perhaps there's more conflict or more difficulty. It really is catching up to best practices and putting this in the law. We believe that the introduction of "parenting plan" will be very important.

The amendments, as I said earlier, are going to revise language surrounding parenting responsibilities. I would just like to go through a few of those. Specifically, the term “custody” will be continued in the Act, but it will be given a clear definition as a starting point for understanding. Previously that wasn’t there, and it will now have a strong definition. We’ll also replace the words “access” and “visiting privileges” with “parenting time,” “contact time,” and “interaction.” Those are the three new terms: “parenting time,” “contact time,” and “interaction.” We’ll also update terminology, replacing “maintenance” with “support,” and as I highlighted before, the name of the Act will become the Parenting and Support Act.

Our goal here is to shift attention toward parental responsibilities and compassion and to use language that recognizes the importance of keeping the child’s best interest at the forefront of all decision making. Finally, the changes include new enforcement provisions which will give the courts specific options to enforce parenting arrangements under a court order.

Coherent, clear legislation helps everyone. Our changes highlight the importance of parental responsibility, respect what’s in the best interest of the child, and provide us with guidelines and language that are current and responsive to the needs of families in changing and sometimes challenging times.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to hearing the comments of my colleagues.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, we will be supportive of any activity that makes the difficult situation of family breakup easier. When you look at the detail of this bill, you can see how many issues must be resolved for children in these situations. We think about parents, how each may have different preferences - you could have different culture, different spiritual upbringing, different heritage, and I’m sure both parents will want to have an opportunity to raise their child, to instill those values, things that are important to them, that they will want their children to feel are important. You can see how important this kind of legislation is and how these changes, we hope, also will help in these situations.

We do hear that grandparents groups are supportive. We’ve heard stories many times about grandparents who - their grandchildren may not get access to their own grandparents, and that is an issue. I know there are some parents who don’t want to have to deal with that. I know there are two sides to that coin, but it is a matter that there needs to be some mechanism to have that determined and have it determined for both the children and for their grandparents.

I also see the issue of relocation. We live in a province - I know in the rural area I represent, many times young people with young families have to move away. If there is a family breakup, it could just mean moving to the city, but in such a situation that may mean there's a weekly drive back and forth to the city. I know many members drive each week for work, but imagine adding for people who don't have that commitment but have to add that commitment to their weekly lifestyle in terms of trying to ensure the child gets to see both parents.

I know that's just simple reality, Mr. Speaker, but I know there has to be a mechanism to help to determine how that is going to work and particularly with this legislation we're looking at situations where perhaps one of the parents has had to move outside the province.

Of course we know how common that is. I know in my area how many people are working out West. Some have relocated there; others are back and forth. This is becoming a more common issue perhaps than it has ever been.

I guess to close, we do look forward to hearing Nova Scotians who may have other ideas, perhaps concerns about this legislation. We look forward to seeing if they will come forward in the Law Amendments Committee, when they have an opportunity to do so.

To close, Mr. Speaker, if this legislation helps the system to work better, it may lead to more positive and stable relations between parents who have broken apart. I can think of nothing else that would be more beneficial to their children that if things are at least stable and conciliatory, for the children's benefit. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, this is a piece of legislation that I have personally dealt with in various versions for many years. I certainly concur with the previous speakers on this issue, that the language is sparse and the language is antiquated.

We in our society have been able, I believe, to trace the changes that were needed to come into sync with our different views of parenting. We now recognize that it isn't just automatically going to be the mother who gets custody of the children; the father is certainly given full consideration in the courts today. Grandparents are being given consideration for access and all these issues are all guided under what is best for the children.

I have a tendency, I guess, to look at the legislation as it has evolved through somewhat of a gender lens. While I indicated that historically women were usually awarded custody, that also the laws were not meeting the financial economic needs of the single woman who was raising her children. Oftentimes she was on social assistance and any amount that she was given in her cheque was clawed back by any amount that the father

was to contribute. In fact, it wasn't uncommon in the courtrooms for the judges to discourage the women from seeking support from the father because of this factor; they were only going to lose out on their social assistance cheque anyway. It was a frustrating aspect and approach to the practice of law.

Things have changed and things have improved. There were instances, though, when legislation simply failed to address issues faced by women when the family broke up. The chances of a woman getting spousal support were very limited. It wasn't until Justice Bertha Wilson came to the Supreme Court of Canada and her leading decision in *Moge v. Moge* where she actually ruled that spousal support could be awarded, and provided very specific guidelines, which included acknowledging that the mother or the spouse had given up her career in making the decision by both parties for her to stay home and raise the children.

Believe it or not, that sounds pretty trite today but it was an astounding decision at its time in late 1989 and in the early 1990s, but it has been a slow process.

Women in this province were unable to get an employment split of their spouse's employment pensions. In fact, we had case law in this province, *Clarke v. Clarke*, that specifically prohibited it and we were the only province in the country with that type of legislation. There was a strong dissent in *Clarke v. Clarke* by Justice Nancy Bateman which the courts, essentially, just followed. And they did make awards of pension splits in spite of the case law. Eventually, our legislation caught up with that and now we have legislation that ensures that pensions will be split and it's not a big issue, but it certainly was in the 1980s and 1990s.

Legislation on family matters has often lagged behind and particularly, and I believe, as I said I view it through a gender lens - it is often women who have suffered. I am very pleased to, it wasn't just to see the legislation - can anyone describe reading legislation as a joyful act, I don't know - but I was really pleased to read the language of the legislation.

These amendments are an attempt to create more certainty and, hopefully, to reduce the courtroom custody battles. For years the courts have tried to introduce processes that will reduce the amount of contested cases under this particular Statute and also under the Divorce Act and various others. But this bill and the amendments are an effort to create a certain balance. Do you want to resolve your matter and not go to the courtroom? You can read it, it is user-friendly. A lawyer can give it to their client and say, just read through this; this is an easy read.

If it doesn't, and if the client or the party is still unable or unwilling to resolve it certainly provides the courts with some very specific guidelines and I think it eliminates a lot of surprises for people. The courts have always - and I think the legal profession generally does encourage people to resolve their matters. We've always said it is so much

better for you and your partner to resolve your differences rather than having an order judicially imposed. It should be noted though as well that a very high percentage of our cases get resolved. Parents for the most part recognize that they will have to make adjustments, they have to be compromising because they know it is in the best interests of their children.

The courts have provided family information sessions that are mandatory for the parties. They are three-hour sessions with a lawyer and a social worker, and the primary focus of the sessions is to bring home to the parents the harm that their parental conflict can have their children. Resolution is always strongly encouraged. I think this Statute provides a lot of information about what the issues might be, and what issues will be considered and will assist them in negotiating their resolution.

Unfortunately there are times when resolutions cannot be reached, but I think these amendments are drafted and will provide an aid and a strong framework for the courts to assist the parents in reaching - to provide some form of access even in situations of high conflict. That has been a very touchy issue for the courts in the past because when you do have maybe one party who is particularly being difficult - for lack of a better word - sometimes it's a concern whether it is in the best interest of the child to have contact with that parent. But I think this legislation provides some creativity and also maybe subtly will provide a bit of a warning to the parent - you need to behave and honour your access commitments. I think there is that part in the legislation, too, that deals not only with the people who have denied access to the other party but the people who don't exercise the access, which I think is really, really an interesting aspect.

The legislation refers to a process if a parent is seeking to change residence or relocate, if a parent is denied access, and if a parent refuses to exercise access. The new language - "parenting time," "contact time," "interaction" - will allow grandparents or other relatives or stepparents to maintain some contact. It may be that there will be an order allowing them, for example, to attend school concerts, to get notice of school events or sporting events, to get photographs. Sometimes in all of the anguish and turmoil that's going on, those things might suffice; sometimes we just don't think about it to examine that, to say, well, for the stepparent or a grandparent, are you okay with that? You get notice of all school events, you'll get photographs or whatever. That could definitely diffuse a situation, and I think that's what everybody is trying to do.

Obviously I'm very supportive of the work that has been done on this. My only concern is that when I do raise it with the private bar and with the legal aid bar, for some reason people don't seem to be that familiar with the pending amendments. I've encouraged them to get up to speed on it and advised them of the availability of presenting at Law Amendments Committee, but it is important, very important, that the private bar, Nova Scotia Legal Aid, various legal associations like the Canadian Bar Society family division, all of those be meaningfully consulted. I think to a large degree that has taken

place, but I also look forward to the comments that will come from Nova Scotians at Law Amendments Committee. Thank you.

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

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand and speak to this bill here today. It gives me an opportunity to summarize what the minister had already spoken about when she presented this bill for second reading.

Separation and divorce can be very, very stressful at the best of times. It's said that the level of emotion and many of the feelings that people experience are not unlike losing someone to death. It's estimated that over 50 per cent of couples do not access legal advice during divorce and that's why these amendments - now titled the Maintenance and Custody Act, soon to be known as the Parenting and Support Act - are so important.

Many of us, if we haven't experienced divorce or separation ourselves, have friends and family that might have. I've walked through the process with many friends, you know, and they're talking to you about what they're going through - and being a layperson, I wouldn't have any advice for them, just sort of be able to listen - and there is a lot of confusion around the process. It's great that there's going to be more of an outline, more of a framework for people to follow, to take some of the questioning out of the process.

Nova Scotians can be very proud that the new provisions will make Nova Scotia a leader in Canada. This bill gives guidance to parents to manoeuvre through what can be a complex process, using clear and up-to-date language, with the end goal in mind for the best outcomes of the children. It requires parenting plans, so both parents understand what to expect of them. This reduces confusion.

These proposed amendments reflect modern parenting arrangements and responsibilities. "Custody" will now be known as "access," and "visiting privileges" will be "parenting time," "contact time," and "interaction." This bill establishes relocation privileges. New guidelines will set out who must prove whether or not the relocation will benefit the child. Grandparents will now have more confirmed access and they'll be able to get that access without going to the courts to apply for permission.

I'm a grandma myself; I have three grandkids and a new one last week. I can't imagine not having access to my grandchildren. I was fortunate enough to have wonderful grandparents myself, and I had wonderful grandparents to my children. They became part of the fibre of those children. They're such a part of their life. Grandparents are so important to the outcomes of a child. They can be so positive. It's really important that they have access. They can be the wind beneath the child's wings at times. It's good that this is now going to be in place.

It introduces the concept of contact time. The bill also outlines enforcement provisions that would deny parenting time - or failing to exercise the parenting time, as the member for Dartmouth South had already indicated. This bill gives coherent, clear legislation, and it helps everyone. Our changes highlight the importance of parental responsibility, respects what is the best interest of the child, and provides us with guidelines and language that is current and responsive to the needs of families in these changing times. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the members who have participated as well in this second reading of Bill No. 131. I really appreciate the kind words of members of the Opposition supportive of the improvements that this bill embodies.

As I said, it's a process that we're engaged in. It has been going on for five years. The first steps began under the NDP Government; I said it was 2012. I think there are issues that come before us in the House and that we really do need to look at things in a continuum of improvements.

Over time, we are all working to the same end, in this instance, that we want to have a better justice system, but many other things. We want to advance the work of this province, the ability and the opportunities that are available in Nova Scotia. Each of us is working in our own way, and this is one way that we can improve it. I'm pleased to see the support from the Opposition members and the acknowledgement that a lot of work has gone into this to date.

I did just want to make a little comment about the consultation that had happened. In my opening on second reading of the bill, I did mention that we had an expert advisory panel, but we actually had nine Nova Scotia experts from legal and court stakeholder groups. They participated in three expert advisory panel forums - they were held in more than Halifax - to assess the conceptual proposals for this phase of the changes. A discussion paper was developed, and Nova Scotians were asked to give their views. Over 165 Nova Scotian respondents provided feedback through written responses, meetings, focus groups, and information sessions. It was quite broad-based; there was an opportunity.

I do hope that all the members in the legal community, certainly as a starting point, will be well aware that this is going through. We will work with the Bar Society and others to make sure that the changes are well recognized as they move forward, providing that they are passed. We'll make sure that people have that information.

But it's very important to me, as the minister, to be sure that we've done all we can to engage the people most knowledgeable. That did include families and members of the public who could speak about their struggles and their difficulty in understanding the Act and having to represent themselves before the courts when things are not worked out more amicably.

As the member for Dartmouth South said, in many instances the courts do encourage people to sit down. I was told just the other day that there are conciliators now made available in many of the courts. It's encouraged that there be mediation and conciliation before it actually gets to the point - it's really only the most difficult cases now that will come before the courts and have to be determined by a judge.

I think there are some very progressive moves in the changes we talked about particularly the relocation, which as we said, was never mentioned before, and now there is a framework to help people work out what is the best move.

Just for everyone's knowledge, I think the most important thing it says is that as soon as a parent knows there is an impending move or the move is now on the horizon, they have to speak to the other parent. They have to make sure that they give the maximum amount of notice.

We've talked about 60 days being a norm or a good amount but if you had three months' notice, you should give three months' notice. Sometimes these things come up with less time that is available so that would be understandable, if there wasn't enough time, say it's a job promotion or an opportunity and you had to go quicker. It's really important that the standard will be that you give the maximum notice possible. That allows the other parent time to consider the impacts not only on themselves but on the wider family.

As the member for Victoria-The Lakes spoke about grandparents, for example, that can be the wider family, the extended family can be a big factor in how a move will be appreciated or anticipated and what the impact is on the child. It isn't just the two parents, we have extended family. We have others who care about those children; we have connections to community that need to be considered as well.

You can't prescribe everything but you can certainly set out a framework that allows two people, in difficult times, to sit down, with care and concern for their children, and try and decide the best way to approach an opportunity that has come before one of them.

We think that's a big improvement and we didn't speak a great deal about the enforcement of access but that is also a big change to add that into the Act. Right now certainly we have a Maintenance and Enforcement Act, which looks at the financial aspects of a court order but we don't really have any recourse on the access part. As the member

for Dartmouth South said, sometimes that means a parent who doesn't allow access and other times it is a parent who doesn't exercise their right and is not giving the appropriate amount of attention to their children that there should be. There should be some way to go back and change the order and say if the parent is not there and not willing to access their rights to see the child, then perhaps it needs to change the court order - something needs to change in that so that it is a clear reflection of the situation.

Certainly it means that somebody can't be denied their access because of any other conflict that exists between the couple or among the parents. So it's a different aspect. It will be interesting to see how that works in practice. I think it's important that we give an avenue for parents who are faced with that very distressing situation - one or the other, either the lack of access or the failure to exercise the access privilege.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move second reading and I look forward to hearing from any members of the public who come to Law Amendments Committee. I'm sure that will be very important to our process as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 131. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 133.

Bill No. 133 - Motor Vehicle Act.

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

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 133, an Act to Amend Chapter 293 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Motor Vehicle Act, be now read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise for the second reading of this important bill. Keeping our roads safe is the department's top priority. The Motor Vehicle Act is one of our key pieces of legislation that covers a wide range of subjects. This bill includes 14 amendments. Broadly they fall into categories of insurance, administration, the graduated drivers' license program and penalties. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of them.

Under the Act, nurse practitioners, optometrists, and occupational therapists are similar to doctors in that all of these professions may identify medical issues that could make someone unfit to drive. This bill extends the liability protection currently in place for doctors to these other professions, when reporting medical issues to the Registrar.

We are also making several updates that will help make it easier to navigate the legislation and our programs. For one example, under the current Act, administrators of driving exams need to be appointed. Written exams are now standardized, so this extra layer of administration is no longer required and will be removed through this bill. We are also broadening the criteria around reporting collisions data in a way that will allow municipalities and researchers to access information while maintaining the privacy of individuals.

The bill will also identify and specify that the Registrar has the authority to cancel certificates, permits, or licences when someone provides false information to the Registry of Motor Vehicles. This was the intent of the Act, and these amendments will clarify the role of the registrar in these instances.

There are additional amendments in the bill, and while all the amendments are necessary and important in their own way, several of them are simply updating the legislation. They correct issues that have been identified by staff or stakeholders through the administration of the Act over a period of time. Overall, they will help staff better deliver Registry of Motor Vehicles programs.

There is also a significant change to the Graduated Drivers Licence program here in Nova Scotia. A key feature of this program is the role of the supervising driver. This individual is required by the program to help provide a safe environment for a new driver to gain valuable experience behind the wheel. Part of this role is the ability to take control of the vehicle at any time; simply put, you can't do this while impaired.

With that in mind, the Act will now require those supervising a driver in the learner and newly-licensed phases of the Graduated Drivers Licence program to maintain a blood alcohol content below 0.05 per cent. Police will have the authority to administer a breathalyzer, and if a supervising driver is found to have a BAC at or higher than 0.05 per cent, they will immediately lose their licence for at least seven days and be required to pay a reinstatement fee. Repeat offences carry longer suspensions.

Impaired driving sadly remains one of the leading causes of collisions and fatalities on Nova Scotia's roadways. We need to instill a culture of safety in our new drivers with a simple message: drinking and driving never mix. This change will help reinforce the message right from the beginning, while new drivers are still in their learning phase.

The final amendment I would like to highlight is a change to the fines related to pedestrian and vehicle collisions. This includes making all offences involving failing to

yield to a pedestrian, a pedestrian failing to yield to a vehicle or obey a signal, and failing to obey a crossing guard - the same category of fines as other pedestrian-related offenses. All of these fines will now carry a cost of at least \$697.50. Making these fines consistent with others helps to reinforce that road safety is a shared responsibility here in this province. This includes being mindful of your own actions, both as a driver and as a pedestrian. We must all do our part to keep each other safe, Mr. Speaker.

With that, I thank you for this opportunity, and I look forward to the comments from my honourable colleagues. Thank you.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for bringing this bill forward. There are two specific amendments in here that I'm most interested in. One of them revolves around the Graduated Drivers Licencing program - especially as a parent of a 17-year-old who just went through the program, and understanding the intricacies of it, and the importance of making sure that our young folks (Interruption) I have a 17-year-old kid, yeah.

AN HON. MEMBER: How old are you?

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I'm really old, okay? Rabbit tracks. (Interruption) I am going down the hole there.

But understanding the importance of the Graduated Drivers Licencing program to make sure that our youth understand the rules of the road and what they need to do, and get the true practice that they need to drive - I mean, you can know everything you want, but until you truly practice how to drive on the road, that's when you really, really get it.

Now, I just want to say that, especially when it comes to that particular amendment, this is going back and fixing a piece of legislation that the government brought forward last October and November. If we all remember, we debated Bill No. 51, which was brought forward by the minister, but of course, under a lot of work for the member for East Hants and we thank them for bringing that forward. If you remember at the time, that bill contained important measures to strengthen that program and our caucus at that time supported it wholeheartedly - the change that required drivers to maintain a zero blood alcohol content for two years after they completed the learner, beginner, and the new phases of the program.

We agreed with the changes that require supervisory drivers to be fully licensed for at least two years as well. Making sure that the person who is the supervisory driver should be just that, it should be a person armed with experience and knowledge and the ability to supervise a new driver, to keep the new driver and all motorists safe so they can actually

take control of that car in case something goes wrong - not just, in some cases, a sober driver, if you'll permit me, Mr. Speaker.

It's for that reason that we, as an Opposition, spoke out about the provision that did not put any limits on a blood alcohol level to the supervisory driver at that time. The minister said requiring the supervisory driver to be awake and sober presented legal problems at the time. I'm glad that a year later we are able to find what those problems are, to identify them, and make sure that they are in this piece of legislation to strengthen the Motor Vehicle Act.

We said that not requiring a supervisory driver to be awake and sober presented some common-sense problems. Having supervisory drivers whose judgment or reaction times are impaired presents a safety problem. Like I said, not only should they be able to instruct the learner driver but they should be able to take over in case of a problem. At that time we tried to amend Bill No. 51; that was kicked out. We tried to recommit Bill No. 51; that was kicked out. At every turn the government used their majority to defeat common sense at the time. This is actually the amendment that we wanted. That's the amendment we wanted, and here we are a year later and it shows up.

Here we are today doing the very thing that could have been done and should have been done a year ago. I can say this: better late than never. Thank you for bringing it forward. Maybe a year ago we could've saved each other a whole bunch of problems if we just listened to each other - just listen to each other sometimes. I know it's hard to believe but there are good ideas over here too.

As far as the pedestrian issue, I have to agree with the minister, there are far too many car-pedestrian accidents happening. We seem to hear of it here and of course in metro Halifax, in Dartmouth, and the metropolitan areas of Nova Scotia. We do hear of car-pedestrian accidents and that shouldn't be happening. It should be treated in its respect. There is an education program that needs to happen or continually happen when it comes to this.

The drivers of those cars need to be aware of the crosswalks but the people crossing the road need to be aware of the cars as well. Just because you see the car doesn't mean the car sees you and vice versa. We need to make sure all that can be done to make sure that this doesn't happen. We've had a number of deaths about this as well, and I'm hoping that anything the department can do to make this better is a good one.

We look forward to hearing from Nova Scotians who come to present at Law Amendments Committee, and hopefully if there are some amendments or some good ideas that come from Law Amendments Committee, I hope the minister is ready to accept them and add them in. Finally, it's simply this: there is nothing more honourable in our jobs when it comes to making sure the safety of our communities and our families is maintained

by good common-sense legislation like this one here today. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to my colleagues, the member for Argyle-Barrington, and in particular the Minister of TIR. I agree with him about road safety and the importance of all these issues to be addressed here today. I want to suggest, before I get into my notes, that the minister - and I said this before - may be suffering from political amnesia or selective memory. I just want to jog his memory here because if you review Hansard 2014, and the member for Argyle-Barrington suggested that - our Party, the NDP, wanted the government to ensure that supervisory drivers were not under the influence of alcohol.

This was pointed out - and this is what I really enjoy about this House, the opportunity to reflect and have debates. There are good points that come forward. The member for Argyle-Barrington suggested that, and I'm suggesting it here. There was a good idea to improve and make these amendments a year ago, and the minister and that Party failed; they failed Nova Scotians. These amendments could have been made a year ago.

Let's point out there was a good discussion here last year, and I want to point out the scenario. All of a sudden it has to come from the Liberal side. This is what's wrong with the politics, Mr. Speaker, and what I want to point out is clearly there was debate a year ago talking about these same amendments. Having the supervisory driver under the influence was painted as a scenario, when you have a youthful driver driving and in a split-second decision where that could be corrected and save the individual from a devastating traffic situation. That was painted here, and it was presented in a very informal debate; it was also pointed out in Law Amendments Committee. That was an opportunity missed. I suggest to you that that is selective memory. I took perfect notes here, and when the minister had an opportunity to address it, he failed. There are good ideas that come from this Opposition. This is a prime example of it.

I look forward to going to Law Amendments Committee and hearing from the public. This is part of the process, Mr. Speaker. There are good ideas that come through our parliamentary process, and we cannot use a majority just to show that we have a majority and we don't listen to Nova Scotians or the Opposition.

Thank you for the time, and I look forward to hearing from the public and this bill going to Law Amendments Committee. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

MS. MARGARET MILLER: It's my pleasure to rise for second reading of Bill No. 133. I don't get to speak often in this House, but when it comes to road safety, that's my pet project so I wanted to make sure that I could be here to speak to that. (Applause)

As members opposite noted, some of these amendments are issues that were raised in the last sitting of the House when Bill No. 51 was passed. I think what the Opposition members fail to remember is that most of these measures were in Bill No. 168 which was passed in 2007 by the then Progressive Conservative Government. It was never enacted. It went through four years of NDP and sat on their table, and then last year . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Hants East has the floor.

MS. MILLER: Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I didn't want to incite a riot; I just wanted to point that out.

Last year our government looked at all the measures in this bill and saw that there were measures that could be enforced right away, and they were. They were passed last year.

This one amendment, supervisory drivers and the low BAC, was something that we weren't quite sure of, exactly, if there would be any challenges to that. We wanted to make sure that we got it right, so we made sure that it was taken to the department and fully researched and brought back this year to make sure that it could be done.

I am so pleased that the minister has returned with this updated legislation that now addresses so many concerns in various areas of the Motor Vehicle Act - kudos to him and his hard-working department. I've met with many of them. They're so hard-working. Because of their efforts to keep our roads safe - keeping our roads safe remains the department's top priority.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister said, this bill includes 14 amendments. Our government has made further changes to the graduated licensing system that plugs that loophole that allowed supervisory drivers to be legally impaired. Previously, there was no BAC condition for supervisory drivers at all in Nova Scotia.

Although this isn't something that often happens, occasionally parents would use children who were in the learner and newly-licensed phases of the graduated licensing program as designated drivers. As I said, this doesn't happen often but the feeling is that when an adult is supervising a new driver, they must be prepared to take the wheel at any time.

If they are seen to be impaired, law enforcement will now have the ability to ask for a breath sample. That was a problem last year. If the supervisory driver is over .05, then

they will be treated as if they are driving, they will immediately lose their licence for seven days and be required to pay a reinstatement fee. It would be the same as if they were behind the wheel themselves.

Also, Mr. Speaker, repeat offences carry longer suspensions; people need to learn. Impaired driving sadly remains one of the leading criminal causes of death in collisions and fatalities on the road. Young drivers are over-represented in all categories of road crashes, including those involving impaired driving - I mean impaired by drugs or alcohol.

Motor vehicle crashes are the number-one cause of death of young people between 16 and 25, and alcohol or drugs is a factor in 55 per cent of these deaths. Sixteen to 25-year olds constituted 13.6 per cent of our population in 2010, but made up almost 33.4 per cent of the alcohol-related traffic deaths. Studies conclude that young drivers are over-represented in road crashes primarily for two reasons: inexperience and immaturity. They are more likely to speed, follow too closely, allow less time to merge with traffic, cross traffic lanes, pass other vehicles, overestimate their driving skills, and take even more risks.

They also have high rates of driving after drinking and drug use, and of being a passenger of a driver who has been drinking or taking drugs. How many times have we heard it said that the child will say, I wasn't drinking and driving, but they don't think about getting in the vehicle with one and they take that chance. They are just playing Russian roulette with their lives.

Young and novice drivers usually lack both driving and drinking experience. They tend to be risk-takers and are less cautious than their older counterparts. So even in the absence of alcohol, young drivers are at a relatively greater risk of crash than older, more experienced drivers. When you add alcohol to the equation, the risks become even higher.

Mr. Speaker, you can appreciate that having a supervisory driver with alcohol in his or her system sets a very bad standard for that learning driver and is a hazard to all other drivers on the road. We need to instill a culture of safety in our new drivers and keep reminding them that either alcohol or drugs and driving is a recipe for death and injury.

There are many administrative sections to this legislation. Included is the very definition of a novice driver and a clarification that novice drivers are to maintain a zero blood-alcohol content for two full years following the new licence phase. One sector in this legislation also allows nurse practitioners, optometrists, and occupational therapists to now join physicians in referring drivers to the registrar because of health concerns. Mr. Speaker, this is important and I'm sure that all of us in the House have seen drivers on the road who should not be there, because of their declining health.

I remember when my father was diagnosed with cancer about 10 years ago and even though he was having periods that he would black out - he wouldn't remember where he was or where he had driven - he didn't want to give up the independence of his licence.

I thought I was being clever when I called his doctor one day just before his appointment and asked the doctor to revoke his licence but my Dad clued in really quick and I'm not sure that he ever forgave me for that. One of the things is that he didn't drive anymore but he refused to turn in his driver's licence and it might have been his only case of civil disobedience in his life.

Mr. Speaker, the last thing I want to mention as a growing issue in this province is crosswalk safety. I don't know what has happened to people. Since when have pedestrians stopped the "wait, look and listen" before crossing the street? So many times, we have seen people simply walk across the road in a crosswalk with heads bowed to their phones or just assuming that the driver is paying more attention than they are. In any battle with a car and a pedestrian, the vehicle wins; it doesn't matter who is in the right or wrong. It is small consolation to families who buried loved ones that their family member was in the right of the situation.

This is a shared concern and responsibility, pedestrians need to be more careful and drivers need to be more vigilant. I am very hopeful that streamlining these penalties to a higher end will make positive change. All offences involving failing to yield to a pedestrian, pedestrians failing to yield to a vehicle or obey a signal, and failing to obey a crossing guard, the same category of fines as other pedestrian-related offences, and they all carry a whopping fine now of \$697.50.

Mr. Speaker, with these few words on these important changes to the Motor Vehicle Act, I will ask my colleagues once again to pass this bill, and all these measures, with the full support of the House. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a few words about this legislation. Certainly we are not going to be tinkering with this. I want to compliment the minister; this is good legislation. It may be a year later than we wanted, but it's here and it's a good thing.

We're living in an era of distractions, Mr. Speaker. I mean you watch every day in your communities - people using cellphones, even iPads, texting et cetera, when they are in charge of a car. Young drivers are in a position where they are experiencing things for the first time, and although they may feel they are competent drivers, they certainly lack the experience of many things that can happen on our roads today.

A lot of new drivers haven't had the opportunity to experience black ice and what they should do when they run into that type of road, accumulation of snow, my colleague mentioned about intersections. From my 12 years of teaching Driver Ed with thousands of hours on the roads, intersections were the area that caused most difficulty for reactions and wanting to know what they should do prior to.

I found young drivers didn't have the capacity, in those early years, to understand to look ahead and anticipate what someone might do. Even if someone was standing along the sidewalk on the curb, not even out of the sidewalk, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't mean they're going to stay there. Young drivers don't have that experience of anticipating that person. Although they may see them coming, they may also step out in front of that car, so you have to be ready for that.

There are so many areas of intersections, heavy traffic, everything is new to these drivers, so to have a supervisory driver beside them who is in charge and willing to take over in case of an emergency, I guess you can't make legislation safe enough for young drivers. I'm very pleased to see this legislation come forth, and I certainly support it. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my honourable colleagues for their comments today, in particular the member for Hants East. I know that she has been a tremendous driving force. Losing her son Bruce to an impaired driver, obviously, was a devastating thing for her and her family, so every time there's a conversation about road safety and how we make things safer, make families safer, and things better overall so that other Nova Scotian families don't have to relive what the MLA and her family went through, it's a pretty significant thing. So again, she puts her heart into this every day, not just with this legislation but as an MLA. We're certainly all fortunate to have her here and we appreciate it.

In that vein Mr. Speaker, I'll try to contain myself with respect to the Opposition's comments on some of the pieces. First of all I want to explain, when this issue came up last year, with the supervisory driver, I think it's reasonable to say that no one disagreed with the points that were being made, whether it be through Law Amendments or on the floor of the House. It wasn't about us not agreeing with that. What it was about was a pending court case in B.C. We weren't sure if it was enforceable by law, so we wanted to make sure we got this right.

If we pushed something through too quickly and it wasn't something that would be acceptable by way of the justice system, then we would have another issue and we'd be taking criticism on that, Mr. Speaker. So, what we did, and what we suggested at that time, was that we would allow the Department of Justice in coordination with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, and of course Service Nova Scotia, to look at some of the ways we can get around and possibly get away from that ruling that would make this unenforceable. What we did was put in an amendment that would essentially say that the supervisory driver would have to have the ability to take over the vehicle in any circumstance. That was the amendment; that was the piece.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not a lawyer. I know there are many in here, but I'm not one. As the minister, I've got to rely on the people who think that we sit down, we look at these things rationally, and we make good decisions. This is an amendment that the staff came up with that would address this very issue. That's the reason why we couldn't just put it in there when the session was happening the last time, and that's why the amendment comes today. No one had ever suggested that it wasn't a good idea.

Secondly, to that end, if you recall back to that time and that particular bill, one of the contentious issues was that of the faint hope clause. When we were talking about some of the details and how we would address some of the concerns from the members for Sackville-Cobequid, Argyle-Barrington, and Queens-Shelburne, we had said at that point, we're going to solve these things and settle these things through regulations, and we will invite both Opposition Parties to participate in those conversations. And we did that, Mr. Speaker. The members didn't participate, probably . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: I never got the invite.

MR. MACLELLAN: Then check with your caucus - on multiple occasions (Interruptions) Okay, so we'll check with whoever the Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Critic is, but there have been multiple invites.

I'm not here to lay the blame, Mr. Speaker, and make this all about the Opposition. If they had confidence in our system and in our staff, then that's great; that's a good thing. (Interruption) This is good legislation for the people of Nova Scotia, but I'm not going to take criticism and a lesson from the opposite side on how we do this properly. This is a good bill. This is good information. I'm happy that the Opposition would suggest that this was their idea and it could have been done a year ago, but there is prudence and rationale. (Interruption)

With respect to political amnesia, they both had opportunities to push this legislation forward. Their own legislation - they didn't do this. The point is, we don't make these things, and we don't have these conversations. It's not about the camera. It's not about the floor of the Legislature. We go away from here and put the diligence and the hard work in, Mr. Speaker, and we do good things for the people of Nova Scotia. We put our time in, and that's the result here today.

With those comments, I'd like to close debate on Bill No. 133.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 133. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 134.

Bill No. 134 - Liquor Control Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Business.

HON. MARK FUREY: I move that Bill No. 134, an Act to Amend Chapter 260 of the Revised Statutes of 1989, the Liquor Control Act, be read for a second time.

Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to these amendments. The amendments proposed today do not create any change on their own. Rather, they create the authority to make changes to the liquor licensing regulations. The aim is to cut red tape for the Nova Scotia liquor manufacturing industry.

In the coming months, we will look at the regulations to identify areas where we can reduce red tape for Nova Scotia's liquor manufacturing industry. Ongoing consultation with the industry and stakeholders will be part of this process.

Our government is working to make Nova Scotia the most competitive and business-friendly environment in Canada. We're getting out of the way of business, and we're creating the right conditions for the private sector to be successful. Government's role includes doing what we can to cut red tape, modernize legislation, and create regulatory excellence. We want to make interactions between business and government faster and less frequent so that our various industries can focus on what they need to do to make themselves more successful and grow our economy.

Government's job is to clear the way for the private sector to pursue growth and to maintain a policy and regulatory environment that supports and attracts business. It's also our job to remove obstacles, not create unnecessary red tape and disincentives that deter new entrepreneurs. By doing so, we will create the right conditions so the private sector can be successful. We believe that clearing the way for business is the best way forward for all Nova Scotians. Business is what drives our economy forward. This is what will create jobs and a more prosperous future.

Our Nova Scotia liquor manufacturers such as our wineries, breweries, and distilleries are developing unique and exceptional products. For example, Nova Scotia's first and only signature wine, Tidal Bay, continues to grow in popularity with 12 wineries now producing this product. Created to reflect our unique geography and coastal breezes Tidal Bay provides local vintners with a signature wine designation like those found in other wine regions such as Chianti, Bordeaux, and Burgundy.

We also have a vibrant and growing craft beer industry and several distilleries which are producing award winning products. This industry, in addition to responding to a demand from Nova Scotians, also plays a key role in the tourism industry. Visitors to our province want to experience uniquely Nova Scotian products whether that's our seafood, our wines, our craft beers, our spirits, or the many other experiences that are exclusive to Nova Scotia.

We have been consulting extensively with Nova Scotia liquor manufacturers on changes we can make to the Liquor Control Act and its regulations which will reduce red tape and modernize legislation in order that they can increase their competitiveness. We want to continue to hear from them to further explore all opportunities which will help them succeed. We also know that Nova Scotians want the sale and consumption of alcohol to be undertaken in a responsible way that ensures public safety.

As we look at ways to modernize the Liquor Control Act, we will consult with all stakeholders and aim to strike a balance between reducing red tape, which our industry stakeholders across government are asking us to do, while ensuring that appropriate and reasonable legislation and regulations are in place to control the sale and consumption of alcoholic products.

We understand that business owners and citizens wish government to be as quick and efficient as possible. My priority is to ensure that we exceed the expectations of Nova Scotians in creating efficiencies for business, excellence in service for citizens, reducing red tape, and pursuing regulatory excellence. The amendments announced today are a step forward in this direction.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks and look forward to hearing from my colleagues.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise to speak to these amendments to the Liquor Control Act, Bill No. 134. I am encouraged by the intention of the bill which is to enable regulations to be changed to make it easier for manufacturers such as breweries, wineries, and distilleries that have licences for consumption in venues like restaurants.

Our beer, wine, and spirits industry in Nova Scotia has been driven by the hard work and passion of entrepreneurs. We could use more of this ambitious entrepreneurship in our province. The hard work and superior products produced by the industry in Nova Scotia has been recognized around the globe with numerous international awards. Changing these regulations would make it easier and reduce red tape for these businesses and would also allow manufacturers to be able to sell some of their product in an

establishment with a consumption licence rather than having to always sell the product in a separate retail space that we often see now.

While this legislation is merely enabling, I do hope that the new regulations that are being developed will do much more to reduce red tape for existing and emerging small businesses in the wine, craft beer, and spirits industry in Nova Scotia. I know that the need for this change likely might not have even been foreseen 20 years ago and at that time it was rare for a manufacturer of wine, beer, or spirits to also have a licence for consumption in an establishment like a restaurant on site.

With the development of the local industry in this area, it has become popular to have a restaurant onsite which serves the manufacturers' product in addition to food. I hope that once these regulations are brought forward it might encourage other small players in the industry to develop ventures like restaurants onsite which can provide great experiences to visitors to Nova Scotia as well as provide employment. It has been encouraging to see how craft breweries, wineries, and distilleries, have proliferated in many areas, including rural areas from Shelburne right to Cape Breton.

One concern I do have, and that the minister may be able to follow up in his closing remarks, my concern does go around the unintended consequences of this bill, and I'll give you an example. I know that right now there's a lot of consulting taking place. In Pictou County we've had our six municipalities come together collectively to discuss that there's potentially the option of having established restaurants allow you to come in and have two drinks without having to order food, and this something that I am concerned about because we as a county, we don't support this. I have letters to show that we would like to keep our family restaurants family restaurants.

So, I worry about if this bill will enable changes like that to happen outside of the Legislature, which I feel would be unfair. I think anything surrounding alcohol definitely should be discussed and debated in the House. So, perhaps the minister will be able to answer that question for me.

I do know that I look forward to any presenters who may come to discuss this bill at Law Amendments Committee, and certainly will await the release of the new regulations that will actually implement the changes that have been spoken about today, and I thank you very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

HON. MAUREEN MADONALD: Madam Speaker, at the outset, I'm pleased to stand in my place and make a few comments on this particular bill - I'm not sure what the number of the bill is (Interruption) Bill No.134, thank you.

I'm disappointed that the minister hasn't provided perhaps some samples to help this debate, help us establish why it's so important to eliminate red tape and move forward with a piece of legislation like this. I think it might have allowed us to move this a little more quickly, but at any rate, Madam Speaker. I think we all would agree that we are experiencing in our province a kind of, I don't know if "renaissance" is the right word, but certainly we're seeing the emergence of an industry, in our wines, in our craft beer, in our distilleries that we all feel very proud of.

I certainly do - it's fabulous, you know, when you have people who visit from other provinces and you're able to have dinner in your own home and serve local wine, or go out and experience some of the many, many excellent craft beers. I know that our distilleries, some of the fine Scotch that is coming out of our distilleries, as well as other liquors, really allows Nova Scotia to showcase the province that we are and the uniqueness in the flavours of the food that is developed here and, particularly, I would say, in our wineries.

You know, the minister made reference to the Tidal Bay wines and how popular they are, and how well they're doing not only at the farm gate and at the various wineries, but certainly in the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation - and I know that wine has overtaken the sale of beer in the Liquor Corporation. I also know that the craft beers now are a growing part of the beer market. We have so many fantastic craft beers in this province, and not to single out individual craft beers, but in my own constituency we have the North Brewing Company which, you know, are really quite remarkable. I wasn't able to participate last night in the Taste of Nova Scotia reception downstairs, but I would dare say that there probably were some local wines and perhaps some local craft beers available.

I know that not so long ago I was in the constituency of my colleague, the member for Queens-Shelburne, they have a fine craft beer, the Hell Bay label out of Liverpool. They have also a fantastic craft beer from Shelburne. (Interruption) Yes, that's right.

We can go all across the province. I recently tried a blueberry-flavoured infused beer out of Cape Breton, which is pretty amazing. We all are very proud of the local production, and I'm sure we would like to see this industry grow, expand, prosper and continue to provide employment and opportunities for people all across our province.

Now, this legislation is, as the minister says, an attempt to reduce the red tape in terms of being able to promote local products and having them available. The one example I've heard from the government is that you could go to a restaurant at one of these wineries, for example, and have wine with your meal, but you couldn't buy a bottle there to go home, you'd have to go down the road or go to the farm gate where they have a different licence, I think, to sell. This would give the government some capacity to allow the sale on the premises. That, certainly if that was how this legislation were to be used, would make a great deal of sense.

However, as the previous speaker indicated, this legislation is so broad in the way it is presented that it essentially could allow for changes to the Liquor Control Act to family restaurants, for example, without ever coming back here to this Legislature for any debate or any discussion or any presentations at the Law Amendments Committee. That certainly is of concern to us.

We in the NDP caucus are very supportive of the idea and the need to lessen red tape for this growing and burgeoning industry across our province. We think we need to do whatever steps we need in legislation and in policy to enhance the growth of that industry and the promotion of that industry. We also want to ensure that that is how this legislation is actually used and that it doesn't go beyond those boundaries without at least a debate and a discussion here in the Legislature because that's what we're here for.

With those few remarks and without the opportunity to sample any of the wares that are associated with this bill, Madam Speaker, I take my seat.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Madam Speaker, it is a great privilege to rise today and speak on Bill No. 134. To begin, I'd like to certainly thank the minister for all the work he has done in his department. I know there has been extensive consultation with the industry. Certainly what he has brought forward - simply a couple of lines - changes the path that we have in this province and opens up the doors to economic opportunities.

I am encouraged to hear the remarks from across the floor. I think it is very valid to point out the renaissance. Certainly there is a change in the atmosphere in Nova Scotia. We heard just previously a couple of bills that were remarked on, Bill No. 51 and Bill No. 133, which just came through the House.

I think in the Province of Nova Scotia and actually probably in all of Canada, there has been quite a significant cultural change in alcohol consumption, in the respect for alcohol with our youth and with our culture. I have to also commend our member from our side who has been very active in working on that. It opens the door for the ability to move forward, I think. That's what this bill does: it allows us to expand on opportunities.

We have some antiquated legislation sometimes that is important to readdress and expand the opportunities to be innovative and move the province forward. The talk of the craft beer, the spirit industry, and wine-making is certainly something that I would also like to mention - our Minister of Agriculture has been very, very engaged with that sector. I'm very proud of a lot of the work that he is doing, especially with the wine industry, but I also know for a fact that he has had a lot of conversations with the craft beer industry and with the hop growers in Nova Scotia. We have some exciting opportunities.

One fact that is little known here that I'd like to bring to the floor is that Nova Scotia is the premiere location, in the world, to grow sparkling wines. That's a little-known fact. It's something that we're beginning to realize, through the good work that a lot of our winemakers are showing the fruits of - I guess to pun a phrase.

Tourism is the other side. We have heard constantly that we want to double our numbers in the next 10 years. Certainly convenience is something that tourists look for. You hear it over and over. They come from regions of Ontario and the New England States where sometimes the regulatory world is a little bit different than it is here. There are opportunities to - I shouldn't say be pampered, but certainly have the convenience of experiencing everything that this province has to offer. Sometimes we stymie it a little bit. I think this piece of legislation is going to allow us to explore more opportunities in that area.

I would also just like to quickly touch on - I know there were some remarks from our member for Pictou West around restaurants and opening up the opportunities there. There are certainly other areas too that we have.

I would also say there are antiquated pieces of legislation around plebiscites for wet and dry areas that go back to Prohibition days. Certainly there are some municipalities and some communities that would like to see a little bit of movement there. But to the contrary, I've heard people in the restaurant business who feel that they are encumbered a little bit just with the simple ability to have a business meeting and sit there and just easily have a beer. I don't think anybody is suggesting that we move into the world of turning family restaurants into pubs, into liquor establishments and nightclubs.

I think the discussion is important, and I again thank the minister for what I know and I feel very comfortable in his engagement with that industry. I am very proud also, just to remark finally - I'll keep my comments short - that in two or three short lines within a piece of legislation, we can open up the doors of opportunity for our wine and our craft beer and our spirits industry in this province in moving this forward. I commend the outside-of-the-box thinking and hopefully we will see good fruits that come forward with this. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Madam Speaker, I just quickly want to follow up on the discussion of this bill. To me, what this bill states is that Nova Scotia is finally going down the road of allowing businesses to succeed and building a foundation for businesses to succeed in Nova Scotia. That's what government's role is. Getting rid of the red tape on this is one great step for small businesses in Nova Scotia, with many more to happen.

One of my first things when I got elected - I met with the member for Clayton Park West, who was the Finance and Treasury Board Minister, and I got all the players in the

restaurant industry - wine and beer and liquor - all around a table to have a discussion: let's look at our antiquated liquor laws in Nova Scotia, and how we can create a foundation where these liquor laws can be looked at, can be shared and changed to ensure that businesses succeed. That was the start of the process of changing this one law, but changing other laws from the growler change, where breweries can now sell growlers. These are good things for Nova Scotia. We have a long way to go. The new minister is doing these things very well.

Looking at last night when we had Taste of Nova Scotia here, and we had Ironworks - I walked up to her and asked, how are things going? And she said, we had the best season ever; the rules have changed, helped us succeed, helped us grow our business; we were able to hire two staff because of these changes.

These are good stories because of the red tape reduction, and we're willing to look at that. We have a way to go - there are still some crazy rules out there, for sure. If you go to Toronto, I recommend going to this one bar. It's a Russian vodka bar, and you can go and taste all different vodkas from around the world. But the thing is, when you order your bottle of vodka, it sits in a block of ice. In Nova Scotia, you can't do that. It sits in a locked cage on your table, and you're not able to sample it. You have to call the waiter over and get them to unlock the cage and pour yourself a drink.

That doesn't work. That's not about increasing business. That's not creating an experience.

Those are things - this is the start of things to look at. This is the start of changing regulations. This is the start to make business successful. This is a big reason why I ran: to get rid of this red tape, because the past government would not have a conversation about small businesses and the regulations. That's what was frustrating. I am so proud to sit here on this side of the floor to represent this government, to get rid of red tape, to move this province forward. Thank you very much.

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

The honourable Minister of Business.

HON. MARK FUREY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to thank my colleagues for their constructive comments on both sides of the House. I think we all realize the opportunities that exist. Small business growth is going to be important to rural Nova Scotia, and I know there are components within our urban communities that have equal opportunities for growth.

I recognize the concerns from my colleague for Pictou West. What I want to share is that we have done extensive consultation. We are hearing circumstances on both sides of the discussion that we have to listen to, but I want to commit to my colleague that that

feedback is valuable. We appreciate that, and we will continue to seek the input of those in both industry and communities who could be impacted.

I also want to commit to my colleague - both my colleague for Pictou West and my colleague for Halifax Needham - the concerns around advancing change without dialogue, which is not a practice that I would support. I commit to both of my colleagues that we will continue that discussion, both within this environment and within their communities and between ourselves.

Madam Speaker, I will say that if I thought for a minute that the Speaker himself or yourself would have permitted me to provide some samplers, I certainly would have taken that opportunity. There are many - as we saw last evening and as we see on a regular basis, to my colleague's comments, that there is an of an industry that we are all proud of, and it is critically important that we advance the opportunities and open doors as each of my colleagues on the government side of the House have expressed, this really is an opportunity for us to grow the industry.

But I will say this, Madam Speaker, given all of the comments, I believe the dialogue that we have undertaken and the objectives that we are pursuing, will balance both public access and public responsibility with public safety, and that is an important piece of this discussion, it's not lost on me. My background has been in policing and I certainly appreciate and recognize the other argument, and that's not lost, Madam Speaker.

So, I will commit to all of my colleagues in the House that we will continue the dialogue in a very constructive way with the single objective of growing small business, expanding opportunities and putting a spark plug in the economy of Nova Scotia. Thank you Madam Speaker, with that, I move to close debate on Bill No. 134.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 134. 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: Madam Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Bills.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

[4:36 p.m. The House resolved into a CW on Bills with Deputy Speaker Ms. Margaret Miller in the Chair.]

[4:43 p.m. CW on Bills rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Margaret Miller in the Chair.]

MADAM SPEAKER: The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole on Bills reports:

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and considered the following bills:

Bill No. 120 - Discontinuance of the Pictou County Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company Act.

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.

without amendments, and the chairman has been instructed to recommend these bills to the favourable consideration of the House.

MADAM SPEAKER: Ordered that these bills be read a third time on a future day.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Madam Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. Prior to giving the business for tomorrow, just for those who have been watching and keeping track, I can advise that the Law Amendments Committee will be meeting on Monday, November 30th - we'll be able to give the exact hour tomorrow.

For those who wish to know what bills will be considered on that day, I will list off now all of the bills that will be considered on Monday: Bill Nos. 112, 118, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133 and 134. Again, based on how many presenters, we will confirm what time Law Amendments will meet on Monday, but I thought the House would want to know exactly what will be considered on that day.

Madam Speaker, tomorrow the House will sit on Friday, November 27th from the hours of 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Following the daily routine and Question Period, we will be going into Public Bills for Second Reading of Bill Nos. 135, 136 as well as Private and Local Bill No.137. We will as well be doing third reading on Bill Nos. 122, 123, 124, 126 and 120, which are all the bills that we just dealt with at the Committee of the Whole on Bills.

So, Madam Speaker, with that I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, Friday November 27th from the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again on the 27th of November, from the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned until 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning, thank you everyone.

[The House rose at 4:46 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 2524**

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Allan Banks is a resident of Salmon River Bridge and has been actively operating his flower and knick-knack business in his community; and

Whereas Allan has helped numerous residents on the Eastern Shore by providing lawn care services; and

Whereas Allan has been a member of the Musical Friends singing group for many years, entertaining hundreds of residents on the Eastern Shore;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Allan Banks for giving his time and talents for the betterment of residents of the Eastern Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 2525

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Gary Rudolph is a resident of Musquodoboit Harbour and currently manager of the Porters Lake Superstore; and

Whereas Gary understands that businesses play a vital role in the growth and development of communities; and

Whereas Gary is always willing to support local charities in their fundraising events;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Gary Rudolph for his continued support for the betterment of communities on the Eastern Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 2526

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Karen Webber is a long-time resident of Lake Charlotte and has been a schoolteacher; and

Whereas Karen has provided leadership to fellow teachers in her capacity as principal of Eastern Shore District High School and Oyster Pond Academy; and

Whereas Karen has always put the needs of her students first, having a positive influence on their lives;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Karen Webber for providing high-quality leadership and education for teachers and students of the Eastern Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 2527

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Ken White is a resident of Musquodoboit Harbour and has been actively involved in his community; and

Whereas Ken is a member of the Musquodoboit Harbour and District Lions Club, helping with fundraising events and many other functions within the club; and

Whereas Ken shows leadership within his Lions Club by organizing such events as the annual gala dinner and annual giant flea market;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Ken White for giving his time and talents for the betterment of the Eastern Shore and exemplifying the Lions motto, "We Serve."

RESOLUTION NO. 2528

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Ron Jennex is a lifelong resident of Oyster Pond and has been actively involved in his community; and

Whereas Ron is a charter member of the Musquodoboit Harbour and District Lions Club, helping with fund raising events and many other functions within the club; and

Whereas Ron is a well-respected pillar of his community including exemplary service to his parish, St. John's Anglican Church, Oyster Pond;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Ron Jennex for giving his time and talents for the betterment of the Eastern Shore and exemplifying the Lion's motto "We Serve."

RESOLUTION NO. 2529

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Shane Doucette is a resident of Salmon River Bridge and operates his flower and knick-knack business in his community; and

Whereas Shane was a past member of the Musquodoboit Harbour and District Lions Club, helping with fund raising events and many other functions within the club; and

Whereas Shane operates a lawn care service business helping many people and organizations along the Eastern Shore;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Shane Doucette for giving his time and talents for the betterment of residents on the Eastern Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 2530

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 Police Long Service Award and Medal was established to recognize the respect, appreciation and outstanding career of Nova Scotians who serve and protect; and

Whereas the Province of Nova Scotia annually recognizes the career success of officers who contribute not only to the police service but also to the well-being and strength of their communities; and

Whereas our families, neighbours, communities, province and country are safer and securer thanks to the 24-hour, 7 days-a-week service that our valued police officials provide;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing Corporal Derek Ray Williams of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and extend congratulations, thanks and appreciation for the 25 years of long service, as recognized at a ceremony on November 2, 2015.

RESOLUTION NO. 2531

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 Police Long Service Award and Medal was established to recognize the respect, appreciation and outstanding career of Nova Scotians who serve and protect; and

Whereas the Province of Nova Scotia annually recognizes the career success of officers who contribute not only to the police service but also to the well-being and strength of their communities; and

Whereas our families, neighbours, communities, province and country are safer and securer thanks to the 24-hour, 7 days-a-week service that our valued police officials provide;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing Constable James Scott Murray of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and extend congratulations, thanks and appreciation for the 15 years of long service, as recognized at a ceremony on November 2, 2015.

RESOLUTION NO. 2532

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 Police Long Service Award and Medal was established to recognize the respect, appreciation, and outstanding career of Nova Scotians who serve and protect; and

Whereas the Province of Nova Scotia annually recognizes the career success of officers who contribute not only to the police service but also to the well-being and strength of their communities; and

Whereas our families, neighbours, communities, province, and country are safer and more secure thanks to the 24-hour, 7-days-a-week service that our valued police officials provide;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing Constable Andrew Eldon Doon of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and extend congratulations, thanks, and appreciation for the 25 years of long service, as recognized at a ceremony on November 2, 2015.