



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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

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

Second Session

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS:	
Justice - Civil Procedure Rules (Amendments 05/28/15 & 06/26/15), Hon. D. Whalen	6296
DIS - Surplus Crown Property Disposal Report (2015), Hon. L. Kousoulis	6297
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:	
No. 138, Chartered Professional Accountants Act, Hon. R. Delorey	6297
No. 139, Municipal Elections Act, Hon. Z. Churchill	6297
No. 140, Public Accountants Act, Hon. R. Delorey	6297

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:

McPhee, George - Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation, Hon. M. Samson	6298
Lyme Disease: Advocates/Vols. - Salute Mr. T. Houston.....	6298
Samson, Janelle - Figure Fitness/Physique Natl. Championship, Hon. M. Samson	6299
Johnson, Ms. Kieran - Dress Design: Memorial - Missing/Murdered Aboriginal Women, Hon. A. MacLeod	6299
Lib. Gov't.: Outsourcing/Privatization - Risks, Hon. David Wilson	6299
Toonies for Change Appreciation Night: Northwest Rotary Club - Thank, Mr. B. Maguire.....	6300
Mae Kibyuk Mem. Green & Gold HS Hockey Tournament: Organizers - Recognize, Mr. E. Orrell.....	6300
Roseway Hosp. - Closures, Hon. S. Belliveau	6301
Brennan, Gracie: Hope for Wildlife - Fundraising, Ms. M. Miller.....	6301
Crowell, Donald - Natl. Order of the Légion d'honneur, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	6302
Com. Serv.: Residential Facilities - Abuse Allegations, Ms. M. Mancini.....	6302
MLAs: Commun. Events - Commit, Mr. B. Jessome.....	6303
Atl. Challenge Cup Hockey Tournament: Col. Co. Players et al - Congrats., Mr. L. Harrison	6303
Statistics Can. Rept.: Homicides/Aboriginal Identify - Numbers, Ms. L. Zann.....	6304
Fishermen's Mem. Hosp. - WCB Safety Certification, Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	6304
Pictou Co. 55+ Games: Organizers - Congrats., Ms. K. MacFarlane	6305
Lib. Gov't. - Privatization, Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....	6305
Campbell, Madison - Antigonish Highland Games Success, Ms. P. Eyking.....	6305
Kentville's Value Waste Resource Mgt. Team - Exhibit, Mr. J. Lohr	6306
Doelle-Lahey Rept. - Endorse, Hon. S. Belliveau	6306

The Brown Hall (Beaver Bank) - Recognize, Mr. S. Gough.....	6307
New Glasgow Rangers: New Glasgow Town/Pictou Co. Heritage Sports Hall of Fame - Recognition Thank, Hon. P. Dunn	6307
Com. Serv. - Child Poverty Rates, Ms. M. Mancini.....	6308
G.R. Saunders Ltd. - Anniv. (60 th), Mr. K. Irving	6308
Priske, Tanya - Diversity Can. Magazine Top 10 List, Ms. K. MacFarlane	6309
Meet Your Farmer: Vols. - Thank, Ms. J. Treen.....	6309
Malcolm Munroe Girls A Volleyball Team - Gold Medal, Hon. A. MacLeod	6309
Bus.: High-Speed Internet - Rural N.S., Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....	6310
Oldfield Cons. Sch. - Nourish Your Roots Proj., Mr. B. Horne	6310
Haley, Andrew: N.S. Sport Hall of Fame - Induction, Mr. E. Orrell.....	6311
Digby Town: Quasiquicentennial - Congrats., Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	6311
Pictou Co. Injured Workers Assoc. - Salute, Hon. P. Dunn.....	6311
Diab, Hon. Lena - Progress Women of Excellence Award, Hon. D. Whalen	6312
Chisholm, Donald - Parts for Trucks Pro Stock Tour Champion, Hon. R. Delorey	6312
Milne, Margaret/Parkinson's Support Group - Northumberland Reg. HS Parkinson's Super Walk, Mr. T. Houston.....	6313
Sparks, Mable Ashe Winnifred (Grant) - Birthday (100 th), Hon. K. Colwell	6313
Healing Animal SCARS: Work - Thank, Hon. T. Ince	6313
Green, Pte. Richard - Forest Heights Commun. Sch. Plaque, Hon. M. Furey.....	6314
Caritas Motherhouse - Tour, Ms. P. Arab	6314
Vaughn, Rev. Lisa: Parish Vitality Coordinator - Diocese N.S. & P.E.I., Mr. I. Rankin.....	6315

MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning: Staff/Bd. - Congrats., Hon. J. Bernard	6315
Dart. Skateboard Coalition Soc. - Gov't. Grant, Mr. B. Maguire	6316
EECD: Gov't. (N.S.) - Educ. Improvement, Ms. P. Arab	6316
GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 2535, WE Day: Celebrations - Join, Hon. K. Casey	6317
Vote - Affirmative.....	6318
HOUSE RECESSED AT 9:59 A.M.	6318
HOUSE RECONVENED AT 10:00 A.M.	6318
ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS:	
No. 1017, Prem.: Mental Health Serv. - Accessibility, Hon. J. Baillie	6318
No. 1018, Prem.: University Tuition - Increases, Hon. M. MacDonald	6320
No. 1019, Health & Wellness - Lyme Disease: Physicians - Preparedness, Mr. T. Houston	6322
No. 1020, Prem.: Paris Summit - Attendance, Hon. M. MacDonald	6323
No. 1021, Prem.: Personal Serv. Contracts - Importance, Hon. J. Baillie	6324
No. 1022, Bus.: Film Incentive Fund - Effects, Ms. M. Mancini.....	6327
No. 1023, LAE: Pictou Co. Injured Workers - Pre-/Post-Election Comments, Hon. P. Dunn	6328
No. 1024, Fish. & Aquaculture - Cdn. Lobster Council: Support - Lack Explain, Ms. K. MacFarlane.....	6329
No. 1025, Health & Wellness: VG Eye Clinic Closure - Postponements, Hon. David Wilson	6331
No. 1026, Health & Wellness - RFP Requirements: Local Cos. - Effects, Hon. C. d'Entremont	6332
No. 1027, Health & Wellness: Dialysis Serv. - Inverness, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	6333
No. 1028, EECD - P3 Schools: Sherwood Park - Status, Ms. L. Zann.....	6334
No. 1029, LAE - Injured Workers: Plight - Review, Hon. P. Dunn.....	6335
No. 1030, Energy Min.: Office Furnishing - Details, Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....	6336

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS:

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 135, Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources
Accord Implementation (Nova Scotia) Act

Hon. M. Samson	6337
Mr. T. Houston.....	6338
Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....	6338
Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	6340
Hon. S. Belliveau	6341
Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	6343
Hon. M. Samson	6345
Vote - Affirmative.....	6348

No. 136, Motor Vehicle Act

Hon. G. MacLellan	6348
Hon. A. MacLeod	6351
Hon. S. Belliveau	6352
Mr. B. Maguire	6352
Hon. M. MacDonald	6353
Hon. G. MacLellan	6355
Vote - Affirmative.....	6357

PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 137, Presbyterian Church Legislation, An Act Respecting the Repeal of

Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	6357
Vote - Affirmative.....	6358

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING:

No. 126, Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act

Hon. R. Delorey	6359
Vote - Affirmative.....	6359

No. 122, Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act

Hon. D. Whalen	6359
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	6361
Hon. D. Whalen	6361
Vote - Affirmative.....	6361

No. 123, Paramedics Act

Hon. L. Glavine.....	6362
Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	6362
Hon. David Wilson	6362
Hon. L. Glavine.....	6364
Vote - Affirmative.....	6365

No. 124, Social Workers Act

Hon. J. Bernard	6365
Vote - Affirmative.....	6365

PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR THIRD READING:

No. 120, Discontinuance of The Pictou County Farmers' Mutual
Fire Insurance Company Act

Ms. K. MacFarlane	6366
Hon. L. Glavine.....	6366
Mr. J. Lohr	6366
Vote - Affirmative.....	6367

ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Tue., Dec. 1st at 1:00 p.m.....6368

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):

Res. 2536, Anna. Valley C of C: Agriculture Innovation Accelerator

Award - Creation, Hon. K. Colwell6369

Res. 2537, Colibri Software: Agriculture Innovation Accelerator

Award - Finalist, Hon. K. Colwell.....6369

Res. 2538, Randsland Farms: Agriculture Innovation Accelerator

Award - Finalist, Hon. K. Colwell.....6370

Res. 2539, Taproot Farms, Fibre Lab: Agriculture Innovation

Accelerator Award - Finalist, Hon. K. Colwell6370

Res. 2540, Grand Pré Winery: Agriculture Innovation Accelerator

Award - Finalist, Hon. K. Colwell.....6371

Res. 2541, Wolfville Farmers' Market: Agriculture Innovation

Accelerator Award - Finalist, Hon. K. Colwell6371

Res. 2542, Frostbyte Interactive: Agriculture Innovation Accelerator

Award - Congrats., Hon. K. Colwell6372



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2015

Sixty-second General Assembly

Second Session

9:00 A.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Ms. Margaret Miller

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We'll now begin the daily routine.

The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction before I table a petition?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. HOUSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in the gallery this morning we have Donna Lugar, Brenda Sterling-Goodwin, and Paula Isenor. They are all advocates for people suffering with Lyme disease. I ask the members to give them a warm round of applause. (Applause)

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition that has 2,349 signatures and I have affixed my signature to it as well. The operative clause of this petition reads:

WE ASK THAT THE GOVERNMENT:

1. **PROVIDE** Nova Scotians access to Doctors trained to clinically diagnose all stages of Lyme disease, which is recommended by Health Canada, rather than relying on the ELISA test . . .
2. **PROTECT** Doctors that clinically diagnose and treat patients until they are symptom free from prosecution by the College of Physicians and Surgeons . . .
3. **REQUEST** that the Minister of Health meets immediately, and at least once annually thereafter, with Lyme Patient Advocates. They are the eyes and ears regarding Lyme disease in Nova Scotia.
4. **UNDERTAKE** a YEAR ROUND awareness campaign such that ALL Nova Scotians become knowledgeable about ticks, their locations . . . what diseases/infections they can carry, how to prevent being bitten, how to properly remove, how to landscape to prevent, etc.
5. **ENSURE** that an Active Tick Surveillance Program is being undertaken as per the “Tick Borne Diseases Response Plan” and that residents have easy access to this information.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I’ll accept that petition under advisement, pending the validity of the prayer contained therein. It’s quite lengthy so I’ll have to take a look at it. Thank you.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, in my capacity as the Attorney General, I hereby beg leave to table amendments to the Civil Procedure Rules. The revisions were made in accordance with the Judicature Act by a majority of the Judges of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court on May 28, 2015, and June 26, 2015.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Section 12 of the Surplus Crown Property Disposal Act, I beg leave to table the report under Disposal of Surplus Crown Property for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2015.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

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

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, before introducing the bill, may I beg leave to make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, and colleagues, I would like to direct your attention to the west gallery where we have a number of people interested in the bills about to be brought forward - from the Chartered Professional Accountants of Nova Scotia: Patti Towler, CEO; Bruce Densmore, Chairman; Dan Ingersoll, CPA Nova Scotia's lawyer; from the Certified Management Accountants of Nova Scotia: Rodney Rodenhiser, CEO, and Joe Moore, Chairman; from the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nova Scotia: Gordon Moore, CEO; from the Certified General Accountants of Nova Scotia: Stana Colovic, CEO; Don Connor, Director of Professional Services; Debra Bower-Pinto, First Vice-Chairman of the CGA Nova Scotia Board; and from the Public Accountants Board of Nova Scotia: Lauchie McKenzie and Richard Morris.

If those people could - oh, they're already standing - if we could give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

Bill No. 138 - Entitled an Act Respecting Chartered Professional Accountants of Nova Scotia. (Hon. Randy Delorey)

Bill. No. 139 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 300 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Municipal Elections Act. (Hon. Zach Churchill)

Bill. No. 140 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 369 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Public Accountants Act. (Hon. Randy Delorey)

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 Cape Breton-Richmond.

MCPHEE, GEORGE - MINISTER OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMENDATION

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, George McPhee, a resident of Louisdale, Richmond County, served proudly for 26 years in the Canadian military. Since that time he has spent 22 years working diligently for the Royal Canadian Legion, including playing a leading role in major renovations at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 47, St. Peter's.

George was recognized for everything he does, as a recipient of the 2015 Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation at a ceremony on July 17th in Halifax. Citing the camaraderie at the branch is a reason he continues to stay active and involved. George's list of volunteer activities is long and impressive: He was key in the efforts to erect the cenotaph in Louisdale; he led a three-year renovation at the branch's Legion hall in Grande Anse; and George also donates his time to the Louisdale Lions Club's Meals on Wheels program, and provides transportation and company to veterans for their medical appointments.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating George McPhee on receiving the 2015 Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

LYME DISEASE: ADVOCATES/VOLS. - SALUTE

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, the number of cases of Lyme disease in Nova Scotia is rising and the number of disease carrying ticks in our province is steadily climbing. A committed group of Lyme disease advocates, their family, friends, and supporters work tirelessly to raise awareness about the disease and work toward better diagnosis and treatment. Many work tirelessly even though the disease often makes it difficult for them to do so.

Today I ask that all MLAs in this House salute the work of these volunteers, a handful of which are with us here today, who do so much to raise the profile of Lyme disease in our province. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton-Richmond.

SAMSON, JANELLE - FIGURE FITNESS/PHYSIQUE NATL. CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, L'Ardoise native Janelle Samson finds herself at the very pinnacle of her journey as a figure athlete. On July 18th at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium Janelle won both the Master's Figure Short A and Open Figure Class A divisions at the 2015 Bikini Figure Fitness and Physique National Championship. Janelle has been working towards these goals for 10 years. Her first competition was also at the Rebecca Cohn.

A decade of hard work and determination has paid off in making her a double national champion. She's a testament to what can be achieved and a role model for those who want to compete or just become healthier. Janelle had been preparing for this event for roughly a year and 16 weeks prior, her diet became much stricter and her exercise regimen much more intense.

Please join me congratulating Janelle Samson on this impressive result at the National Championships.

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

**JOHNSON, MS. KIERAN - DRESS DESIGN:
MEMORIAL - MISSING/MURDERED ABORIGINAL WOMEN**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Riverview High School Grade 12 student Kieran Johnson, who recently created the design on a red dress in memory in all missing and murdered Aboriginal women. Her dress is on display in the school, while several others are hanging from trees in front of the school. Kieran Johnson said she is glad to be playing a role about such an important issue.

Riverview's art teacher Diane Lewis says she hopes bringing this project to Cape Breton raises the awareness about the issue for both her students and the public. I want to thank Kieran Johnson and wish her all the best as she continues with her future education. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

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

LIB. GOV'T.: OUTSOURCING/PRIVATIZATION - RISKS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, there are significant risks associated with P3 contracts and a litany of problems with public private sector partnerships across Canada. Auditor Generals have said that but we now know that the Premier's Office's own briefing notes outline the risks as well. The document raises significant concerns about the McNeil Government's plan to outsource and privatize more government services.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I just want to remind the honourable member not to refer to the current government with the sir name of the Premier.

The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid has the floor.

MR. WILSON: Sorry about that Mr. Speaker. About the Liberal Government's plan to outsource and privatize more government services. The legacy of P3 contracts in Nova Scotia is one of short-term gain for Liberal Governments and long term pain for everyone else. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax-Atlantic.

**TOONIES FOR CHANGE APPRECIATION NIGHT:
NORTHWEST ROTARY CLUB - THANK**

MR. BRENDAN MAQUIRE: Mr. Speaker, on October 26th I was pleased to attend the Toonies for Change Appreciation Night along with Councillor Linda Mosher, the Northwest Rotary Club, participating vendors, and many volunteers and recipients of the proceeds from the lottery. Toonies for Change was started in May of 2014 by the Northwest Rotary Club of Halifax. This is a weekly 50/50 lottery that pays out 50 per cent of its proceeds to the winner, 25 per cent to the Rotary Club to support their many charitable endeavors and the remaining 25 per cent is shared among six Spryfield non-profit organizations.

Appreciation night brought together all the people and organizations that make this lottery possible, from volunteers who collect the toonies each week and record the numbers to the vendors that display the lottery boxes in their establishments. It was a great chance to meet all the people involved in the lottery and show our appreciation to everyone who makes this possible.

I would like to congratulate the Northwest Rotary Club for all their hard work in organizing and running this fantastic program that supports so many of our non-profit organizations. I wish them continued success with the Toonies for Change Lottery. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

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

**MAE KIBYUK MEM. GREEN & GOLD HS HOCKEY TOURNAMENT:
ORGANIZERS - RECOGNIZE**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the organizers and fans of the Mae Kibyuk Memorial Green and Gold High School Hockey Tournament that takes place yearly in North Sydney. Mae Kibyuk was an avid hockey fan who could be

seen at the rink regularly watching her sons and her grandsons play hockey, and Memorial High School decided to name this tournament after her.

The eight teams that competed this year provided an excellent exhibition of classic hockey, with the Riverview Redmond defeating the J.L. Ilsley Judges of Halifax in the championship game with a score of 3-2, after two overtime periods and a shootout. It's a true honour to have this opportunity to thank all players for providing a weekend of top-notch hockey.

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

ROSEWAY HOSP. - CLOSURES

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: The Minister of Health and Wellness came to the town of Shelburne to announce a plan to address the closures at Roseway Hospital earlier this Fall. The minister's so-called plan has lasted only 11 days, with Roseway Hospital scheduled to be closed tonight at 6:00 p.m. Under the minister's watch, the people of Queens-Shelburne have witnessed the health care service erode, erode, and erode.

Mr. Speaker, the creation of the health care super board has stripped away rural Nova Scotia's voice about health care in the province. The minister has failed to keep Roseway Hospital open. The minister has misled this community, as they prepare for another closure tonight.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

BRENNAN, GRACIE: HOPE FOR WILDLIFE - FUNDRAISING

MS. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Gracie Brennan is a 9-year-old girl from Lantz, Nova Scotia, who loves to swim, bike, and dance. She also really loves animals and has two guinea pigs, a fish, and a dog.

Gracie started collecting money to donate to the SPCA, but when she went on a class field trip to the wildlife sanctuary Hope for Wildlife in Seaforth, Gracie loved the wild animals and really liked what the sanctuary was doing to help them get better and possibly return to the wild. Gracie decided to give the money that she had raised to Hope for Wildlife.

But Gracie didn't stop there. She raised more money by cashing in her family's refundable recyclables, selling cupcakes at a family yard sale, and collecting donations from others who appreciated her example. Gracie was thrilled to have her picture taken with Hope Swinimer, founder of Hope for Wildlife, when she presented Hope with the \$205 she raised.

Gracie decided that when she grows up, she also wants to help animals. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend Gracie for her efforts. Seeing young people like Gracie do what they can should inspire all of us to do more.

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

CROWELL, DONALD - NATL. ORDER OF THE LÉGION D'HONNEUR

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: On Remembrance Day 2015, I was very honoured to have the privilege of presenting the Knight of the National Order of the Légion d'Honneur to Lance Corporal Donald Crowell of Clyde River.

Donald enlisted in 1942 and was shipped overseas in 1943. He saw active duty in Belgium, Holland, Germany, and France. During the invasion of Normandy, Donald was one of the first to reach the shores.

France will never forget the acts of bravery by Canadian soldiers during the Normandy landings to help restore their freedom. This only strengthens the relationship that exists between Canada and France.

Mr. Speaker, we are all very proud of Don, and we join with the people in France and thank him for risking his life for the cause of peace and freedom.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

COM. SERV.: RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES - ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Providing a nurturing and safe environment for individuals with developmental disabilities living in residential facilities across Nova Scotia remains a challenge for the Department of Community Services.

In a recent news story published by the Halifax Media Co-op, it outlines that in just the past three years, 76 allegations of abuse were found to have occurred within facilities for individuals with developmental disabilities across the province. These numbers are very concerning. There is a fear that residents, many with poor communication skills, face serious obstacles when attempting to report abuse.

Mr. Speaker, simply responding to allegations of abuse is not enough. The department must be creating environments within these facilities where violence of any kind is stopped before it happens.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Lucasville.

MLAs: COMMUN. EVENTS - COMMIT

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, as Nova Scotia rebuilds, it is imperative that we act with purpose. We need to commit to taking a good look at ourselves in the mirror on a daily basis, identify our strengths, and decide how these assets can add value to society.

Throughout my life I have had the opportunity to play many sports, and on most successful teams I've played on, we were able to commit to this. Every action you make, make it with a purpose, my coaches would say, which meant that every time we stepped off the bench we should be intentional about what we are trying to accomplish.

The same can be said for everyday life in our respective communities. Take this weekend in Hammonds Plains-Lucasville, for example: the PTA at Hammonds Plains Consolidated is hosting their Christmas craft fair, TASA and Bedford minor hockey teams are hosting fundraisers, and Saint James Church is hosting an Advent wreath-building event.

Mr. Speaker, with respect, I want to take this opportunity to encourage all members of this House, as we head home to our neighbours and loved ones this weekend, to be mindful as we attend our events in our respective communities. Please act with a purpose. Thank you.

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

**ATL. CHALLENGE CUP HOCKEY TOURNAMENT:
COL. CO. PLAYERS ET AL - CONGRATS.**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, on Thanksgiving weekend, several Colchester County hockey players representing Nova Scotia earned gold at the 20th Annual Atlantic Challenge Cup Tournament in Moncton.

Gavin Hart, Riley MacInnis, and Hunter Martin played for the under-15 team that posted a 5 to 0 record in the tournament. Julia Scammell and Julia Schmitt, each having an assist in the championship contest, played for the under-18 girls division with a 4 to 1 record. Along with gold in these two divisions, Nova Scotia took home silver in both the male under-14 and female under-16 divisions.

The Atlantic Challenge Cup saw a total of 16 teams in the four age divisions, representing the Provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. Congratulations to our Colchester County players and to all participants in the tournament. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**STATISTICS CAN. REPT.:
HOMICIDES/ABORIGINAL IDENTIFY - NUMBERS**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, earlier this week Statistics Canada released a report that for the first time ever had a complete analysis of homicides and Aboriginal identity. According to this report, Aboriginal people were about six times more likely than non-Aboriginal Canadians to be victims of homicide.

Sadly, these numbers confirm what many advocates and activists have been telling us for years. First Nations people make up just 5 per cent of our population in Canada, but are drastically over-represented as victims of violent crime, including sexual assault and homicide.

I urge all levels of government to take notice of these jarring statistics and call on the federal government to consider starting an inquiry to look more deeply into the challenges facing Aboriginal men in our country, as well as the missing and murdered Aboriginal women. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

FISHERMEN'S MEM. HOSP. - WCB SAFETY CERTIFICATION

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, the professionals in our health care system work extremely hard to provide us with the care we need to be happy, healthy Nova Scotians. They also work very hard to keep themselves safe from workplace accidents, and they have been doing a fine job.

Lunenburg's Fishermen's Memorial Hospital, along with hospitals in Bridgewater and Liverpool, recently became the first in the province to receive WCB safety certification. The trio of hospitals received the certification following a year-long audit by ENNIS Security Services.

Maintaining a safe working environment in our hospitals is key to providing good services to Nova Scotians. I wish to take this time to congratulate Fishermen's Memorial Hospital on this fine achievement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

PICTOU CO. 55+ GAMES: ORGANIZERS - CONGRATS.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and congratulate the organizers of the 55+ Games that were held in Pictou County in September. They did an outstanding job representing the rich and diverse culture of Pictou County at the opening ceremonies, which featured First Nation dancing, Highland dancing, African drumming, and fiddle numbers. More than 750 people from across Nova Scotia registered for the games; 170 of the participants were from Pictou County, which was an increase from only six in the 2013 games.

The 55+ Games are a great way for Nova Scotians to stay involved with physical and social activities. This will have positive long-term effects on physical, mental, and emotional health.

Once again I am pleased to congratulate and thank the organizers of the 55+ Games for their dedication and hard work in making the games a success.

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

LIB. GOV'T. - PRIVATIZATION

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, the perils of privatization have cost taxpayers billions in other provinces, such as British Columbia and Ontario. Take Ontario, for example, where the most expensive P3 hospital in the province was built at double the cost of a public build. Remember the devastating Walkerton water scandal with seven lives lost, or the Highway No. 407 giveaway, to name only a few.

Corporations love privatization because it makes them buckets of money off the backs of hardworking taxpayers. Governments privatize to sell future revenue to business enterprises for a quick cash grab today, simply to fulfill campaign promises and to balance their books for the next election. You cannot guarantee lower costs and better services when profits are part of the deal.

This Liberal Government has preached against corporate giveaways, yet they're willing and anxious to put taxpayers' money into large corporations for their own political advantage. Shame, Mr. Speaker.

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

CAMPBELL, MADISON - ANTIGONISH HIGHLAND GAMES SUCCESS

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Madison Campbell of Baddeck on her recent success at the Antigonish Highland Games. Madison is a student

at Baddeck Academy and a multi-talented athlete who won gold in both the high jump and 4 X 100 relay competition, silver in shotput and 200-metre hurdles, and bronze in discus.

With her fantastic performance, Madison was also selected to represent Nova Scotia at the national championships in Quebec. Madison also received the Ron O'Flaherty Scholarship Athletic Award. The award recognizes the top male and female athletes throughout the province, who have a minimum academic average of 85 per cent and who have represented their school in athletic competition.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Madison and wish her plenty of success in the future. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

KENTVILLE'S VALUE WASTE RESOURCE MGT. TEAM - EXHIBIT

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House of Assembly about the annual exhibit hosted by Kentville's Value Waste Resource Management Team. It is an innovative event that showcases art created by using repurposed, unwanted items that have been left at the curbside for pickup.

I congratulate Kings North, Centreville resident Janette MacDuff on her double win for the People's Choice Award in their Most Original Category, with her entry of a coloured-glass window using old window frames, a grinder and coloured pieces of glass she found at Value Waste Reuse Centre. Janette created her inspiration piece, depicting houses at Fox Island belonging to her distant relatives.

Thanks go to Value Ace Resource Management Team for its effort to promote new and environmentally-friendly ways of reducing waste for Kings North and the Valley. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

DOELLE-LAHEY REPT. - ENDORSE

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Last session this member for Queens-Shelburne requested no less than two votes in this House for the sitting Liberal Government to endorse the Doelle-Lahey Report in its entirety. Each time the Liberal Government voted it down. Instead, the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture adopted some of what was in the report while other recommendations fell by the wayside. This approach has not been satisfactory to many who follow the industry.

Environmental lawyers have called the new regulations, "a skeleton that follows the basic approach put forward by Doelle-Lahey, but lacks substance in key areas of

planning, transparency and effectively addressing ministerial discretion.” I encourage the minister to work toward adopting all of the recommendations put forward by the Doelle-Lahey Report. Thank you.

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

THE BROWN HALL (BEAVER BANK) - RECOGNIZE

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to recognize the Brown . . .

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

MR. GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to recognize the Brown Hall. The Brown Hall is a not-for-profit community centre in Beaver Bank that throughout the week puts on various activities for seniors and others in the community.

The Brown Hall operates solely on donations for those who can partake in the events that are held there. The Brown Hall serves a weekly meal every Tuesday, there is no set fee for the dinner, however, it is asked that a donation of \$5 be made, or whatever can be afforded. If any person cannot afford their meal, they are not turned away.

I had the opportunity to witness the wonderful work being done there when I helped out at the Thanksgiving dinner this past October. It was a comfort to see my constituents of Sackville-Beaver Bank taking a positive stance to help those who find it difficult to help themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge Kathy Fougere and her many volunteers that are faithfully committed to the Brown Hall . . .

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

The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**NEW GLASGOW RANGERS: NEW GLASGOW TOWN/PICTOU CO.
HERITAGE SPORTS HALL OF FAME - RECOGNITION THANK**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my gratitude to the town of New Glasgow and the Pictou County Heritage Sports Hall of Fame for recognizing, hosting, and honouring the 1964-65 Maritime Senior Hockey Champions, the New Glasgow Rangers.

The Rangers were inducted into the Sports Hall on Friday, November 14, 2015. Unfortunately, the team's playing coach, Fleming MacKell, passed away three weeks prior to the induction. MacKell, a prolific NHL scorer, played on two Stanley Cup winners with the Toronto Maple Leafs prior to being traded to the Boston Bruins, where he became a valuable member of that team.

Several local players joined their teammates in New Glasgow from other areas of Canada for the induction. A big thank you to all the organizers of this event.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

COM. SERV. - CHILD POVERTY RATES

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, when asked how it is possible that Nova Scotia has one of the highest rates of child poverty in Canada, the Minister of Community Services deflected the question and responded by stating that she is encouraged by the recent announcements coming from the federal government. I'm hoping that our new federal government will assist the Minister of Community Services in lifting countless children out of poverty, but it's not a federal issue.

The Minister of Community Services is primarily responsible to assist Nova Scotia's most vulnerable, like the 42.7 per cent of children under six in Cape Breton who live in poverty, and not wait for action from another government. Nova Scotians are looking to the minister to be a leader on issues of poverty.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

G.R. SAUNDERS LTD. - ANNIV. (60th)

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to recognize a remarkable business that has operated for 60 years and employed four generations. G.R. Saunders Ltd. began with Ray Saunders, a travelling giftware salesman who put the Nova Scotia tartan on Royal Adderley bone china. Today, Saunders Tartans & Gifts in New Minas supplies almost all of the Scottish shops in Canada.

Mr. Don Saunders, Ray's son, began working in the shop at 10 years of age, and his sister Mary worked with him until her retirement. Don's daughter Nancy is now in charge of promotional sales, and Nancy's 16-year-old daughter has begun working part-time. The Annapolis Valley recently celebrated the production of our very own tartan, and it was Don Saunders who arranged for its weaving in Scotland.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, I would like to congratulate and thank the Saunders family for 60 years of business in the Annapolis Valley.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

PRISKE, TANYA - DIVERSITY CAN. MAGAZINE TOP 10 LIST

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise and congratulate Ms. Tanya Priske on being recognized as one of Canada's most influential women in leadership and the advancement of women in business.

Diversity Canada Magazine placed Tanya on its annual Top 10 list of Canadian women who have taken the lead in advancing the status of women, Aboriginals, visible minorities, the disabled, and the LGBTQ community. The 10 women were chosen from 87 nominations, based on criteria that included proven leadership, achievements, volunteerism, and innovation.

Tanya currently serves as the executive director of the Centre for Women in Business in Halifax, and is passionate about supporting the growth and development of women-owned businesses. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Tanya for this prestigious recognition and thank her for her work in supporting women.

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

MEET YOUR FARMER: VOLS. - THANK

MS. JOYCE TREEN: Mr. Speaker, on October 17th I along with Fisherman's Cove hosted an event called Meet Your Farmer. The purpose of this event was to showcase agriculture in Nova Scotia and to support buying local. The idea started with a healthy community breakfast, supported by Select Nova Scotia and Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia, but quickly grew into a full-day event, ending with a wine and cheese with Jost Winery as its sponsor.

The daytime event had local vendors, information booths, and live cooking displays. There were activities for the children, consisting of petting zoos, bouncing castles, face painting, and a craft with alpaca hair.

The whole day was a huge success and thank you to the many volunteers who helped. The plan is to make this event an annual one to celebrate agriculture in Nova Scotia. Thank you.

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

MALCOLM MUNROE GIRLS A VOLLEYBALL TEAM - GOLD MEDAL

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Malcolm Munroe Girls A volleyball team on recently winning gold at a tournament recently held at

Whitney Pier Memorial Junior High. This win was the third consecutive gold medal victory for the team this season.

The Malcolm Munroe Girls A volleyball team is led by coach Jacalyn Kennedy and assistant coach Mickayla Townsend. I take great pleasure in congratulating each and every player on the Malcolm Munroe Girls A volleyball team and wish them all the best as they pursue their education and their sport. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

BUS.: HIGH-SPEED INTERNET - RURAL N.S.

HON DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, the current Minister of Business is continuing to evade and avoid the issue of high-speed Internet in rural Nova Scotia. When asked in this House on November 20th, the minister was careful to acknowledge the importance of the issue but failed to recognize it as an essential service or outline exactly what he is doing to expand the service.

We all know that it is easier to blame others for our own failings but people who live in rural Nova Scotia recognize an excuse when they hear one. Nova Scotians are tired of this minister's inaction. People living in rural Nova Scotia deserve to get an actual plan to bring this essential service to each and every corner of our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

OLDFIELD CONS. SCH. - NOURISH YOUR ROOTS PROJ.

MR. BILL HORNE: A good news story, Mr. Speaker. Oldfield Consolidated was one of the five schools and a daycare that participated in the Nourish Your Roots project, through Nourish N.S. aimed at getting healthier foods into schools. In a two-week period students raised \$8,000 for their school and \$16,000 for the three farm groups that were participating. At Oldfield, students sold 159 boxes of food at \$30 each, with \$10 from each box going to the school. Oldfield school has 130 students and were delighted to sell more boxes than they had students.

Through this program the students learned about farming, agriculture, produce and that it is all local. Principal MacGillivray said it was fantastic to be involved and the school is open and more than happy to be involved in the future Nourish Your Roots projects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HALEY, ANDREW: N.S. SPORT HALL OF FAME - INDUCTION

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Andrew Haley of North Sydney on his induction into the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame. Andrew is a five-time Paralympic medal winner in three separate games. He fought cancer twice before the age of nine. Andrew lost his right leg and his left lung to the disease. He is a true inspiration.

It is a true honour to have the opportunity to honour Andrew, who works in sales for the Toronto Blue Jays, as a motivational speaker encouraging youth to overcome obstacles and do everything they desire. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

DIGBY TOWN: QUASQUICENTENNIAL - CONGRATS.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the quasiquicentennial of the Town of Digby and their celebrations surrounding reaching this milestone. Although only incorporated in 1890, Digby was founded in 1783 with the arrival of Honourable Robert Digby to our shores after the surrender of New York.

The people of Digby planned a year-long celebration of reaching this milestone, starting with the New Year's Day levy. The main focus of the celebrations was on June 20th, starting early with the Mason's Breakfast. The rest of the day was filled with lots to do, including the Spring Into Summer Trade Show, the Learning Grove summer fair, the unveiling of the town clock, the Digby historical mural and a rather loud Nova Scotia town crier competition.

In addition to the quasiquicentennial activities, our July 1st barbeque, lobster bash, scallop days, and Wharf Rat Rally were extra special in recognition of the year. So, as the year winds down, I would like to say happy 125th to the Town of Digby. We can be so proud of its past and expect great things in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

PICTOU CO. INJURED WORKERS ASSOC. - SALUTE

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, for many years the Pictou County Injured Workers Association has fought for fairness for injured workers and their families. The association advocates for fair benefits and treatment of all injured workers, and are passionate about the need for change in the WCB system.

They took the Liberal Party at its word when they said in an election questionnaire that reform was needed at WCB. Pictou County Injured Workers are now disappointed to learn that the questionnaire was an election promise that this government does not intend

to fulfill. The Pictou County Injured Workers Association wants fairness and quality service delivery so their members can live with dignity.

Today I salute the organization and the good work they do.

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

DIAB, HON. LENA - PROGRESS WOMEN OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

HON. DIANA WHALEN: It's my pleasure to rise in the House today to recognize one of our members, Minister Lena Diab, the Minister of Immigration who was honoured on November 18, 2015, with the Progress Women of Excellence Award in the category of Management and the Professions. Many of her MLA colleagues attended the gala dinner and joined members of her family, legal colleagues, and Father Pierre Azzi from our Lady of Lebanon Church in sharing in this important night.

Minister Diab was recognized for her significant contributions to her community and her profession. I've had the pleasure of knowing Minister Diab for many years and I know she is always willing to step up and take on challenges, which is what she has done in her legal career and continues to do in her role as Minister of Immigration. Minister Diab has a strong foundation based on her belief in the importance of family, faith, and her supportive network within the Lebanese community and the legal community, both of which she has generously supported in volunteer roles over the years.

I ask the members of this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Minister Diab on receiving this prestigious award. (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

CHISHOLM, DONALD - PARTS FOR TRUCKS PRO STOCK TOUR CHAMPION

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Victory is sweet and for Antigonish native Donald Chisholm, after 15 years of racing, it has come. Donald has been racing full time in the Parts for Trucks Pro Stock Tour since 2000, and in 2015 he is the champion. After a season of racing in about a dozen races and coming out the winner at home in the Lucas Oil 150, Donald and his Keltic Ford/Nova Construction team are able to enjoy their success.

I would like congratulate Donald and his team of Car 89 on racing to their first championship, and I hope this is the first of many. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**MILNE, MARGARET/PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP
- NORTHUMBERLAND REG. HS PARKINSON'S SUPER WALK**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm excited to report that the Parkinson's Super Walk, held at the Northumberland Regional High School in September, was a great success. They raised over \$17,000 and they did this without corporate walks or sponsors. The walk was entirely family and community based. Seventy-two people took part in the walk and they were joined by a 16-person marching band. There is often a positive response to marching music by those who suffer from Parkinson's.

I want to congratulate Margaret Milne and the Parkinson's support group for a job well done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SPARKS, MABLE ASHE WINNIFRED (GRANT) - BIRTHDAY (100th)

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Mable Ashe Winnifred (Grant) Sparks, of Cherry Brook, on the occasion of her 100th birthday on January 31, 2015. Mable celebrated this joyous occasion at the historic St. John's Anglican Church Hall, surrounded by friends and family.

Mable is the sixth and the youngest child of Elizabeth (Beals) Grant and James Grant, and was born in the community of Cherry Brook. She married Lawrence Sparks and together they had four children - Lillian, Inez, Allen, and Laurence. She lived most of her life in Cherry Brook and some time in Toronto, Ontario, and Rochester, New York.

Mable is a lifelong member and pillar of the Cherry Brook United Baptist Church. She is the oldest member of the community and the last surviving member of her family. She is a friend to all, and her quiet approach to life is a comfort to many of her friends and acquaintances. She is truly a wonderful person.

I congratulate Mable on her 100th birthday, and wish her continued good health in the coming years.

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

HEALING ANIMAL SCARS: WORK - THANK

HON. TONY INCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to commend the work done by the Cole Harbour group, Sonya's Cat and Animal Rescue Society, or as they are commonly known, Healing Animal SCARS. The group is run by Sonya Higgins.

This group has rescued over 700 cats since it was founded in Spring 2006. The animals rescued are spayed, neutered, and tested for medical conditions. Potential adopters are thoroughly screened in order to ensure the animals that have suffered from neglect and abuse are placed in loving homes.

Healing Animal SCARS is a home-run not-for-profit. I would like to thank them for the important work they do. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

GREEN, PTE. RICHARD - FOREST HEIGHTS COMMUN. SCH. PLAQUE

HON. MARK FUREY: On October 2nd, I was honoured to attend a plaque dedication at Forest Heights Community School in Chester for Private Richard Green.

This young soldier from the Chester area who served as a member of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry was killed while serving in Afghanistan in 2012 at the age of 21. The entire student population of Forest Heights Community School as well as Private Green's family and community members were on hand to take part in the unveiling of a plaque placed on school grounds in his honour.

It's important for us to continue to honour our nation's service men and women, to teach our nation's youth of the sacrifices of some to benefit many, and to ensure that the memory of our fallen is never forgotten.

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

CARITAS MOTHERHOUSE - TOUR

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: On August 7th, the member for Annapolis and myself were invited on a tour of the Caritas Motherhouse, situated on the breathtaking Mount Saint Vincent University campus.

After our tour, we had the pleasure of sitting down for delicious tea and sweets with the Sisters of Charity and the Victoria Hall residents of Caritas, where we had the opportunity to discuss everything from local politics to the aptly predicted success of the Toronto Blue Jays. Through you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to especially thank Susan Brimble, the recreation coordinator, and her team at the Caritas residence for organizing and hosting this special day.

Although the building may be relatively new, walking through the doors and into that safe and welcoming space always has the comfort and feel of home to me, and I'm so thankful to have them in my community.

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

**VAUGHN, REV. LISA: PARISH VITALITY COORDINATOR
- DIOCESE N.S. & P.E.I.**

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Reverend Lisa Vaughn on her new position as the parish vitality coordinator for the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Pastor Lisa has served as a rector of the parish of St. Timothy's, Hatchet Lake, and St. Paul's, Terence Bay since 2003. For the past 12 years, Pastor Lisa has encouraged and supported countless individuals and groups to step up into positions of leadership within the church which offers programs and services for everyone. Pastor Lisa embraces technology and even holds a special service to bless handheld devices each year. The church is totally inclusive, offering weekly Jesus in Jeans rock music services that appeal to all ages.

I would like the members of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in wishing Pastor Lisa great success in her new position. I cannot think of anyone better suited to being called vitality coordinator than her.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

MACPHEE CENTRE FOR CREATIVE LEARNING: STAFF/BD. - CONGRATS.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: I had the pleasure this week to tour the MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning in Dartmouth South.

This innovative and inspiring centre is a creative hub for connecting youth between the ages of 12 and 19 to the arts by harnessing their passion, their talent, and their purpose. Two resident artists from NSCAD, volunteer drummers, graphic artists, videographers, and others offer their talent and time to inspire young people to learn, create, and engage. The addition of a new kitchen will further enhance creativity through culinary endeavours. The centre will provide creative learning workshops, classes, camps, and projects to over 600 kids from the Dartmouth area.

Please join me in congratulating the staff and board of the MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning in their unique approach to learning for today's youth.

It is my hope that the member for Dartmouth South will tour this facility and the other great organizations in her riding and take the opportunity in this House to celebrate the work of the people in her riding.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

DART. SKATEBOARD COALITION SOC. - GOV'T. GRANT

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, on July 10, 2014, this government announced \$411,000 in recreational facility development grants. These grants are to help Nova Scotians lead healthy active lifestyles. As the great Allan Rowe said that day, it's important to invest in sports and recreation facilities so Nova Scotians can lead healthy lifestyles.

Mr. Speaker, \$100,000 of that grant was given to the Dartmouth Skateboard Coalition Society for a much-needed skateboard park in Dartmouth South.

This member's statement is to highlight the greatness of former MLA Allan Rowe and that positive things are indeed happening in Dartmouth South. Thank you.

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

EECD: GOV'T. (N.S.) - EDUC. IMPROVEMENT

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, our government is working hard to provide young Nova Scotians with the best education they can get. We are improving education by creating an action plan to modernize the education system over the next five years that will address the challenges and concerns brought forward by Nova Scotians.

In December 2013 the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development announced that it would increase capital repairs funding by \$9 million for a total of \$15 million for smaller projects such as window replacement and roof repairs. Bel Ayr Elementary School and South Woodside Elementary School in Dartmouth will benefit from these capital repairs.

Furthermore, the Education and Early Childhood Development Minister previously announced the sites for a new high school and Primary to Grade 9 school for the Halifax Regional School Board. A new P-9 school will replace aging Southdale-North Woodside and Prince Arthur Junior High in Dartmouth South, bringing the students in the community together under one roof. It will be built on the former junior high school property.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for her hard work and I want to recognize the efforts of our friend and colleague, Allan Rowe, for all his advocacy on this.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, with the consent of the House, could we 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 Education and Early Childhood Development.

RESOLUTION NO. 2535

HON. KAREN CASEY: Thank you very much, and I appreciate the co-operation.

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

Whereas students and teachers from more than 235 schools across the province are here in Halifax today to celebrate We Day; and

Whereas We Day Atlantic Canada is bringing student leaders together to celebrate how they are effecting positive change in our world through impressive and significant accomplishments, such as the students at Riverside Education Centre who raised money to build a school in Haiti or the students, staff, and families from Dwight Ross Elementary, St. Mary's Elementary, Pine Ridge Middle School, Berwick and District School, and West Kings who collected 2,610 pounds of food to "stuff a bus" and needed a second bus to hold it all; and

Whereas children can and are making a difference, and in many instances are inspiring adults to take a stand on global or local issues;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature join the We Day celebrations, not only today but year-round, and inspire young leaders in their communities to create change in our local and global communities.

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.

Just before we move into Question Period, I have a ruling on the petition presented earlier by the member for Pictou East. I have had it reviewed by the Clerk of the House and the second clause of the petition requests the government to protect doctors from prosecution by the Nova Scotia College of Physicians and Surgeons.

O'Brien and Bosc states on Page 1167 that matters that properly belong before a tribunal may not be made the subject of a petition to the House. Over the years the House has chosen to delegate certain matters to administrative and regulatory bodies. The College of Physicians and Surgeons falls within the types of bodies referred to in O'Brien and Bosc. I do not believe this petition is acceptable on that ground, so I instruct that it not be tabled and that a Page return it to the honourable member.

The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I certainly respect your ruling but I would just like to say that it's a shame that the voices of 2,349 people couldn't be heard in this House, and I would say that we should work together to find a way so that voices are heard in this House when they need to be. I thank you for your ruling this morning.

MR. SPEAKER: We'll now take a 40-second recess until the start of Question Period.

[9:59 a.m. The House recessed.]

[10:00 a.m. The House reconvened.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

PREM.: MENTAL HEALTH SERV. - ACCESSIBILITY

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Over the summer we all learned of a New Glasgow woman who was desperate to get her son the mental health services that he needed. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to access services and she was advised, this woman, by the police, she was told by a police officer that maybe the only way to get her son the medical treatment he needed was to have him arrested because

then he would be in the court system and sent to Dartmouth for a 30-day mental health assessment. This is one story of many that are becoming all too familiar to Nova Scotians.

I would like to ask the Premier, does he believe this is acceptable in the Province of Nova Scotia?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I don't believe any Nova Scotian would believe that it's acceptable that the only way young people in this province can receive the medical care they require is to become part of the justice system. That is why we continue to try to invest in adolescent mental health, and it's why we've been investing in our education system for early identification of onset of mental health issues in a young person's life.

We know as a government, and I think all Nova Scotians know, we need to continue to do more to provide the supports to families like the honourable member just mentioned here. I want to tell him as well, I raised it when I was in Ottawa with the Prime Minister that I believe this is an opportunity for us as a nation to put together an aggressive approach to adolescent mental health, to ensure that not only young Nova Scotians, young Canadians receive the support they need as quickly as possible.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear that the Premier raised adolescent mental health during his meetings in Ottawa earlier this week because this story and so many like it, we hear more and more of them every day. I completely agree, we need to do more for families like this mother and her young son. In fact, sadly, he did end up getting arrested on an assault charge and now that mother says that he might end up with a criminal record.

I'm sure everyone in this House agrees we do not want to see young people with mental illness deserving of treatment to end up with a criminal record so needlessly.

I will ask the Premier, will he now agree to overhaul the mental health delivery system by calling a public inquiry?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. This is an issue that is affecting all of our families in all of our communities across the province. I want to thank the health care workers across the province for providing that support. I want to thank the work that is happening in the public education system for early identification. We will continue to work to put in place the proper supports that young Nova Scotians, that families who are challenged with these challenges are getting the support that they require. With the multi-departmental approach this government is taking, we will continue to work with families across this province to ensure those supports continue to be improved.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, this is one story, but it's a great example of where statistics and real life come together. We know that 200,000 Nova Scotians will face a mental illness at some point in their lives - in a province of our size, that is every family that will be affected.

There are good things happening in our system and there are lots of professionals and volunteers who are working very hard, but even they tell us that the resources are not there, that there are cracks in the system, and that the system, itself, is in crisis and needs an overhaul.

I've asked the Premier several times to add to the work that is being done by calling a full public inquiry. Will he reconsider his decision and report to this House that he will add a public inquiry to the efforts that he has listed that are already going on?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for his question; I want to thank the Minister of Health and Wellness for the work that he's doing in his department; and I want to thank the staff in the Department of Health and Wellness, who continue to work with our health care providers, with community organizations, to continue to build on the support services in this province. They continue to reach out to identify the cracks that the honourable member is referring to and look for ways, with support, out in the community that they can help ensure that when any family in this province requires the support of mental health services for their children that they not only receive that, but that the entire family unit receives the support that is required to help them over that period of time so that that young person then can go on and lead a full, active life.

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

PREM.: UNIVERSITY TUITION - INCREASES

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, last week the Premier stood on the floor of the House and praised the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education for removing the cap off university tuitions in our province. Then the Premier seemed to get angry when members on this side of the house pointed out just how high tuitions had spiked this past year, and maybe he should be angry. Tuition fees in Nova Scotia are third highest in Canada and universities are signalling they expect the Premier and his minister to allow the MOU to raise costs for students even higher.

So, my question for the Premier is, why is he allowing university tuitions to spiral out of control?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to thank not only our sons and daughters, but those tens of thousands of global citizens who come to this province every year to go to post-secondary institutions. They recognize the quality of our institutions here; they recognize the top-notch education

they are going to receive. We are continuing to find ways that those young people can get an opportunity to stay here, continue to build the economy of Nova Scotia, and we're looking at ways to ensure that not only are these institutions that are spread out across our province and providing that quality education, but they become economic drivers in the communities that they reside in.

MS. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, as people come to our universities our own young people can't afford to get into those universities. This government is struggling to contain the fallout from its short-sighted decisions over the past two years, and yesterday about 100 students forced the Board of Governors at NSCAD to delay further tuition hikes after the school had already experienced a 9 per cent increase in tuition this year.

Mr. Speaker, we know Cape Breton University is threatening layoffs, even after the Premier allowed a 21 per cent increase in their tuition. So when will this Premier take real steps to control ballooning tuition hikes in Nova Scotia's universities?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank again the honourable member for the question. I again want to remind her, these institutions not only attract 20,000 people globally, our sons and daughters get an opportunity for the top quality education in this province. I want to again thank all those Nova Scotians who see the optimism in this province and not the pessimism that comes from the Opposition. I want to thank them for continuing to believe in this province and continuing to want to be here to work and get educated in this province.

They have a government that is going to continue to work with them to provide low income Nova Scotians an opportunity to attend not only university, but community college, and in loan forgiveness ensuring that we do not charge interest on student loans that are provided to Nova Scotian students. Those are all positive things going forward. We will do our part to work with young Nova Scotians to ensure that they get the quality education that they so deserve.

MS. MACDONALD: Well, there is a reason to be pessimistic, Mr. Speaker, the Ivany commission could not have made it clearer that there's an urgent need for action. We have declining population, and this government, may I remind the Premier, cancelled the Graduate Retention Rebate, \$50 million out of the pockets of young graduates without reinvesting hardly any of that back into the university system.

So Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Premier, why has he not reinvested the \$50 million they took from young graduates to take the burden off the growing costs of university tuition?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question, it gives me an opportunity to talk about our Graduate to Opportunity program where we work with employers to provide opportunities for those graduates that the

honourable member is referring to. I want to thank the great work that's being done by the Apprenticeship Board providing more opportunities for young people in this province to get an opportunity here at home after they complete their education.

Unfortunately Mr. Speaker, the only pessimist in this province is sitting in the NDP, because I'm going to tell you, young person after young person is looking for opportunity in this province, and they are finally glad to have a government that is wanting to partner with them and provide them opportunities, not only to go to work for someone else in this province, but to drive their own job opportunity and create their own job here in Nova Scotia - create a small business, which that government is opposed to.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - LYME DISEASE:
PHYSICIANS - PREPAREDNESS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. There are certainly some doctors here in the province that will properly diagnose and treat Lyme disease, but there are many that do not, either because they are not properly educated or because they are fearful. When doctors' hands are tied or they are not properly educated, Nova Scotians suffer. If we have Nova Scotians that aren't getting the proper clinical diagnosis and treatment they deserve, it's a concern to all Nova Scotians.

My question today for the minister is, does the minister believe that there are doctors in the province that are not properly prepared or are afraid to properly diagnose Lyme disease?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I can tell the member opposite is that we now have a very large contingent of doctors who have been trained to identify in early stage and also in late and post-treatment follow-up across Nova Scotia. When I compare it to 10 years ago, we have moved the yardstick remarkably forward. Doctors Nova Scotia and Dalhousie Medical School continue to do professional development for doctors around Lyme disease.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, more and more doctors being properly prepared is a good thing. But we need to keep pushing that yardstick further and further. We have a strong group of advocates in this province who are very well organized and very well educated, and I think they can bring a good insight to the department.

My question is, would the minister commit to meeting with the group of advocates, now or as soon as possible, and then setting up a system where the minister and the department meet annually with the Lyme disease advocacy group so that they are sharing information and making sure that the department is hearing what they have to say?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I have met with a number of people who are in the advocacy group to improve service and diagnostic work right across that whole continuum. There are many aspects. Surveillance must continue, obviously, to be done well.

I have met and I will continue to meet with people from this group. I am very sensitive to this issue. One of my first cases when I became an MLA was a little boy from my community who had Lyme disease, and I've tracked him over my time in office. Many, many Nova Scotians have become much more aware of Lyme disease, and we all know that the best place for all of us to do work is around prevention and making sure that we do our observation for ticks when our children and family members are outside.

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

PREM.: PARIS SUMMIT - ATTENDANCE

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the upcoming Paris summit on climate change hopes to build on the momentum already underway. Leaders from here in Canada and around the world will have a chance to exchange ideas and discuss the challenges that lie ahead. On October 23rd, CTV reported that during a teleconference call, Canada's Premiers agreed everyone not facing an election campaign would attend the Paris summit with the Prime Minister. I'll table that.

I want to ask the Premier if he could tell us why he has chosen not to attend the Paris summit with the Prime Minister and other First Ministers from across Canada.

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question, Mr. Speaker. When the Paris summit starts, the opening few days are for national governments. The Prime Minister will have a role. We as provinces, for the purposes of that summit, are considered subnational governments. Our role takes place later in December - December 4th, 5th, and 6th - where the Minister of Environment will be going and representing the province.

I had an opportunity to sit down with Canada's Prime Minister and First Ministers to talk about this issue last week. I very clearly laid out the great work that has been happening in this province when it comes to ensuring that we reduce our carbon footprint. We're going to continue to do that.

I said to the Prime Minister and fellow Premiers that this issue, while it is a national issue and the federal government has a role in it, provinces that have already been doing great work over the last number of decades need to make sure we're credited for that and aren't penalized when it comes to any policy position that we make. I'm going to continue to make sure that Nova Scotia is represented on this issue.

MS. MACDONALD: I want to thank the Premier for his response. I would agree that a lot of good work has already gone on, but I think we would all agree that the momentum needs to continue. Climate change is not something that's going to happen - it's something that's happening right now and many, many people are feeling the impact and are concerned about it.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier: During the First Ministers' meeting, what were some of the ideas and concerns he shared with the Prime Minister with respect to what Nova Scotia will be doing to continue the momentum that's already under way?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. What I told the Prime Minister and I told other Premiers across the country was that we have a tremendous opportunity in Canada because of the natural resources we have, natural assets.

I spoke to the Prime Minister about building an electricity grid across this country that's connected from province to province to province so that we can then be able to build on some of the hydroelectricity projects that are able to happen; for example, in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Gull Island project, which is bigger than Muskrat Falls. Not only would it provide opportunities here in our region, but I believe could help solve some of the issues across the country.

I've talked to the Prime Minister about investing in innovation because I can tell you, if we don't harness the Bay of Fundy, our children will. We need to be able to have that opportunity to share that clean energy not only in our own region but also to be able to export some of that energy to provide opportunity so that at the same time, through innovation, we're driving down our carbon footprint we're also providing good opportunities in this province.

We just need help from the national government to recognize that our power rates are reflecting the fact that Nova Scotians have already invested a substantial amount of money when it comes to climate change. We just need to make sure they're not penalized twice.

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

PREM.: PERSONAL SERV. CONTRACTS - IMPORTANCE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: We now know that the Auditor General is going to look into the way this government hands out personal services contracts, saying he will take a preliminary look at how \$5 million in government-issued contracts are being awarded.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission says “actually there are bigger fish to fry.” Obviously, he doesn’t think this is worth taking a look at, but the Auditor General does.

So I’d like to ask the Premier: Does he agree with the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission that the way the government hands out personal services contracts is so insignificant that it’s not worth the look?

THE PREMIER: If the honourable member listened, the minister actually said he looked forward to having the AG review these, scrutinize them.

I want to remind the honourable member that it’s not only government - he’ll be looking at the ones his caucus hands out, Mr. Speaker. He’ll be looking at all services contracts in this province.

Unless the honourable member wants us to put everybody in the Public Service, we need to have employment contracts so we can hire people to be able to do the work in this province. The Auditor General will review it - not only what this caucus does, but he’ll review what that caucus is doing as well.

MR. BAILLIE: Well, actually, Mr. Speaker, he did say he thought there were bigger fish to fry. That’s not our view, and he’s welcome to look at whatever he wants as far as we’re concerned.

But the concern that the Auditor General expressed in looking into personal services contracts comes from the record of this government, where they handed out a contract to Glennie Langille in the Protocol Office - previously a member of the Public Service, but no longer. Everyone knows now about the secret offer of a job to the wife of a Liberal MLA, and on and on it goes - the Premier’s own deputy minister it turns out is a private corporation instead of a person like everybody else.

I’d like to ask the Premier: Will he put an end to these backdoor job offers until the Auditor General concludes his investigation?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I again want to remind the honourable member that there was no job offer made to any member’s spouse in this House. I want to remind the honourable member he knows that. No matter how many times he repeats it, it doesn’t make it true.

I’m going to tell you what we’re going to continue to do - to be an open, transparent government and provide good government to the people of the Province of Nova Scotia. We welcome the Auditor General continuing doing the great work that he’s been doing on behalf of the citizens of this province in looking at not only employment service contracts but looking at all the expenditures that government does. I’m looking forward to the fact

that now he will also look at the way the Leader of the Official Opposition spends the money on behalf of his caucus.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier can point his finger in all directions but the reason the Auditor General is now looking at personal services contracts is because of the record of his government. If they were truly going to be open and transparent, they would welcome the Auditor General's review without question instead of telling Nova Scotians that they believe there are bigger fish to fry.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important issue and I'll tell you why, the Auditor General says, ". . . sometimes we audit things to provide assurance to legislators and to Nova Scotians on how things are working." Well if this government is so open and transparent, will the Premier just save us all the trouble and assure Nova Scotians now that his government will stop these secret, backroom job offers and put in place real rules that protect taxpayers?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. This government made available to anyone who wanted to look at all of the issues, anyone we have hired, the contracts. The contents of those contracts are made available to people.

It was when he was the chief of staff of a former government when secrecy was a code around here. Under this government, we have been transparent. We will continue to provide good government and we'll go out and get the skills required to help us deliver good government to the people of Nova Scotia.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that we asked the Auditor General to look into these contracts to see how the government is handing out these jobs, it was our request.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? The Auditor General doesn't always agree but something caused him to agree in this case, that the way this government is handing out personal services contracts or jobs is being done. The list of those that are in place now is over 100 people and over \$5 million. Who knows what offers have been made that aren't on that list as of yet.

The Auditor General says it's important enough to take a look at how the government is handing out these contracts. Does the Premier agree with the Auditor General or not?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we welcome the Auditor General to come and look at any aspect of the way government is being delivered to the citizens of the Province of Nova Scotia. The minister has said that, but let me clear something up.

The list that the honourable member is referring to are just not people who were hired by the government. They are people who were hired by the caucus of the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia and the New Democratic Party of Nova Scotia. It's a practice that has been used to hire political staff and people who do services, who have skill sets that aren't necessarily in the Public Service that are there to deliver good government to the people of the Province of Nova Scotia. We've done it, Mr. Speaker, in an open, transparent way and we welcome the Auditor General's review.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

BUS.: FILM INCENTIVE FUND - EFFECTS

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister in charge of the Film and Television Production Incentive Fund. Last week when I asked the minister when he would lift the cap on the Film and Television Production Incentive Fund he stated that the film industry ". . . publicly endorsed the Film and Television Production Incentive Fund." I will table that. They haven't - they said it might be workable if the cap is lifted.

I would like to table a *Chronicle Herald* article about Annie Valentina. Her theatre company is leaving Nova Scotia. Film jobs offset Annie's income from theatre. Now most of those jobs are gone and so is she.

Is there a message the minister would like to give to Annie and her family as they pack to leave Nova Scotia?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. The work that has taken place between representatives of the film industry and the Department of Business has been exhaustive for the last number of months. In those dialogues representatives from the film industry have told government, have told my department, that the Film and Television Production Incentive Fund is a funding formula that will work.

I want to table an article, Mr. Speaker, entitled "Nova Scotia film industry gives up on pushing government to reverse tax decision." Marc Almon is the chairman of the board and he quotes in the article, "We're not looking to have that returned . . . We're trying to move forward." That's what the industry has told us, that's what we continue to work towards.

MS. MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, I find the language from the minister regrettable. He has indicated that yes, and I think he is right, people have given up in the film industry. Maybe we will have to present him with some going-away cards because Annie Valentina isn't the only one leaving. The website, nsfilmpeopledisplaced.com tells many stories of people who are leaving or left their families for film jobs out West, and I will table that. Script supervisor Zoe Bigio, 33 years old, has moved to Toronto. Makeup artist and

costumer Candace Knocton, 27 years old, has moved to Vancouver. Stunt woman Melissa Kelly . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Does the member have a question?

MS. MANCINI: The question is, when will the minister lift the cap to ensure the first-come, first-served film incentive fund doesn't send more Nova Scotians packing?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I'm really surprised by the questions from the member. If she had engaged in the industry and industry representatives she would know where the industry is moving and where the industry is going. I want to table another article from the Canadian Press on July 19, 2015 . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Business has the floor.

MR. FUREY: The caption is titled: film producer says Nova Scotia incentives are workable for industry. This is a prominent, international producer who has said that the film television production incentive fund in Nova Scotia is workable. We continue to work with the industry; we continue dialogue in a constructive, positive manner.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**LAE: PICTOU CO. INJURED WORKERS
- PRE-/POST-ELECTION COMMENTS**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. On September 12, 2013, in the heat of the election campaign, the Premier, on behalf of the Liberal candidates, filled out an election questionnaire from the Pictou County Injured Workers Association. There were eight yes or no questions and the Premier answered yes to each statement, and I will table that.

The Premier agreed with the statement, the system needs to be reformed via legislative review Royal Commission and the low level of benefits to workers needs to be addressed. Yet letters from the Premier and the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education say, we are not prepared to bring forward legislative amendments and we do not expect to bring forward legislative amendments to the Workers' Compensation Act at this time, and I will table that.

My question to the Premier is, why did the Premier say one thing to the injured workers before the election and the exact opposite after the election?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I will ask the minister to respond.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question, Mr. Speaker. We continue to have dialogue with the Injured Workers Association. The member will remember that recently we had some issues with one of the Injured Workers Associations. We worked with them; they are now funded and they now are operating again. I want to assure the honourable member that we're willing to work with them and that we have bills before this House that deal with labour standards right now.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, promising something to get elected and not delivering breeds cynicism and hurts our democratic system. My question to the Premier is, did the Premier not mean it when his team filled out the Pictou Injured Workers Questionnaire on his behalf or has he gone back on his commitment?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to thank the minister for the work that she is doing on behalf of Nova Scotians. She has laid out work that has been happening with Injured Workers Associations across the province.

The honourable member has brought here and raised an issue around the Pictou County Injured Workers Association. The minister has assured them if there is work to be done, she'll work with them. We will continue to move forward to try to address the concerns of organizations across this province. I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, like all Nova Scotians, anytime somebody is hurt at work, it is affecting their health, but also their livelihood and their ability to actually continue to look after their family and provide the supports that they have been used to.

We feel that as a government we have a role to play and a responsibility to ensure that we do the best we can for our workers across the province. The minister is committed to doing her part to work with them to find solutions.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**FISH. & AQUACULTURE: CDN. LOBSTER COUNCIL:
SUPPORT - LACK EXPLAIN**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Nova Scotia has over 3,000 fishers, and we all know the importance of this industry to our provincial economy. I'm proud to say many of these fishers live in Pictou West. However, we are losing ground on collective efforts to coordinate a lobster marketing plan like other provinces such as Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador, for they are all supportive of the Canadian Lobster Council and are moving ahead of Nova Scotia with their marketing strategies.

Will the minister please tell us why he does not want to work with, or support, the Canadian Lobster Council, like other provinces?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: I thank the honourable member for her question, and indeed we have a great deal of difficulty in Nova Scotia supporting the Lobster Council of Canada. They have not been effectively representing the whole industry in the province, and indeed in southwestern Nova Scotia, where the majority of lobsters are caught, they have absolutely no support.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry to say that I think it's an unsatisfactory answer, and one that surely our hard-working fishers will be disappointed in. They all don't live on the South Shore.

As we all know in this Chamber, implementation of the lobster marketing plan is dependent on funding from the lobster sector in the form of a levy. In August 2014, the minister stated in a news article that he will present the results of the pilot project before expanding the levy.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is 15 months later, will the minister please tell the House what the results are of this pilot project?

MR. COLWELL: Indeed this project that's going on actually has been expanded to southwestern Nova Scotia this year and has been very successful, and indeed we're seeing improved quality results in the end marketplace. And we have some fisheries that indeed - one buyer that was working on this project in particular, and several other ones as well, the local fishermen have seen a tremendous improvement in the quality and the price we are getting for lobster outside of Nova Scotia in the export market. It is truly working, and indeed we've seen huge gains in China in the market of lobster - we've gone from about \$23 million a year to over \$130 million a year, which is a huge market we continue to grow.

I stress the biggest part of the lobster industry, in all parts of Nova Scotia it's very important where the harvesting is done. In southwestern Nova Scotia, the Lobster Council of Canada totally failed - totally failed - in their process to try to get all the lobster harvesters in the province onside. Southwestern Nova Scotia supplies 95 per cent of all the lobsters that are exported live in this province, and if that organization isn't willing, and not willing to work with the lobster fishermen, the key lobster fishermen in this province, they don't deserve to represent them.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville Cobequid.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: VG EYE CLINIC CLOSURE
- POSTPONEMENTS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. On Tuesday I asked the minister to provide the people of Nova Scotia with a comprehensive update on the VG flood that would include everything from the number of patients who have had their surgeries postponed to the results of the air quality testing that was ongoing.

Yesterday the minister provided me with a short list, which I appreciate, from the new health authority, which I'll table, Mr. Speaker, and it mentions the asbestos issue on the third floor, from the ICU, has been fixed and that drywall, drying, cleaning and polishing is ongoing. I wouldn't consider that a comprehensive list, the people of the province deserve to know how the flood has affected patient care.

So I'd like to ask the minister - we know that the Eye Clinic Centre on the second floor has been closed - can the Minister of Health and Wellness tell us how many surgeries and appointments have been postponed?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. We know that the VG on the Centennial site is not only our provincial hospital, but also regional work takes place there, so it is of concern that it got back up and running very quickly - and in fact this provides me with an opportunity to again thank the staff for the tremendous work that they did at the time of the flood, and since the flood, making accommodations in areas that they never expected to have to work. What I will do is provide to the member opposite, from the first day up until now, the numbers that the health authority does have available.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, we shouldn't have to pull it from the minister. He said time and time again that he would be updating Nova Scotians about the impact on patient care that the flood had and that's all we're asking. We know that in Question Period the minister said that we're being told that other pieces of equipment are not covered under the insurance because of the flood, and the minister indicated that he would get us a list of what that equipment is.

In regard to my question the other day about the air quality testing, that wasn't answered in the update and it wasn't answered by the minister. Can the minister at least today provide us with the result of the post-flood air quality testing that has happened at the VG?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. We know that 2A and 3A have been cleared. The air testing now is of the quality that the medical teams will reoccupy those floors on November 30th. In fact, the 4th floor, the air quality due to moisture still in the drywall, is not available for occupancy. This is an ongoing process.

Insurance costs and so forth are yet to be determined but really this is in the hands now of the Nova Scotia Health Authority to make the decisions about what the final costs will be, the insurance settlement, that's their purview and we will hear from them in time.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - RFP REQUIREMENTS:
LOCAL COS. - EFFECTS**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, my question as well is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. The consulting tender for the Dartmouth General Phase 1 was awarded to an out-of-province company that partnered with a local firm. The requirements in the RFP quickly made Nova Scotia-based companies ineligible as it required the company to have designed a minimum of five health care projects of over \$20 million in the last seven years. This unfairly puts many reputable Nova Scotia firms out of the game, unless they partner with a larger out-of-province company. My question to the minister is, how can Nova Scotia businesses survive if the government's very own requirements continue to favour out-of-province firms?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, not only in the health care sector but right across many work areas, many professional areas, we know that many Nova Scotia companies are able to garner contracts right across the country and also internationally. This is an area that works both ways, and in this case here, this was the most favourable decision that could be made in the design of the Dartmouth General.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, we know that most firms in Nova Scotia haven't built five health care projects of over \$20 million in the last five years. It's a level of requirement that's way far above what any Nova Scotia company can actually meet. A number of major government contracts in the health care system are coming up, as well as infrastructure planning and improvements for the VG Hospital and others.

The minister has alluded to, as a result of issues of some of the older facilities, contracts for those improvements represent a lot of work for Nova Scotians who need employment. My question to the minister is, will the minister work with the health authority and procurement services to ensure that Nova Scotia companies are not automatically put out of the running?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I know that we have TIR who is providing great oversight on these projects, also in terms of the contracts that will be awarded, they will all go through that kind of screening at TIR, and I expect that Nova Scotia companies will be involved in all of those health builds.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: DIALYSIS SERV. - INVERNESS

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, as our population ages there is a greater incidence of diabetes and there is a greater demand for renal dialysis. My question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. The Inverness Hospital right now is at full capacity. They offer dialysis but they only offer it three days a week. It's at capacity; the service could be expanded so that the people locally wouldn't have to travel two-plus hours to Sydney, in many cases, and we know some people require dialysis three days a week, so it's a significant amount of travel.

If the minister was able to move funding from Sydney to Inverness - because the government is paying for the service there as well - that would help people locally. My question is, will the minister help people who want dialysis closer to home in Inverness?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: First of all, I thank the member for the question. Having been in Inverness Hospital on Monday of this week, I want to let the House and all Nova Scotians know how pleased they are to get a scanner to bring health service very close to home.

While I was there, this issue was made very clear to me, as we are hearing across Nova Scotia. With our high rates of diabetes, renal dialysis is being challenged in many areas, so I have the background now to take a look at this issue.

MR. MACMASTER: I want to thank the minister for mentioning the CT scanner. I know many people in the community marched and rallied in sub-zero temperatures. There were petitions that I tabled in the Legislature here, and certainly medical staff at the hospital who champion the cause. We thank them for representing the concerns of people in the area and getting the CT scanner.

Inverness does have the equipment, as the minister knows. The hospital only needs funds to expand staff. I know that may require some months of training, but the government is already paying for the cost of the service in Sydney. It just needs to move it to Inverness, where the demand is.

Will the minister give us a date by which we could expect dialysis to be expanded in Inverness?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, maybe a final word on the scanner. I'm always pleased when we have advocacy from local residents, but I'm equally pleased when we have a Premier who kept his word to the good people of Inverness.

In terms of dialysis, it is an issue. It is one that the Provincial Health Authority has already started to take a look at. Hopefully we'll have some information for the residents of Inverness in the near future.

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

EECD - P3 SCHOOLS: SHERWOOD PARK - STATUS

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, a document tabled by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development lays out the expiry dates for P3 school contracts. This document states that the first decision notice must be given by the minister November 30, 2015, and concerns the fate of Sherwood Park in Sydney. I'll table that.

If this document is correct, a decision is imminent. Could the minister please tell this House today what her decision is with regard to the future of Sherwood Park?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Thank you for raising that question. I think it's important to note that originally there was a date of November 30, 2015. The private partner came to the department. They have a number of other P3 schools in our province that are maturing in June 2016. They asked if that date could be moved forward, so it would be putting all their properties in line with the same date.

We approved their request, and so they will all be moving forward now as of the 2016 date.

MS. ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to hear that answer, so that it's a little more clear. That means that next year there are 31 more P3 schools to be provided with a decision by government to developers. The government's plan for these schools will have a major impact on students, parents, teachers, and the taxpayers of Nova Scotia.

My question to the minister is, does the department plan to buy these schools outright, renegotiate the leases, or walk away from the contracts after they expire?

MS. CASEY: Thank you for the question. It is clear that at the end of the lease the government has three choices: they can purchase the building, they can renew a lease, or they can walk away. There's a lot of information that we are now collecting from school boards to help us determine which of the P3 schools that we are currently using are required to deliver the public school program in the province.

We recognize that the students in this province are a priority in this decision, and we need to know what the educational needs of those schools are in those communities.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

LAE - INJURED WORKERS: PLIGHT - REVIEW

HON. PAT DUNN: My question is for the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. We all deal with issues in our constituency offices and probably one of the most frustrating issues that I have dealt with over the last couple of years is dealing with the Workers' Compensation Board, the low level of benefits that some of them receive, if any, and the roadblocks that are put in front of us when we try to help injured workers and their families that are suffering.

My question to the minister is, will the minister commit to reviewing the plight of so many injured workers who are struggling to receive what they deserve?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I will let him know that in addition to the Workers' Compensation Board, there are a number of other options available to injured workers, like the Office of the Worker Counsellor, where they can get additional help.

I would urge the honourable member, if he has any specific cases that he wants to bring to my attention, I'm more than willing to listen.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, there are many injured workers who find themselves in this situation. We're dealing with one right now who was injured in 2004. Mr. Speaker, some of these workers - I personally know them. I know where they worked. I know witnesses who were there when the injury occurred. They still have their cases to reach any kind of successful conclusion. The caseworkers continue to shut doors on them. They put up roadblocks. They even ignore the findings of medical experts.

My question is, does this sound like a fair process?

MS. REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Again, I would urge him, if he has any specific cases that he wishes me to take a look at, if he's concerned that there's a problem globally with the Workers' Compensation Board, please come and have a chat with me. I would be more than happy to hear what he has to say.

What I will say is that we do have supports that are available to our injured workers. We want to make sure that our workers are safe on the job, and if they are injured on the job, I want to make sure that we are doing what we are supposed to do for them.

If they're having difficulty with that, there's the Office of the Worker Counsellor, where they can take their cases. We actually pay for this service - taxpayers do - to fight on behalf of the injured workers.

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

ENERGY - MIN.: OFFICE FURNISHING - DETAILS

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: When you're the Minister of Energy, style matters, and nothing defines style like the perfect couch. Maybe the minister's EA thinks an old, free couch from surplus looks, and I quote, "great". But the minister can spot a crime against design a mile away. So the verdict on that free couch was, and I quote - and I'll table it - a firm "no". After all, how can a minister kick up his feet, lay back his head and enjoy a moment of relaxation and reflection when the pattern on the couch is screaming- it's 1982?

My question for the Minister of Energy, given the wide range of colours - 778 - the basic 3-person couch comes in, which I'll table, why did he select a neutral grey over a more trendy citrus colour?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, it's actually black.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, once the minister selected the perfect couch, it was time to complete the room. A splash of fresh clean paint, some new carpet, three frosted etched window patches for privacy, a mounted television with HDMI loop, and voilà - \$6,100 later, the minister's office was transformed into a mid-afternoon oasis. The minister may not think our energy supply can be renewable, but he understands that his soul is.

My question for the minister is, at a time when all Nova Scotians are being asked to make do with less because of this Liberal Government's cuts, why was the Minister of Energy unwilling to scrimp on style?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that most of the furniture in the office actually is from surplus - a boardroom table along with seats. We are very cognizant of any costs when renovations are being done.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 135.

Bill No. 135 - Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation (Nova Scotia) Act

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 135 now be read for a second time.

I'm pleased to introduce amendments today to the Accord Act to extend the oil and gas moratorium on Georges Bank until December 31, 2022. Nova Scotians have been very clear about wanting the moratorium to remain in place. With today's legislation, government will ensure this area remains protected for the long-term sustainability of our fishing industry.

The moratorium on Georges Bank has been debated on the floor of this Legislature before. I know that honourable members on both sides of this House recognize the importance of Georges Bank to our fishery, to our provincial economy, and to the livelihoods of the women and men who make their living in the area.

Georges Bank, as many of you know, is a large elevated area of the seafloor that separates the Gulf of Maine from the Atlantic Ocean. It is about 100 kilometres offshore between Cape Sable Island and Massachusetts. The area is home to fish, mammals, corals and other organisms. It is also a home away from home for the men and women who fish on the Bank.

Earlier this month I stood in this House and spoke about the importance of our offshore industry to Nova Scotia. Oil and gas majors like Shell, BP, and now Statoil see the potential that exists here and are committed to invest billions to better understand and develop that resource. Offshore development is important to this province and we believe the two industries can and, in fact, do coexist where and when it can be done safely and responsibly.

Georges Bank does need special protection. Nova Scotians have told us, and members of this House have told us, they want to see this moratorium continue. I'm pleased to reaffirm our government's commitment to the moratorium on oil and gas activity on Georges Bank through 2022, and in 10-year increments after that, following a review of socioeconomic and environmental impacts.

Studying the area, its environmental sensitivities, the fishery, and the socioeconomic impact of the moratorium is not a new idea and has been done before. Ongoing review is part of taking a responsible approach to offshore development and environmental protection.

The last legislated Georges Bank statutory moratorium on oil and gas activity was put in place as part of the Accord Act in 1988. It expired December 31, 2012, and was replaced with a policy moratorium, which will expire at the end of 2015, and that Statute can be repealed. The amendments in today's legislation mirrors that of our federal counterparts passed in June. This is part of our joint management approach to Nova Scotia's offshore.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to now move second reading of Bill No. 135.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, consecutive governments have supported the need for a moratorium on oil and gas activities in the Georges Bank and we certainly support the minister's initiatives today. Today we seen legislation that would continue the existing moratorium in place for that area until 2022. That will extend a moratorium that has been in place since 1988, so this is a positive development, as it will continue to protect this very sensitive area that is essential to our fisheries industry. This legislation mirrors the federal legislation that was passed earlier this year, again, highlighting the support for protecting this very important area.

Oil and gas activities can be done safely in this province; in fact, we have a long history of doing so over several decades. Currently we see activities moving forward off the coast with both Shell and BP, who plan to spend over \$1 billion each on offshore exploration work. But the Georges Bank has consistently been flagged as an area that is too sensitive for increased traffic from oil and gas activity. Despite the stringent offshore regulations and the existing offshore regulatory regime that's enforced by the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board, we have to take additional steps to continue to support the protection of this area.

In recent years we have seen positive legislative changes that have strengthened the existing offshore regime, and today's legislation continues with the positive trend for Nova Scotia's offshore protection. I am glad to see this piece of legislation brought before the House today. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Madam Speaker, we certainly have seen that we do not always agree in the Legislature. There are issues, though, that all Parties can agree on, and all Parties have worked for the ongoing moratorium on offshore drilling on Georges Bank.

When the NDP was in government, the federal government did not want to go beyond a policy commitment when it came to the moratorium on Georges Bank. It was clear to the NDP that Nova Scotians wanted something more forceful; hence its

unilaterally-passed legislation, the Offshore Licensing Policy Act. It's good now to see that both levels of government will enshrine the moratorium through mirror legislation.

Madam Speaker, beyond the agreement of political Parties, it is important to have onside those who hold an interest in parcels of land on Georges Bank - and yes, there are those who hold an interest in areas on Georges Bank. Those interests have been put on hold for the duration of the moratorium. I have heard that these interest-holders have been cooperative thus far. Going forward, it will be important to have these interest-holders onboard.

While we are all in support of the moratorium on Georges Bank, we all know that in case of a spill, the flow of oil will not - and we must repeat - will not respect political boundaries. The parcels of land currently being leased are geographically close to Georges Bank. If there is an oil spill offshore, oil could quickly travel onto Georges Bank, and we have to be very cautious of that. It's critical that the regulations ensure the use of best practices. What is at stake? A unique marine environment and a lucrative fishing industry. We must recognize that in making our decisions here in this House.

We must continue to work to ensure companies exercise due diligence. We should not just assume it. We have to work toward getting a capping stack closer to Nova Scotia. We often think that the risk is so low that it won't happen to us, but there are chances and it is not worth the risk.

Research about the use of COREXIT following the Deepwater Horizon spill continues to be gathered and reported on. Going forward, we need to make sure we reassess that and the benefits of using dispersants or the non-environmental use of dispersants. It would be too easy for the major oil companies to just jump on side of the research that says it's okay and ignore the research that is also going on saying that it is quite a danger. We don't want the regulations to simply become status quo.

We all know that oil companies like dispersants. It gives them another tool to point to when they are dealing with an oil spill, but regulators, governments, and Nova Scotians need to keep asking the tough questions. That's our job, to ensure that our environment, our resources, and our marine industries are protected to the greatest extent possible. It is our responsibility to do that.

Will the dispersants in the event of an oil spill create a net environmental benefit? I'm not so sure. I think there are many Nova Scotians who are not so sure. It is very important for the government and for all of us to continue to assess this issue.

I encourage the Minister of Energy to fill the vacancy on the board. We have talked about that and brought it forward in the House many times. It's not to be a partisanship, just want to make sure that the provincial interests are being represented on that board in the decision making process, and as we brought forth, it's vitally important that we do have

somebody who has an environmental background and also a background in the fishing industry. It only makes sense, Madam Speaker, that those types of professionals sit on a board of this nature.

I do want to thank the minister for continuing his work and all the three parties. This is a very important issue to our environment, our health and our future of the province, and we must ensure that no offshore drilling takes place on Georges Bank. But we also have to be aware and make sure - as I indicated earlier Madam Speaker - is that if there is an oil spill, even a small amount, it does travel far and wide, and we have to be absolutely sure and vigilant in our decision-making process and our continuation of accountability to the government and the oil companies.

I do say that it is a project, it is something that all parties have come together on in terms of the moratorium on Georges Bank, and we need to continue to do that, and I would like to thank the minister for the work he's done to date. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Madam Speaker, I would also like to begin my few comments by thank the minister for the good work that he's done in this area in his job as Minister of Energy. I'd also like to thank the members across the floor for their support of this bill. Yes, there are good pieces of legislation that come through this House all the time and this is another example.

Before I really get into the bill itself, I just wanted to reflect my role as the MLA for Clare-Digby. I have probably one of the most extensive fishing resource-based communities that we have in this province. Just one statistic alone shows that the Port of Digby has the second highest amount of landings in all of Atlantic Canada, and I have eleven major ports that stem from Cape St. Mary, to Meteghan, Saulnierville, Sandy Cove, Little River, East Ferry, Tiverton, Freeport, Westport, Centreville and Digby.

Those ports are bursting at the seams with fishing boats. A lot of them do fish on Georges Bank; certainly it is an area that we have headed to quite a bit for scallops, but the other resources that we catch are - certainly the lobster industry is huge in our area. So anything that happens on Georges Bank is of the utmost importance to me.

Those are just the areas where we have fishers. Just off the wharf in Digby itself, 600 people work off that wharf. Not one of those people that I could walk down there and talk to wouldn't be aware of what's happening on Georges, so it is comforting to know the work that we're doing will support the protection of that.

I also want to add about the companies that we have, which make up a huge part of our community also, from O'Neil Fisheries, Comeau's Sea Foods, D.B. Kenney, Riverside Lobster, Gidney Fisheries, Innovative Sea Foods, Acadian Sea Foods, there are thousands

of people who work in this industry out of my riding alone, and protecting that industry is of the utmost importance.

I'm also very proud of the work that we did on our Resources Committee in hastily bringing together a meeting of interested stakeholders around what's happening on the Scotian shelf with the Stena IceMAX. I do believe that after the extended sitting that we had with three hours of presentations and questions, we brought in Shell Canada and we brought in the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board, I don't believe there was one person that left that committee meeting without all their questions being answered.

I feel very comfortable that since Macondo, since that tragic oil spill that happened in the Gulf of Mexico, the industry stopped that day and immediately changes happened to ensure that we do not experience that again, and I do feel very comfortable that there has been a lot of positive work done in our offshore drilling. Realize that we have 127 wells that have been drilled offshore, they have co-existed with the industry out there for some time. Newfoundland and Labrador is also another good example where the industry has co-existed, and I think we should feel comfortable that there is a good balance struck there.

So putting this legislation together to, again, protect and to ensure that protection goes forward for the long term I think is paramount for all of the people of Nova Scotia, and I'm very proud to see that we all support this legislation. I thank the minister for the work and I look forward to more pieces of legislation coming forward that we are all going to support. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Madam Speaker, it's certainly a pleasure and I want to thank the Minister of Energy for putting this bill forward, Bill No. 135 - Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation Act.

First of all, I say that I'm in great support in this particular bill and I want to recognize the minister that as a very young man I know he fished with his family. I actually had a private discussion with the member, and I'm not going to get into that, but I recognize his involvement as a younger man in the fishing industry and his family and I can tell you that my family shared that same recipe of travelling to Cape Breton and fishing. So the experience is recognized here in this Chamber.

There are a number of issues that have been raised on this - and I want to get into it very quickly because I know there are other speakers. The protection of Georges Bank, and that area is a very unique ecosystem. It has been recognized not only in Canada but also the United States, there's protection there and it's a unique ecosystem. The issues that were raised are about the drilling that is going on now, literally next door. I emphasize, next door to this protected area.

There are two issues that I want to talk about today that have to be addressed. My colleagues earlier talked about two vacant seats now on the Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board which, I think, if we use common sense here that that would be addressed in this session, within the next few weeks or months, for this government to make the appointment of persons some environmental and fisheries background knowledge. That's my first point.

The second point that has been generated, and the member for Clare-Digby pointed out, having the Resource Committee meeting and I appreciate that. There were a number of questions asked and I don't think they were all answered that day, with all due respect. I think there was one outstanding question and this is the one that I want to zero in on here and I really think that as members of this Chamber that we need to focus on that. The fishing industry and members of the environment are uncomfortable with an option that the oil industry have to respond to an oil spill. One of their tools in their toolbox they have is the use of dispersants.

Now, this is the key issue and I want to paint the picture of this environmental protected area of Georges Bank - and the Minister of Energy knows that the tidal flow that is influenced by the Bay of Fundy is going to have a great impact on the use of dispersants literally next door to Georges Bank. This is the issue that needs to be addressed. I'm going to suggest here right now that if the industry were wise, they would set that option aside immediately and say that we need to do more work on that, we need further consultation, we need to have members on this petroleum board, and we need to address that. That is the issue here today and I'm going to just spend a few minutes talking about that.

The dispersants are probably worse - the cure is worse than the disease. Now, if you understand the environmental habitat around Georges and that area, literally next door you're going to have development taking place. If there is a spill from whatever degree, from one to ten, one of the toolbox is dispersants. The scientific community is saying, we are all right with that, but I can assure you that the fishing industry has great concerns and the environmentalists have great concerns. I want to give you a quick lesson about local knowledge. When the local fishing industry recognizes there is a concern about dispersants, I think we should all have the respect to acknowledge that. I'm going to take you back to about 40 years ago.

In the early 1970s, there was a lobster task force report done, and the scientific community of the day said to the fishing industry across Nova Scotia, your lobster industry is doomed. You are going to be a failure. There are not enough berried lobster females on the habitat to sustain your fisheries, and the lobster industry is doomed. The senior fishermen in my community set me aside, and they did other fishermen, and said, if you understand the ecosystem, you remove the predators and you have more abundance of larvae from the shellfish. They will flourish and they will bloom; don't worry, the shellfish will dominate and take over when you remove the predator. Guess what? The predator, the codfish, was removed or reduced, and I won't get into it, but I can tell you the point is

being made right today, some 40 or 50 years later - guess what? Historical levels in shellfish have dominated this industry for the last 24 years. Those same senior fishermen, 40 or 50 years ago, did not have any initials behind their names. They did not have diplomas about any scientific universities supporting their theory. They had common knowledge.

Today, when fishermen stand up and say, we are concerned about the dispersants being used as a tool to manage a spill in one of the most sensitive ecosystems in the world - and I may add that the water is warming as we speak - there is a concern. What I'm putting here today is that if the oil industry and this government are wise, they would take that tool and they would set it aside and say, we need more consultation with all the stakeholders. That is the point I am trying to make, and I hope that my other colleagues will support that.

Yes, getting back to this particular bill, Georges Bank is a unique ecosystem. But I also want to point out that Georges and the ecosystem do not support or recognize borders. It is the human being that puts in United States where that goes, where the Hague Line goes, where Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board allotment goes for drilling. The ecosystem has a different pattern.

We're here to make sure that we do it correctly, and I think having some local knowledge and making sure that the dispersants question is answered is the right way to go. Thank you for the time, and I look forward to the other comments.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand and speak for a few moments on Bill No. 135. First of all, I thank the minister for bringing this one forward. It has taken some time and a lot of negotiations with the federal government to finally pull it off, to have the mirror legislation here in Nova Scotia.

If we remember the history of this just a little bit, back in 1984 or 1985, the whole idea of drilling offshore on Georges Bank became part of our history. At that time, a number of individuals got together and set up a No Rigs committee and started lobbying hard to make sure that a treasure like Georges Bank was protected. Guys like Denny Morrow or even Mark Butler, back at the time with the Ecology Action Centre - it's not often I commend the Ecology Action Centre but in this particular case Mark and his team did a great job of putting everything into context; the late Claude d'Entremont and many other people who participated in that No Rigs at the time to have the first moratorium in 1987. Subsequently governments thereafter have extended that moratorium to today where we all get to vote on a bill that extends it that much further.

It did take a little bit of work on behalf of the federal government to finally get there. If we remember correctly, the debate that happened in this House when the NDP were in government, trying to bring a bill forward, I would say they got it halfway there but they were always resting their hat that the federal government didn't want to do it so

we couldn't do what we wanted to do, rather than saying listen, we'll do it and hopefully the federal government will mirror the legislation because of the requirement through the CNSOPB and the offshore Act that manages it.

We are here today again and hopefully over time we'll be able to understand the ecosystem of Georges Bank. I've been lucky enough to have fished on Georges Bank. Probably the member who spoke before me - I don't know if the member for Clare-Digby has been on Georges but I'm just looking around to see who else would have had that opportunity.

It's a marvellous place because of what it can produce, and continue to produce, and has continued to produce for hundreds of years. It has been fished and fished and fished, and there's something about that bank that it continues to replenish itself, continues to provide our families a way to live. Our communities have become fishing communities over the last hundreds of years - the people in Cape Island, the people in Woods Harbour, the people in Shag Harbour, the people in Pubnico, the people in Yarmouth and Clare and all those areas that take that opportunity and go to sea and come back with marvellous seafood to sustain their families.

It has given over and over again; billions of dollars' worth of economic activity has been provided by what Georges Bank provides Nova Scotia. It's really funny, Mr. Speaker, because if you look at the totality of that - I mean the member for Queens-Shelburne was correct, fish and ecosystems don't see boundaries. If we look at the boundary of where that Hague line goes, it really only covers - you know, the Canadian side of that bank is very small compared to the American side but it is our side that is the most productive nursery fishery in the world, I would say. Out of any bank in the world, it is a phenomenal place that needs to be protected.

Now when it comes to the rest of the issue of offshore drilling, I think it's a far more complicated one than we can talk about in this House of Assembly because there are tons of literature on both sides of the story, which makes it that much more difficult. If you put offshore oil exploration into Google you will get thousands of websites, one way or another. One extreme is that it is bad and the other extreme is that it is perfectly safe. Well guess what? Somewhere in the middle is probably the truth. Even beyond that, we do have the CNSOPB - the Canadian-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board - that has a whole host of experts that review these decisions to make sure that the science makes sense.

We know that any drilling opportunity is not 100 per cent but no economic activity is 100 per cent. Let's not forget what happens on Georges Bank. My father was a scallop fisherman and I had the opportunity to go scalloping with my father. My father who is a scallop fisherman worked for 45 years, I believe, on Georges Bank - a little bit on Browns Bank, too, but for the most part that work was done on Georges Bank.

For those of you who know what scalloping is, it is scallop dragging. They have a drag that is about 15-feet long, 20-feet long, that they drag along the bottom of the ocean. There are two of them. They drag up everything that is on the bottom, put it on the deck, find a lot of the scallops in it, and then go and shuck them for market. But they drag up a whole bunch of other things, too: rocks and periwinkles and cockle shells - you name it, it comes up in that drag. The environmentalists will tell you that dragging is so bad for that bank.

Well, science has changed that a little bit. Now they don't just drag everywhere in a random pattern. Through that technology, they've been able to find the pockets and be able to least impact that bank. Guess what? That fishery is a multi-million dollar fishery today and will continue to be for a very, very long time.

The issue of groundfish, again a drag that drags on the bottom of the ocean, sometimes mid-water, but it does drag on the bottom of the ocean. There is impact on Georges Bank by fishing, and has always been there for fishing, and it continues to produce.

We just need to be careful. I think that's what this bill does, it makes sure that still the uncertainty of oil and gas, even though nothing is 100 per cent, that it is protected until such day as some government, some expert somewhere says, listen, I think we should be able to do this safely without any impact on that ecosystem. But until that time when we find those experts and that kind of research to give us the feeling of safety, then the safest thing for us to do is to put a moratorium on Georges Bank and to maintain it until that time.

Again, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak on this bill. It's a good bill that of course I'd be happy to put my name forward on to vote in favour of this as well, as I have done the last two times in this House of Assembly. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

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

The honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: I want to thank all my colleagues who spoke on this bill in second reading, the members for Pictou East, Chester-St. Margaret's, Clare-Digby, Queens-Shelburne, and Argyle-Barrington.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity during my career in the House to see this type of legislation brought forward on a couple of occasions. It was a pleasure to see that the tradition appears to continue today, that it's going to have all-Party support for this moratorium.

Negotiating this type of an agreement with the federal government doesn't happen easily. It takes the hard work of a lot of individuals from both the federal government and

the province to be able to make this a reality. I want to extend my thanks to the entire staff at the Department of Energy who have worked so hard on these negotiations. I see that Kim Himmelman, who's our director of Regulatory and Strategic Policy, who has worked so closely with the federal government in making this a reality, is here. I want to recognize Kim and her entire team at the Department of Energy for having reached this stage.

Mr. Speaker, the whole goal not only of the moratorium but certainly whenever we talk about any offshore exploration is to ensure that Nova Scotia continues its proud tradition of having a safe environmental and safety record when it comes to offshore exploration. We can be very proud of the record that we have here in Nova Scotia. We want to ensure that that continues, which is why we've entrusted the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board with representatives from both the province and the federal government, with the expertise involved to be able to make these decisions on behalf of Nova Scotians. They've done so in the past, and they're doing so now, and it's important that we support the work that they do.

Mr. Speaker, in our democracy it's essential that people be able to raise concerns. Never would I be one to suggest that people should not raise those concerns. That's why we're here; regardless of our political stripe, it's to represent our constituents and represent Nova Scotians and raise those concerns. But we also have a duty of providing facts to those concerns. Rather than simply raising them, one has a duty to be able to provide citizens of Nova Scotia with the facts surrounding the concerns they have raised.

I want to recognize my colleague, the member for Clare-Digby who's the chairman of the Resources Committee, that when a request came from the member for Queens-Shelburne that the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board and Shell appear before the committee to answer the questions they had, my colleague immediately reached out to me and said, how can we make this happen? I want to commend him for that as chairman of that committee, for the work that he did in making that happen.

Mr. Speaker, I'd go so far as to say we probably surprised the Opposition in having both the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board and Shell come in as quickly as they did, and I know the Opposition has been, at times, a bit critical around the committee work around this House, but I would hope that this was an example of where a committee did its work, was effective, and was able to bring them in.

Not only that, my understanding, if I'm not mistaken, the committee actually sat on a day that it wouldn't normally sit on and actually extended the length of the meeting to make sure that all the questions that members had could be heard, but more importantly that the answers could be provided and the assurances given to the concerns being raised.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that committee was a great example of how well it can work and I certainly hope that all members would recognize, and again I thank my colleague, the member for Clare-Digby as chairman for his leadership in bringing the

witnesses before the committee, extending the length of the committee meeting and doing everything to accommodate - I believe the committee could have met a bit earlier, but I believe the Official Opposition had an out-of-town retreat at the time, so it had to be moved a little bit later than the chairman was pushing for, but it was all about accommodating and trying to make sure that members could ask questions and, more importantly, get answers to their questions.

Mr. Speaker, there are questions that have been asked regarding the unfortunate, terrible disaster that took place in the Gulf Coast with the Macondo disaster. I think as my colleague from Clare-Digby said so well when he spoke, the industry paid attention. The fact is that a number of changes have taken place.

Mr. Speaker, I can't stand here in my place, and I don't think anyone else would, to be able to give a 100 per cent guarantee, but we have to ask ourselves, has the industry, has the offshore petroleum board put in place the necessary conditions, the necessary restrictions, to ensure that offshore drilling and exploration in Nova Scotia can be done in the safest means possible? They are the experts in this field, we rely upon them as a province, as a government, as citizens of Nova Scotia, to make these decisions on our behalf with our best interests in mind.

I certainly recognize the importance of Georges Bank, I've had the opportunity to speak with the member for Queens-Shelburne on his own experience in fishing, and his family's experience in fishing. The member for Argyle-Barrington spoke as well - I didn't know so much about his fishing experience, I was more familiar with his brother's fishing experience because we attended Dalhousie at the same time, and we had some fun stories regarding his experience fishing with his father for scallops on Georges Bank.

As the member for Queens-Shelburne mentioned, my experience is a little bit further down the coast, fishing more off the coast of Cape Breton, going so far as Banquereau Bank. I have a map in my office which shows all of the offshore parcels, and when I have some of the different representatives of companies and other interests in the offshore come in, I love to be able to point out to them just the way from some of the parcels, and just off Sable Island where Banquereau Bank is, and to be able to let them see how far that is from Petit-de-Grat Harbour to get to Banquereau Bank, which was anywhere from 16 to 22 hours is how long it took us to get on the grounds and spend four to five days fishing before coming back home.

As the member for Queens-Shelburne mentioned, I did grow up in the fishery. I started cutting bait around the age of 12, and moved on to baiting trawls, which is part of the upgrades that do take place in the fishery, especially the hook and line fishery, and I have to say, and I'm sure the member for Queens-Shelburne might agree with me, there were enough days where I said I can't wait when I can grow up and move on to do something other than this. But I can say, Mr. Speaker, quite honestly, there are a number of days in the House I wish I was back to baiting trawls, back at the bait shed in Petit-de-

Grat - and something tells me the member for Queens-Shelburne probably wishes he was on his boat enough days fishing, rather than being in the Chamber.

This is a bit of an historic day for our province. In the past, when these bills were brought in, they were for a set a period of time, and they required new legislation. With that brought a level of anxiety for Nova Scotians in that - what's the current government going to do in Nova Scotia? Or, what is the current government going to do in Ottawa because it takes a joint approach on this?

This legislation, which I can't emphasize enough, once passed, will no longer require governments of either Nova Scotia or the federal government to come back to their Legislatures or Parliaments to extend a moratorium; it will do so automatically every 10 years. This may be the last time we have an opportunity to debate this moratorium but I think the message that we heard today, loud and clear, was that there continues to be all-Party support for this moratorium. It's what's right for Georges Bank and the many men and women and families who make their living off that fishing ground.

I'm pleased to see it is receiving the support of that and I look forward to having this bill move forward to Law Amendments Committee where we will certainly be happy to hear any concerns regarding this piece of legislation. With that, Mr. Speaker, I again thank all my colleagues for their interventions and would close debate on Bill No. 135.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 135. 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. 136.

Bill No. 136 –Motor Vehicle Act.

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

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 136, an Act to Amend Chapter 293 of the Revised Statutes of 1989, the Motor Vehicle Act, be now read for a second time.

Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to rise in the House to speak to the amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act that will allow the use of Segways and other personal transporters

on our sidewalks and roadways here in Nova Scotia. Personal transporters are not a new technology in the global marketplace. They are common in many states in the U.S. as well as in Europe. Our department conducted an almost two-year pilot project to test and evaluate the safety of Segway use on our streets and on our sidewalks. Nova Scotians have had an opportunity to provide feedback through multiple channels, including a 1-800 number, by email, an online survey; we also had face-to-face surveys in the Halifax downtown area during the summers of 2014 and 2015, and news releases reminding Nova Scotians to send in their comments directly to my department.

To date we have received 420 rider surveys and 850 road-user surveys. While the pilot project does not officially close until the end of January 2016, Segway tours in HRM have virtually stopped and are winding down, due to the cruise and tourism season. We've received only two responses in the month of November and received 11 during the entire month of October. The feedback is clearly coming to a close with the lack of tours around the city. However, we will continue to accept surveys over the next few weeks as they come in.

The results of the pilot project on Segways were generally positive with no negative impact on the safety for all road users. Preliminary results of the road-user survey indicates that almost 80 per cent agreed somewhat that they were safe. Preliminary results of the rider's survey indicate that 94 per cent agreed that they felt safe riding a Segway or personal transporter device. This morning I did provide a full summary of that data sheet for the caucuses opposite so that they could have it for their comments here today.

We've also received positive feedback from other stakeholders such as Halifax Metro Transit. No concerns were raised by the local traffic authority. Safety for both personal transporter users and all other users on the roads, including pedestrians and cyclists, was the top priority when determining whether changes should be made to MVA.

I want to note that when we started the pilot project there were not a lot of different types of personal transporters in the marketplace. Today, two years later, there are many types of personal transporters. This amendment includes not only Segways but other personal transporters. Our definition of a "personal transporter" is that they are self-balancing electric vehicles with two side-by-side wheels, designed for personal transportation of a single person, equipped with a bell or a horn, and equipped with a light.

The proposed amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act include operating and equipment requirements for personal transporters as well as the rules of the road. There will be strict rules for Segways and other personal transporters, including using helmets, and a minimum age of 16 for drivers, or 14 years old with a guardian's consent, and only during guided tours.

Personal transporter operators must stand when it is in motion. They cannot tow another person or device, and they must ride in single file. They will be exempted from

having to make hand signals. Personal transporter operators will be expected to share the road with pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

On a sidewalk, pedestrians will have the right of way. In a bike lane, personal transporter users must yield to cyclists. On roads, Segways and other personal transporters must stay on the far right side. Personal transporters cannot operate at a speed greater than 20 kilometres per hour on roads and only 7 kilometres per hour on a sidewalk. Personal transporters are not allowed on highways with speed limits greater than 60 kilometres per hour, or on controlled-access highways, or on highways on which bicycles are prohibited, or on private property if the property owner prohibits their operation. As well, municipalities may prohibit the use of personal transporters on municipal sidewalks and roadways, so they will have that call to make.

Today's amendments will provide an alternative transportation option for people with mobility challenges. It will also provide potential economic benefits for a variety of sectors, including postal employees, police, emergency services personnel, tour operators, and of course tourists.

If the bill passes, Nova Scotia will be a first province to make personal transporters such as Segways a permanent part of the Motor Vehicle Act and allow them on sidewalks, bike lanes, and roads.

As a final comment, I just want to say that there has been discussion about this - where this came from, what the need is, and what its importance is. This is probably one of the proudest pieces for us as a department in the government. A gentleman who is part of Segway Nova Scotia, a co-owner named Max Rastelli, started this process about four years ago. He came early on in our mandate in 2013, when we were first elected and had the privilege to govern.

Max is a small businessperson. He's an entrepreneur. He believes that Segways are a growing niche market for tourism and other segments out there. As we know about small business and entrepreneurs, there's a risk associated, so Max put a lot of his personal time and effort to explain the value and the benefit of Segways and, of course, to address some of the dangers and some of the concerns from cyclists, from pedestrians, and from drivers.

I want to end by saying that it's stories like Max's and entrepreneurs and private sector players out there who take the risk and who bring things forward. This would not be here today - we would not be moving on Segways and personal transporters in the province - if it weren't for this private sector developer who believes in it and who is going to put a lot of money up, quite frankly, and take the risk to try to develop this market on his own, although we assume that he won't be alone and there will be other participants in this market.

This is about tourism, it's about economic development, and it's about believing in the private sector. I think this is an important decision, and the timing is perfect because Max and other Segway and personal transporter industry players will be able to hit the ground running - or rolling - in the new year. That's a good thing, and I think this is good legislation. It is part of reducing red tape and supporting private sector niche markets.

Mr. Speaker, with that I will close my comments and open up the floor to the members opposite for their comments.

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank and congratulate the minister on bringing forward this piece of legislation. It is a good piece of legislation. Actually, in 2012 our caucus introduced a bill talking about doing Segways and the advantage of Segways. At that time, Max was the person that we had been talking to as well. This was a nice segue into making sure that our bill is taken up by this government.

But on a very serious note, Mr. Speaker, when I listened to the minister give his outline of what the bill was able to do and the thought and preparation that went into the bill, I think his staff and his department need to be congratulated for that. I am particularly happy where it gives the ability for municipalities to look at it and do what they feel is best for their communities in particular, but I also think it is very important that the minister mentioned on many occasions about the safety factor and making sure that it is going to be safe. The ridership is for people 16 years of age unless they are with their parent and doing a guided tour and then it can be 14 years. Those are the kinds of things I think are important. It's good to have those things at the beginning of the legislation so people understand the ground rules as they move forward.

It can be a small economic driver for our communities in our province and anything we can do to enhance economic values in our province I think are important. Overall our caucus is very supportive of this idea because again, as I said, it was one that we had put forward. That only goes to show that it doesn't matter where good ideas come from; if they are good ideas, legislation can make them happen and that's what is really important here. We have a piece of good legislation allowing some people to make a living doing something they think is important.

I will say that I am glad to hear there is some new technology on Segways because the ones that were available two years ago, I couldn't test out. They didn't have the capacity that they do today. Mr. Speaker, with those few words I'll take my seat but again, I want to pass on congratulations to Max for seeing this through, to the department and the staff for the work they have done, and for the minister for making sure that the follow-up was taking place.

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

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, just a few notes on the second reading of Bill No. 136. Again I know there are some concerns out there; we certainly discussed this earlier at a caucus meeting and we look forward to going to Law Amendments Committee.

One thing that I did highlight that I was interested in and in support of, is naturally giving each independent municipal unit their own freedom to evaluate this. I really recognize that and I want to thank the minister for including that. So we look forward to this bill going to Law Amendments Committee and look forward to hearing from the general public. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to speak on Bill No. 136, the Motor Vehicle Act, the personal transportation Segways. Although I have never been on a Segway before, I promise I'll get one if the member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg and the member for Queens-Shelburne get one with me and we'll go down the street together. How's that?

I've seen pictures of the member for Glace Bay and Cape Breton-Richmond with their helmets on so I know they've been on one, too.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I've never used one before but over the last few years I've seen more and more individuals using Segways, in particular on our waterfront in HRM. We've seen several new, small businesses spring up around the Segway business and this summer the HRM waterfront was alive and buzzing with locals and tourists alike on Segways.

Mr. Speaker, this summer I witnessed men, women and children smiling and laughing as they experienced our breathtaking waterfront while on Segways. There is clearly a demand for a clear definition around usage of Segways. This government in February 2014 launched a two-year pilot. The pilot program and public consultation included surveying Segway riders, other road users, instant reporting forms, feedback from municipalities, the police and community and other stakeholders.

We are here today because the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and their minister listened to the public and the stakeholders. Mr. Speaker, while I was younger, I filled a backpack and headed to Europe to explore the world. One of the things I noticed was the amount of cyclists, joggers, people on Segways, a real concentration of alternative and active transportation. I watched as all modes of transportation shared the road and shared the sidewalks. They actually looked out for each other and were proud of their different modes of transportation.

Active and alternative transportation and access to it is a passion of mine. In my community of Halifax Atlantic, we're seeing all levels of government and our passionate constituents working together with me to create an active transportation and outdoor activity community, projects like the new playgrounds at the Greystone Community, a new playground for the YWCA, and supporting the McIntosh Run Watershed Association, which will bring a beautiful accessible trail system throughout our community. I was proud to secure a \$45,000 grant for the Long Lake Provincial Park Association. This money will go toward a family picnic area with a beautiful look-off spot and a trail system.

Mr. Speaker, speaking of Long Lake, as we stand here today, work is ongoing to implement the Long Lake Provincial Park master plan, a plan that was designed after years of local consultation. Working with our communities, the Department of the Environment, the DNR, transportation, the municipality, and several other stakeholders, our community in the last two years has seen investments and repairs to Crystal Crescent Beach and Herring Cove look-off, two of the most visited spots in all of HRM.

So, Mr. Speaker, as you can see, active and alternative transportation is a priority to myself and this government. This piece of legislation is another indication to Nova Scotians that we are listening and we do value their ideas and input.

Before I close, I want to speak of two Segway users and lifelong friends of mine: Jan Sebastian LaPierre and Chris Surette, two amazing individuals who paddled to Sable Island to raise money and awareness for youth mental health. Jan and Chris will launch their first children's book this Saturday at the Halifax regional library. Their book is entitled *A for Adventure*. This children's book encourages adults and children alike to get out and be active. Mr. Speaker, if you take a moment to read the book, you will even see a Segway in it. I encourage all of you to support local and pick up a copy of *A for Adventure* during your holiday shopping. Thank you.

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

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I just want to rise in my place for a few minutes on these changes to the Motor Vehicle Act with respect to Segways to allow the use of them on our sidewalks.

I think the previous speaker certainly hit on an issue that is of concern to me and to all of us and to many people in our province with respect to the need to get people out doing more active transportation. I myself need to do more active transportation.

A bit of concern has been expressed to all members of the House. I know we've all received some emails about this particular piece of legislation and whether or not it is going in the right direction, taking the province in the right direction, with respect to active transportation. Certainly we see Segways here in the downtown from time to time. Some of the emails we've received have expressed that they are a bit of a pain in the derrière - I

don't know if that's parliamentary or not, but I figured if I said it in French, maybe I'd get away with it.

We are trying to build a more active culture, one where we get back to more active transportation - more walking and more cycling, and less use and dependence on motorized forms of transportation. So I suppose in one way this is contradictory. For example, the Minister of Health and Wellness would be advised by people on the wellness side and on the health side of his department that we really do need to be more mindful, and we need policy that actually encourages the use of our own bodies more to move around and take us from place to place. So, I do believe that we do need to be mindful of that and I'm not sure - it would be interesting to know to what extent the government have had a discussion about this.

I'm also reminded that when we adopt new forms of motorized transportation, there are often liability issues that go with that: issue of safety, issues of insurance, issues of accidents on our sidewalks, maybe collisions between persons who are on a sidewalk walking and persons who are using a motorized vehicle and the kinds of physical harm that that may result in, but also just the kinds of costs that this contributes to insurance plans and what have you.

This may seem like a fairly innocuous, insignificant change in the Motor Vehicle Act, something that's novel, something that's a little bit trendy, but is this the trend that we want to encourage? I don't know. I think it's worthy of some debate. I don't know to the extent that there's been public consultation, with respect to these changes; if there was, I missed that. From time to time there are consultations that the government embarks on that I'm not aware of, but not very often. I have a pretty capable staff that bring these things to my attention. So, perhaps I did miss the consultation process around this.

So, we'll see if we have any people come forward at the Law Amendments Committee or whether any members of the government, or senior officials, in for example the Department of Health and Wellness, come forward. This government cut the active transportation grants that went to organizations like the Ecology Action Centre. These programs were programs that encouraged the development of the neighborhood school bus, the idea that kids would walk to school and not be dropped off at the front door in large recreational vehicles.

It just strikes me that in some ways the policies and the direction that government needs to be going in has been somewhat harmed by reductions, and by cuts to programs like the Active Transportation Program. I'm kind of surprised that this government, a government that has so many younger members in it, doesn't seem to be connected with those concerns.

So, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to put my concerns on the record and perhaps we'll have an opportunity to discuss them further after we hear what people have to say at the Law Amendments Committee, thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I'll just be brief. I do want to thank my colleagues on all sides of the Legislature for their comments. To the member for Sydney River-Myra-Louisbourg, I didn't know that your caucus and Party tabled that legislation in 2012, and that's an indication that Max had been at it for a long time, so, that is a good thing. I'm glad that your group, the Official Opposition, recognized the importance of this and certainly support it.

One of the areas - Max and I talked about a lot of examples where it would make a lot of sense - I think about the precinct of Louisbourg, with the fortress and the downtown core, and there's some work there to see that redeveloped. I can see that being a very viable place to apply the Segway usage, because of the distance and the relatively broad expanse that you have to cover when you're enjoying the tourism aspects of Louisbourg. I certainly see it working in that member's riding.

On a side note, we have the *MV Miner* celebration tomorrow in Main-à-Dieu, so I know I'll see the member there. I'm heading there with my kids, and it's going to be a great day for all of us on the island. I look forward to that tomorrow.

With respect to the member for Queens-Shelburne, a very good point - that was one that specifically jumped out at me. This is provincial legislation, and it's a little rich to impose on the municipalities that they would have to do any of these things. The best example from the pilot project was that when HRM decided to support this, one of the roads they stipulated that was absolutely off limits for the pilot was Spring Garden Road, because of the condensed nature and because of the congestion that is there with all the pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

That's the freedom we want to give the municipality, so Segway Nova Scotia and all those in the industry are very clear that the municipalities have to be comfortable with this. It's one thing to have it in downtown metro, where the grid for the roads is pretty secure. When you get out into the rural areas, where the infrastructure may be a little tougher, then obviously there are concerns there. We want the municipalities to have the final say on that.

Thanks to the MLA of the Year, the member for Halifax Atlantic, for his comments as well; they are much appreciated. I know that it ties into the member for Halifax Needham about cycling and active living. That member has a lot of requests in his particular riding

about cycling lanes and some of the dangers that are on the road. So whether it be Segways, whether it be aspects of cycling and road safety for everyone, that member is certainly engaged. We've had many conversations about that, and he's had a number of requests through our department where we could support and develop some of that infrastructure for cyclists. I do appreciate his comments.

Finally with the member for Halifax Needham, I certainly take her points about active living. I guess where I would be in this - first of all, our department has a number of initiatives and investments that we're looking at and that we've supported, and that her government and the Progressive Conservative Government before her side had supported - that idea of the blue route and of the Trans Canada Trail and how we make those investments. There are a number of things.

The MLA for Halifax Chebucto almost daily brings ideas to me - actually, definitely daily - for active living and things we can do better in terms of active living. In response, I guess I would say that I really don't see this as a zero sum game. I don't think it's that you are picking one over the other. I would certainly support the idea that we are champions for active living as well. We are going to do what we can, just like the previous government did across the aisle, so I think that is important to keep in mind.

I don't see this as novel or trendy. Again, to my opening comments, this is an aspect of developing a niche market. We talk about tourism, whether it be the Ivany report - of course, my colleague in the Department of Business - it's important to look at these things, reducing red tape. So you have the pilot, it works, let's go for it.

I think there is a market here that has to be developed, or potentially. I don't think we should hamstring that if we don't have to. We've looked at safety, we've looked at the ideas of economic development, particularly in rural areas, so I think it works from that perspective. We'll continue to do those things that support active living.

Of course, when it comes to tourism and new, emerging markets that we have out there, then it's certainly our responsibility to look at those. Bill No. 136 is one example of where we are supporting private sector and Max Rastelli, Segway Nova Scotia, and all those entrepreneurs who are going to look at personal transporters in the future.

Again, on a final comment to the Acting Leader of the NDP, I also look forward to Law Amendments Committee, to see what the comments are. I did receive some emails as well. There are varying perspectives on what that means and what the impact will be for pedestrians, for cyclists, for vehicles on our roads. I'm looking forward to that debate and that feedback, and then we will obviously be back before the Legislature before this bill is ultimately passed - if it is ultimately passed.

I do appreciate the comments from everyone. We've gone into this for the right reasons, and we do look forward to the feedback from the public and all those in Nova Scotia who have a vested interest in this particular conversation.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to close debate on Bill No. 136.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 136. 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 the order of business, Private and Local Bills for Second Reading.

PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 137.

Bill No. 137 - An Act Respecting the Repeal of Presbyterian Church Legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to speak on Bill No. 137.

This bill repeals the incorporating statuses of the remaining three incorporated Presbyterian congregations in Nova Scotia. These three congregations will now join other Presbyterian congregations in Nova Scotia as unincorporated congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Canada. A while ago Rev. Dr. Laurence Mawhinney, most known for the time he served as mayor of Lunenburg, approached me about presenting this bill as a private member. I've worked with him and solicitor Bruce Clarke, who is representing the three congregations.

This is mostly a housekeeping bill. In the early 1900s, there was no legislation that applied to Presbyterian Churches in Canada. As a result, some congregations chose to be incorporated by a private Act of the Legislature. This was done in Nova Scotia in 1907, in 1925, and in 1930, by legislation that incorporated the trustees of St. Andrew's

Presbyterian Church in Lunenburg, which is in my constituency; the Presbyterian Church of Saint David, which my parents were married in; and Knox Presbyterian Church Congregation of Halifax, respectively. Since that time, federal legislation was passed to recognize the Presbyterian Church in Canada as a group of congregations across the country.

The national church has adopted its own standard book of forms to regulate the life of each of these congregations now. In 2013 and 2014, each of the congregations of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Lunenburg, the Presbyterian Church of Saint David, and Knox Presbyterian Church of Halifax decided to move themselves from the structure formed by the Nova Scotia legislation and follow the structures of the national Presbyterian Church.

As a result the legislation passed in Nova Scotia in the early 1900s is no longer required. Leaving them as valid legislation in Nova Scotia will just be a source of potential confusion. The repeal of this legislation does not negatively impact the three congregations here in Nova Scotia in any way.

I ask that if there's any conversation from the Opposition, I am eager to listen.

I now move that Bill No. 137 be read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 137. 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 Private and Local Bills.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 126.

Bill No. 126 - Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act.

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

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I move that Bill No. 126 be now read a third time and do pass.

Mr. Speaker, with the passage of this bill, the pooled registered pension plan, PRPP, regulations will be finalized, and employers, employees, and the self-employed will soon have access to a low-cost, regulated pension option. PRPPs are a new type of voluntary savings plan that may benefit workers who do not currently have a pension plan and those who are self-employed. PRPPs are designed to be easy for employers to set up and more flexible and portable than traditional pension plans.

The proposed amendments will allow money from PRPPs to flow into retired savings arrangements under the Pensions Benefits Act. This will ensure that workers have consistent options and protections when they retire, regardless of whether they have been saving through defined contribution pension plans or a PRPP.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing further comments from my colleagues in the Legislature. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 126. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 122.

Bill No. 122 - Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 122 - amendments to the Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act - be now read a third time.

During second reading, I heard from many members of this House who spoke about the bill. I want to thank everyone, particularly the members for Cumberland North, Inverness, and Dartmouth South for bringing their important points forward. I appreciate them taking the time to speak in support of this bill and I want to thank all members of the House for that support.

The amendments will clarify the process for Nova Scotians dealing with child and spousal support orders between provinces and territories. That really is the essence of it when we're talking about interjurisdictional support orders. It sounds like a long term but it's really where you have custody, or payments for child, or spousal support, between jurisdictions. I think it's important to go into that because I'm learning of new legal jargon while I'm here, or legal terminology. It will prevent an unnecessary notice requirement that would increase case processing time and cost for parents and children looking to collect support payments.

These amendments essentially formalize our current practices around notification and confirms the original intent of the legislation. They may be seen as housekeeping amendments but by making these changes we are preventing what could be a lengthy, costly, and unnecessary process that would place an additional burden on Nova Scotians dealing with child and spousal support orders.

As I had said in my initial comments on second reading, the reason for having to do this was because there was a court decision that said that we needed to provide notification. We would be the only province in the country that would have had that notification requirement and it was really because our Act was unclear. In the absence of clarity they said we will defer to the need to notify.

I would like to remind members I had given an example in the initial second reading time but these would be orders that were actually initiated by the individual that later notification we were told we'd have to do. If you initiated the action, you'll be following it through the process and you'll be well aware of where it's at and you'll know your rights to find out as it goes through. It wouldn't be catching anyone unaware. That's what I really want to make clear. It's really a question that if we were to go with what was suggested in the absence of this bill, we would be adding months and weeks to the time it would take to have an order heard and cost to the province, cost and lengthy anxiety to the people involved.

So that's really why we're doing it. It's a small but important step to addressing the core issue here, which is helping families navigate the courts system so that children of separated parents have the support they need and are entitled to. I'm pleased to introduce this legislation as it brings us in line with the best practices in other jurisdictions in the country and with these amendments justice can be served with the least delay to the justice system and to the person seeking endorsement of a family support order.

Just as importantly, it ensures that orders are recognized and enforced efficiently and effectively so that children and families receive that necessary financial support. I know here in the House and elsewhere, we often talk about the maintenance enforcement and the need for efficient systems so we can help the many families that are impacted. I've mentioned before, and I hope members will remember, it is 15,000 families that rely on the maintenance enforcement program and this is really a part of that.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this bill provides Nova Scotia with much needed practical amendments that are responsive to the needs of families navigating through the court system, as well as addressing the issue of mobility and interjurisdictional matters. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, we will be supporting this legislation, as we indicated previously. We hope that there will continue to be improvements made to maintenance enforcement. This is very important; as the minister mentioned 15,000 Nova Scotian families are affected. These people are dealing with great strain when they're not getting support payments. It means people have to take on debt; they're having their credit ratings ruined, through no fault of their own but because somebody is not paying their support.

I mentioned also in second reading, there are 56 recommendations brought forward by the Law Reform Commission of Nova Scotia. We hope to see further work done to improve maintenance enforcement, but, once again, we look forward to this bill passing and helping all of the Nova Scotia families that will be helped with these changes. 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, again, I appreciate the support from the Justice Critics in the Opposition Parties. I think this is important and will make a difference as we go forward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 122. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 123.

Bill No. 123 - Paramedics Act.

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 123 be now read for a third time and do pass.

During second reading, the member for Hants West noted that Bill No. 123 made no reference to paramedics working in the communications centre, the men and women who direct responses to 911 calls and the like. Bill No. 123 would not require emergency medical dispatchers or medical first responders to be registered and licensed by the proposed Paramedic College. Under the Emergency Health Services Act, emergency medical dispatchers are currently registered through EHS and medical first responders are registered by EMC.

Bill No. 123 in no way affects the registration practices for emergency medical dispatchers or medical first responders. That was also the case with the legislation passed in 2005. I look forward to hearing any final feedback from the members at this time.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to stand and speak just a few moments on this bill. Of course we have been supporters both in our time in Opposition and in government when it comes to self-managed professions that they have the opportunity to take care of themselves, really, where they don't really need government intervention for the operation of the training, the discipline, the ongoing issues when it pertains to one profession or another.

Paramedics have been trying for this over the last number of years. As you know, it was in 2005, updated in 2007 and finally to see it here today. I think the key here is to provide them with the funding that they require to get it going, to provide them with the other expertise that it requires to get it going so that it truly can be a college to paramedicine.

As I said a few days ago in the Law Amendments Committee, we had an opportunity to hear for a few moments from the union that represents paramedics. I am a little concerned that maybe there wasn't as much consultation as it does require, but I am comfortable, from discussions with the minister and with others, that there was a fair amount of consultation that did go along. I'm just hoping that they take that as a key to continue that, maybe expand what they're doing when it comes to the consultation, so that this can be a seamless transition from basically no system, managed by the company and limited by the department, to a truly integrated stand-alone college. So with that, of course, you have our support on this bill.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to be able to rise for a few moments to talk about the Paramedics Act. I too spoke in favour of this piece of legislation

on second reading. I know many paramedics over the last decade or more have been working toward this goal. The goal to be self-regulating is so important to most if not all paramedics, I believe. But in my response on second reading, I did mention the fact that we need to ensure that this is moving forward in a way that is fully supportive of those men and women who put on the uniform as medics across this province, and I am also concerned that the union that represents over 1,400 paramedics was given about a day's notice before the introduction of this bill.

Terry Chapman, the President of IUOE Local 727, came to Law Amendments and made a presentation indicating that he'd had about twelve hours to look at this piece of legislation that will affect every single member that he represents - every single one of them. He is concerned that he hasn't had the time to go through it, and he indicated that the union had been involved with consultation in 2005, prior to the introduction of the original Paramedics Act. I am concerned with that. I believe there were some comments made from the government members of that committee, that they will try in the future to make sure that they are included in trying to discuss where we go with that. But it still leaves some concerns and the question of, why hadn't that been done earlier?

One of the concerns that Terry had and the union has is that if they do find something over the next little while it'll be much more difficult to change it once legislation is passed. I believe he made the request - could we slow this down, is it paramount that it passes this session where it doesn't come into effect until 2017? In the discussions I've had with him, he wanted to make sure and be very clear that he believes that his members do fully support this and the idea of having a self-regulating body. But of course with any document the size of this, and the sheer importance of this piece of legislation, they want to make sure that they do their due diligence in making sure that their concerns are met, that if there are things that might need to be changed or amended, they have that opportunity.

A couple of the concerns he had mentioned, Mr. Speaker, were the criteria for any investigation - what might those criteria be? I know a lot of this might be fleshed out through the regulations, but they're hoping that they would've known that prior to the introduction of the legislation. They're also wondering if there's a flow chart or algorithm for any proceedings that may happen if, say, one of their members is brought up on disciplinary actions - if there is, what are they?

I hope that, with the concerns Mr. Chapman brought to Law Amendments, the minister and the government recognize that they need to do a better job, most definitely at engaging the union and ensuring that if they do have concerns, they're addressed.

I want to assure the minister that we will be supporting this piece of legislation, but I hope the minister and the government are open between now and the next session for example - before this legislation is proclaimed and comes into effect - that if there are issues that we find throughout the legislation, the government will be willing and open,

potentially, to an amendment down the road. I just wanted to make sure that is on the record, that we're not against this piece of legislation at all.

I described a little bit about my history prior to being here, trying to get to this point and have a piece of legislation that best represents the paramedics, the men and women of our province.

I hope the minister and the government recognize that if there are changes needed, they are open to that. Really in the end, we want to make sure that we have a great piece of legislation that promotes the profession of paramedicine here in Nova Scotia so that we really recognize the work that the men and women do seven days a week, 365 days a year, Mr. Speaker.

With that I do want to advise the minister that we do support this but we do have a few concerns and I hope the minister is quite open with ensuring that this is and will be the best piece of legislation that has been passed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, first I want to say how pleased I am to have two colleagues here in the House who could make very insightful remarks - the member for Sackville-Cobequid and the member for Hants West - who during second reading did outline a few of those areas that do perhaps need some attention before this all takes place and we have a college in April 2017.

I really do appreciate those comments. As the member for Argyle-Barrington said, part of the problem in the past was trying to do this piece of work without putting some of the funding and expertise in place to get it realized. Over the last year and a half working on this piece of legislation - and we all know that seldom does a piece of legislation come forward that is perfect. I'm certainly open to the comments from Mr. Chapman that he made in Law Amendments Committee and from the members opposite. If an amendment is required to strengthen the bill, I'm certainly prepared to entertain that.

I feel, however, having the support of the paramedics and the consultation with them really was a point along the way which determined that this will go forward. On a ministerial level, one of the drivers for me to bring this piece of legislation to reality - brought forth first by the Progressive Conservatives in 2005 - was that I was only in office a short time when an issue arrived on the minister's desk which had college written all over it, that I should not have any say and execution of a determination on or kind of an adjudication really on an issue that was all, in fact, what the college should be doing. I'm pleased to be able to say we're moving forward.

I thank the Opposition Parties for supporting the legislation. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move third reading of Bill No. 123.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 123. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 124.

Bill No. 124 - Social Workers Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move that Bill No. 124, an Act to Amend the Social Workers Act, be read a third time and do pass.

I have just a couple of comments, if I may, Mr. Speaker. This bill will enable the Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers, a self-regulating body, to better regulate the practice of social work in the province. These changes will bring the profession in Nova Scotia into line with other provinces and reflect current social work objectives and focus. That is the focus of Bill No. 124, and if there are any comments I look forward to hearing those.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that this will support the Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers to be better self-regulating. I would now move third reading of Bill No. 124.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 124. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Order that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Private and Local Bills for Third Reading.

PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR THIRD READING

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Would you please call Bill No. 120.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 120 be now read a third time and do pass. Without getting into a lot of details like I did in second reading, just for the benefit of the House I will give a quick Coles version of what this bill exactly does.

The Kings Mutual Insurance was incorporated by a federal Act and is governed by the federal Insurance Companies Act; the Pictou County Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company was incorporated in Nova Scotia and is governed by the Nova Scotia Mutual Insurance Companies Act. Companies wishing to amalgamate must be governed by the same jurisdiction and be subject to the same legislation. Accordingly, before Kings and Pictou can amalgamate Pictou needs to be continued as a federal company under the federal Insurance Companies Act. The Private Member's Bill must be first passed, which will allow for Pictou to be continued as a federal company.

So, on those few short statements, I would like to open the floor for any comments. Thank you.

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to support the bill put forward by the member for Pictou West. I have representation from the Pictou Farmers' Fire Insurance Company and Kings Mutual at my office, and this is a case I know for all of us in Nova Scotia we don't like to see our local companies that have been with us for generations, perhaps disappear, but it's only disappearing really in its name.

I think the alignment that eventually will take place with Kings Mutual is a very, very positive step for both companies, and I just wanted to, again, thank the member, and she has our co-operation to move this through.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, as a former member of the board of Kings Mutual Insurance Company in Berwick, I would just like to say a few words about this bill too,

and I would like to commend both Pictou Mutual and Kings Mutual on the planned amalgamation of the two companies, and believe that it will bode well for the policy holders of both companies.

The new company will be stronger and more able to meet the challenges of the insurance industry. The policy holders, those who are insured by both companies, have been remarkably well served over the last 100-plus years and actually if you're a policy holder of either company, I believe you are one-third less likely to have a claim simply because of the very strong program they have had of inspection of your property and your insurance risks.

These insurance companies have served Nova Scotia very well and with the challenges of the insurance industry, and the insurance industry getting larger and larger, these both in the insurance world are relatively small companies, but will be able to serve the insurance needs of Nova Scotians much better and be stronger in the future.

I will point out both are true mutuals and that is if you were a policyholder of either company, you are an owner of the company. It's a wonderful success story in Nova Scotia, both companies, and, in fact, there are four of these mutuals, there is also Antigonish Farmers' Mutual and Clare Mutual in the province and all of them are true mutual where if you're a policyholder, you are a shareholder.

I want to wish all four companies and the new amalgamated company when that does happen, all the best for their continued success in the future. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 120. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I believe that marks the first bill passed by the member for Pictou West since her election to this House. We look forward to many more to come from the honourable member. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I should advise for all members of the House and for those following, that the Law Amendments Committee will meet on Monday, November 30th at 1:00 p.m. The bills that will be considered at the time are Bill Nos. 112, 118, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134 - and including the two bills from today, 135, and 136.

I move that the House do now rise to meet again on Tuesday, December 1st between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Following the daily routine and Question Period, we will go to second reading of Bill Nos. 138, 139, and 140, which were introduced today.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to wish all members a happy and safe weekend and move that the House do now rise to meet again on next Tuesday, from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again on Tuesday, December 1st between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned until Tuesday, December 1st at 1:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 12:33 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 2536**

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas in 2013 the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce created the Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award to identify and support ingenuity in the agriculture sector; and

Whereas the winner of the Agriculture Innovation Accelerator receives a prize of more than \$30,000 in cash and services to help move their project or product forward to the next phase of development and the finalists benefit from being acknowledged for their ingenuity, creativity, and contribution to the advancement of the agriculture sector; and

Whereas this year the Chamber recognized six finalists that represented innovation in technology, distribution, food, and food product development in the Annapolis Valley area;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce on its leadership in creating this award that celebrates and helps develop producers, suppliers, and organizations within the agriculture sector.

RESOLUTION NO. 2537

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Colibri Software was one of six finalists considered for this year's Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award; and

Whereas in 2013, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce created the Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award to identify and support ingenuity in the agriculture sector; and

Whereas Colibri Software developed the Farm Geo Tracer to enable horticulture producers to keep records that support food safety and meet the demand of "Field to Fork" certifications;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Colibri Software for being chosen as one of Nova Scotia's outstanding agriculture and agri-food related innovators and the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce for creating this award that celebrates and helps develop producers, suppliers, and organizations within the agriculture sector.

RESOLUTION NO. 2538

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Randsland Farms Inc. was one of six finalists considered for this year's Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award; and

Whereas in 2013 the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce created the Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award to identify and support ingenuity in the agriculture sector; and

Whereas Randsland Farms was recognized for its technology to dry kale products for chips, flakes, and powder in the healthy snack and food ingredient markets;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Randsland Farms for being chosen as one of Nova Scotia's outstanding agriculture and agri-food related innovators and the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce for creating this award that celebrates and helps develop producers, suppliers, and organizations within the agriculture sector.

RESOLUTION NO. 2539

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Taproot Farms' Fibre Lab was one of six finalists considered for this year's Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award; and

Whereas in 2013 the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce created the Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award to identify and support ingenuity in the agriculture sector; and

Whereas Taproot Farms' Fibre Lab was recognized for developing affordable, small-scale, long-line flax-to-linen production equipment for the processing of flax fibre into linen yarn as a step to producing local linen products;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Taproot Farms' Fibre Lab for being chosen as one of Nova Scotia's outstanding agriculture and agri-food related innovators and the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce for creating this award that celebrates and helps develop producers, suppliers, and organizations within the agriculture sector.

RESOLUTION NO. 2540

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Grand Pre Winery was one of six finalists considered for this year's Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award; and

Whereas in 2013, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce created the Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award to identify and support ingenuity in the agriculture sector; and

Whereas Grand Pre Winery was recognized for its Pomme d'Or Apple Cream Liqueur, which was created with Nova Scotia apple products, and for that product's continued expansion domestically and in export;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Grand Pre Winery for being chosen as one of Nova Scotia's outstanding agriculture and agri-food related innovators and the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce for creating this award that celebrates and helps develop producers, suppliers, and organizations within the agriculture sector.

RESOLUTION NO. 2541

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Wolfville Farmers' Market was one of six finalists considered for this year's Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award; and

Whereas in 2013, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce created the Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award to identify and support ingenuity in the agriculture sector; and

Whereas Wolfville Farmers' Market was recognized for its online distribution platform that allows vendors to better connect to consumers;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Wolfville Farmers' Market for being chosen as one of Nova Scotia's outstanding agriculture and agri-food related innovators and the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce for creating this award that celebrates and helps develop producers, suppliers, and organizations within the agriculture sector.

RESOLUTION NO. 2542

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Frostbyte Interactive and its Aerhyve was the winner of this year's Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award; and

Whereas in 2013, the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce created the Agriculture Innovation Accelerator Award to identify and support ingenuity in the agriculture sector, and the winner receives a prize of more than \$30,000 in cash and services to help move their project or product forward to the next phase of development; and

Whereas Frostbyte Interactive and its Aerhyve uses drone technology to maximize production of field and horticultural crops with software that will produce actionable information for the producer;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Frostbyte Interactive on winning this award as one of Nova Scotia's outstanding agriculture and agri-food related innovators and the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce for creating this award that celebrates and helps develop producers, suppliers, and organizations within the agriculture sector.