



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

THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 3179, Sexual Assault Awareness Mo. (04/16): Sexual Violence	
- End, Hon. J. Bernard .....	7975
Vote - Affirmative.....	7976
Res. 3180, Stanfield's Pants Off for Prostate Cancer:	
Co-Chairs/Organizers - Recognize, Hon. L. Glavine .....	7976
Vote - Affirmative.....	7977
Res. 3181, Times of African Nova Scotians (Vol. 2): Delmore "Buddy" Daye	
Learning Instit. - Launch Congrats., Hon. T. Ince .....	7977
Vote - Affirmative.....	7978
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:	
No. 158, Securities Act,	
Hon. R. Delorey .....	7978
No. 159, Motor Vehicle Act,	
Mr. A. Younger.....	7978
No. 160, Blueberry Associations Act,	
Hon. L. Hines .....	7978

## NOTICES OF MOTION:

Res. 3182, Monday Sitting: QP - Rule (3A) Suspend, Mr. T. Houston.....	7979
---	------

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:

Myra, Bob: Death of - Tribute, Hon. M. Furey.....	7979
Boudreau, Gerald: Lancement du livre - Félicitations, Hon. C. d'Entremont .....	7980
Starratt, Sandra - Prog. Women of Excellence Award (2015), Ms. P. Arab .....	7981
Stanfield's Pants Off for Prostate Cancer: Support - Recognize, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	7981
McCluskey, Gloria: Commun. Serv./Support - Thank, Ms. M. Mancini.....	7982
Rowe, Allan - RTDNA Lifetime Achievement Award, Hon. J. Bernard .....	7982
Symons, Mollie - Lt.-Gov.'s Award, Mr. J. Lohr .....	7983
Roseway Hosp. - ER Closures, Hon. S. Belliveau .....	7983
Richard, Jean: Veterans/Bedford/Canada - Serv. Thank, Hon. K. Regan.....	7984
Cromwell, Angela - Bus. Endeavours, Hon. P. Dunn.....	7984
Trout, Jennie - Recognize, Ms. L. Zann.....	7984
St. Peter's Church (Birch Cove) - Anniv. (65 <sup>th</sup> ), Hon. D. Whalen .....	7985
Vissers/Harbers Families - Environmental Farm Stewardship Award, Mr. L. Harrison .....	7986
C.B.: Poverty Levels - Address, Ms. M. Mancini.....	7986
Alford, Emily: Natl. Darts Comp. - Best Wishes, Hon. D. Whalen .....	7987
Jennings, Chief Wade: Debert FD - Role Model, Hon. K. Casey.....	7987
Arbuckle, Ashley - Basketball Medals, Mr. T. Houston.....	7988
Com. Serv.: Women's Ctrs. - Budget Freeze, Ms. L. Zann.....	7988
Beals, Keont'e - ANSMA Award, Hon. K. Colwell .....	7989

Glube, Constance: Death of - Tribute, Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	7989
<i>Nova Star</i> - Bankruptcy, Hon. S. Belliveau .....	7989
Burchell, Robbie - Speed Skating Accomplishments, Mr. David Wilton.....	7990
Hanna, Ashleigh - Altruism, Hon. A. MacLeod .....	7990
Fougère, Don - Prix de l'éducation, Hon. M. Samson .....	7991
Holmes, Charles: Death of - Tribute, Mr. E. Orrell.....	7992
Antigobaskits/Junior Achievement Companies - Congrats., Hon. R. Delorey .....	7992
Wilkie, Lucy, Mr. J. Lohr .....	7992
Benoit Electric - Recognize, Mr. I. Rankin.....	7993
[GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:]	
Res. 3187, Queen Elizabeth II - Birthday (90 <sup>th</sup> ), The Premier.....	7993
Vote - Affirmative.....	7994
[STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:]	
Aikens, Alicia/Robson, Kelsey: Intl. Students Prog. - Mexico Trip, Hon. P. Dunn.....	7994
MacDonald, Meredith - Maritimer of the Wk., Mr. D. Mombourquette.....	7995
Shriver, Darren & Sherry/Foodland & Co-Op Leaders - Dominican Republic Bus. Conf., Mr. L. Harrison .....	7995
Hockey Gear Giveaway: Sportwheels/Cleve's - Thank, Mr. B. Maguire .....	7995
Chelsea Laine Salon & Colour Bar/Green Circle Salons - Partnership, Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	7996
Beazley, Paul: New Position - Congrats., Mr. C. Porter .....	7996
Rogers, Jonathan - Swimming Accomplishments, Hon. J. Baillie .....	7997
MacIntosh, Olivia/Fraser, Isabelle - Canskate Champions, Mr. T. Houston.....	7997
Natl. Dental Hygiene Mo. (04/16) - Recognize, Mr. B. Jessome.....	7998
Moreland, Capt. Daniel - Tall Ships of America Lifetime Achievement Award, Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	7998

## ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS:

No. 2097, Prem.: ERs - Mental Health Care, Hon. J. Baillie .....	7999
No. 2098, Prem.: VG Replacement - Prioritize, Ms. M. Mancini.....	8001
No. 2099, Prem. - VG Replacement: Plan - Details, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	8003
No. 2100, Prem. - Nursing Homes: Budget Cuts - Justification, Hon. David Wilson .....	8004
No. 2101, Justice: HRM Police - Min. Meet, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	8005
No. 2102, TIR: Natl. Safety Code 11(b) - Clarification, Hon. A. MacLeod .....	8006
No. 2103, Health & Wellness: Family Physicians - Funding, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	8008
No. 2104, Gaming - VLTs: Reduction - Numbers, Mr. A. Younger.....	8009
No. 2105, Health & Wellness - Health Auth.: Calls - Return Time Frame, Hon. David Wilson.....	8010
No. 2106, LAE - Tuition Reduction (On. & N.B.): N.S. Enrolment - Impact, Mr. E. Orrell .....	8011
No. 2107, CCH: N.S. Reg. Libraries - Funding Promises, Hon. P. Dunn.....	8012
No. 2108, Health & Wellness - Valley Dialysis Serv.: Improvements - Time Frame, Mr. J. Lohr .....	8013
No. 2109, Com. Serv.: Women's Ctrs. Funding - Acceptability, Ms. L. Zann.....	8013
No. 2110, Health & Wellness - Electronic Medical Record System: Delay - Effects, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	8015
No. 2111, CCH - Cultural Strategy: Tabling - Time Frame, Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	8015
No. 2112, LAE - Dalhousie Univ.: Tuition Fees/Costs - Acceptability, Ms. M. Mancini.....	8016
GOVERNMENT BUSINESS:	
GOVERNMENT MOTIONS:	
ON MOTION FOR SUPPLY:	
Hon. J. Baillie .....	8017
Ms. M. Mancini.....	8021
Mr. T. Farrell.....	8025
HOUSE RESOLVED INTO CW ON SUPPLY AT 3:29 P.M. ....	8028
HOUSE RECONVENED AT 7:40 P.M. ....	8028

## PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 152, Municipal Government Act and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter	
Hon. Z. Churchill .....	8028
Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	8029
Hon. S. Belliveau .....	8029
Mr. B. Horne .....	8029
Hon. Z. Churchill .....	8030
Vote - Affirmative.....	8030
No. 154, Halifax Regional Municipality Charter	
Hon. Z. Churchill .....	8030
Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	8031
Hon. S. Belliveau .....	8031
Mr. B. Horne .....	8032
Hon. Z. Churchill .....	8033
Vote - Affirmative.....	8034
No. 156, Public Archives Act	
Hon. T. Ince .....	8034
Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	8036
Ms. M. Mancini.....	8037
Hon. R. Delorey .....	8037
Hon. T. Ince .....	8037
Vote - Affirmative.....	8037
No. 157, Government Records Act	
Hon. L. Kousoulis .....	8038
Hon. P. Dunn.....	8039
Hon. David Wilson .....	8039
Hon. L. Kousoulis .....	8040
Vote - Affirmative.....	8040
ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Fri., Apr. 22 <sup>nd</sup> at 9:00 a.m.....	8041
NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):	
Res. 3183, Wolfe, Wayne: Retirement - Well Wishes, The Speaker .....	8042
Res. 3184, Baker, Deanna - East. Shore: Betterment - Thank, The Speaker .....	8042
Res. 3185, Stevens, Mabel - East. Shore: Betterment - Thank, The Speaker .....	8043
Res. 3186, Hopkins, Weldon - East. Shore: Betterment - Thank, The Speaker .....	8043



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2016**

**Sixty-second General Assembly**

**Second Session**

**1:00 P.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

**DEPUTY SPEAKERS**

Mr. Gordon Wilson, Mr. Keith Irving

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

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

**GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

**RESOLUTION NO. 3179**

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

Whereas April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and

Whereas the goal of this month is to promote the prevention of sexual violence through awareness and education; and

Whereas this is something we all have a responsibility for;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House, and all Nova Scotians, work together to break the silence and work to end sexual violence.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 3180**

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

Whereas the Third Annual Stanfield's Pants Off for Prostate Cancer takes place today, April 21<sup>st</sup>, in support of Prostate Cancer Canada Atlantic Region's fundraising efforts for research, education, and awareness of this disease; and

Whereas the intent of this event is to bring humour to the conversation about this serious topic, prostate cancer, which is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in men; and

Whereas one in eight men will be diagnosed with the disease during their lifetime, and as many as 710 Nova Scotians will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature recognize Co-Chairs Jon Stanfield and Dennis Campbell, and the organizers of Stanfield's Pants Off for Prostate Cancer, and encourage all men over the age of 40 to get tested, as early detection improves the survival rate for prostate cancer.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

### RESOLUTION NO. 3181

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

Whereas the Delmore “Buddy” Daye Learning Institute is committed to working with, and on behalf of, the African Nova Scotian/Canadian communities to improve learners’ educational experiences and outcomes; and

Whereas the Delmore “Buddy” Daye Learning Institute partners with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and is a leading provincial and national centre of knowledge and research on Africentric theories and practices that improve educational outcomes; and

Whereas 10 per cent of all Loyalists who settled in Nova Scotia were of African descent, and these African Nova Scotians planted the seeds for more than 50 Black communities that would eventually be established in every part of the province;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Delmore “Buddy” Daye Learning Institute on the launch of *The Times of African Nova Scotians, Vol. II* and Notable Nova Scotians poster, second edition, which are learning resources for the public schools, post-secondary institutions, and Nova Scotians, which inspire cultural and educational excellence and celebrate our Nova Scotian history.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.



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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage on an introduction.

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, if I may take leave to introduce many of the folks who were on the poster and the members of the Buddy Daye Learning Institute here to acknowledge their presence in the House and welcome them. Please stand. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

HON. TONY INCE: There are a couple of the people that were noted on the poster, Sheila Lucas-Cole and, well, there's Sheila. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness on an introduction.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in my place to make an introduction. I've already read the resolution appropriate for the prostate event being held this evening, but it's certainly my pleasure to introduce no stranger to the House, if he would stand, Peter Mallette, Executive Director, Atlantic Region Prostate Cancer Canada; Ken Power, Chairman of the Atlantic Region Advisory Council; and Dennis Campbell, Co-Chair of the Stanfield's Pants Off for Prostate Cancer event.

Prostate Cancer Canada is a leading national foundation dedicated to the elimination of prostate cancer through research, advocacy, education, support, and awareness. Tonight the Stanfield's Pants Off for Prostate Cancer event will be held in support of fundraising efforts to help in the fight against this disease. I'm happy to have Peter, Ken, and Dennis here today; I'd like to ask all members of the House to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 158 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 418 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Securities Act. (Hon. Randy Delorey)**

**Bill No. 159 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 293 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Motor Vehicle Act. (Mr. Andrew Younger)**

**Bill No. 160 - Entitled an Act to Repeal Chapter 42 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Blueberry Associations Act. (Hon. Lloyd Hines)**

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

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**RESOLUTION NO. 3182**

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

Whereas Rule (3A) does not allow for Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers on a Monday; and

Whereas it has been the practice of this government to call the House to meet on Mondays during estimates; and

Whereas Question Period is the primary way members are able to seek information from the government ministers and to call the government to account for its actions;

Therefore be it resolved that the House suspend Rule (3A) and allow for Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers on Monday April 25<sup>th</sup>.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

**MYRA, BOB: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize Bob Myra, who passed away on April 16<sup>th</sup>. Bob was a long-serving councillor for the Municipality of the District of Chester, being first elected in 1997. I know my colleague across the floor from Chester-St. Margaret's would've made sure to recognize Bob if she could've been here with us this session.

Bob was involved in so many aspects of his community, through municipal council, the local Legion or the many committees struck to develop the ballfield, playground and basketball court. Bob was also a member of the Masonic Lodge No. 61, the Philae Shriners and active with his local church.

I came to know Bob personally, Mr. Speaker, over many years in recreational and amateur hockey, where he committed his time and his knowledge to the benefit of our youth. His sudden passing is sure to leave a deep void for many residents of Chester and I'd like to extend our condolences to Bob's family, friends and colleagues.

MR. SPEAKER: I'd just like to remind the honourable member it's unparliamentary to mention fellow members who are either present or absent in the House, or to indicate that a member is absent. Just for future reference.

The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

### **BOUDREAU, GERALD: LANCEMENT DU LIVRE - FÉLICITATIONS**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Monsieur le Président, le jeudi 3 mars 2016, dans la salle Père Maurice LeBlanc au Centre communautaire de Par-en-Bas, Gérald C. Boudreau a lancé son livre, *Le diable est à la porte*. L'histoire est de la fiction écrite en français. Le personnage principal est Thomas Cormier, un jeune séminariste qui fait face un défi dans ses études. Comme l'histoire se déploie ils guident le lecteur tout au long de son voyage à surmonter et faire face à ces défis. C'est également une histoire d'amour de ton prochain et l'Église.

L'auteur Gérald Boudreau est un professeur à la retraite de l'Université Sainte-Anne. Il a passé sept ans à étudier la, et plus de trente ans professionnellement dans diverses capacités tout au long de sa carrière. Il est un Acadien fier.

Je félicite Gérald Boudreau pour le lancement de ce livre et lui souhaite le succès et la bonne santé.

Mr. Speaker, on Thursday March 3, 2016 in Salle Père Maurice LeBlanc at the Centre communautaire de Par-en-Bas, Gérald C. Boudreau launched his book, *Le diable et à la porte*. The story is a fiction written in French. The main character is Thomas Cormier, a young seminarian who is facing challenges in his studies. As the book unfolds, it guides the reader through his journey to overcome and face these challenges. It is also a story of your love for your neighbour and the church.

The author Gérald Boudreau is a retired professor from l'Université Sainte-Anne. He spent seven years studying there and professionally, over 30 years in various capacities throughout his career. He's a very proud Acadian. I congratulate Gérald Boudreau on the launch of his book and wish him continued success and good health.

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

**STARRATT, SANDRA - PROG. WOMEN OF EXCELLENCE AWARD (2015)**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I stand today to recognize Sandra Starratt, a recipient of the 2015 Progress Women of Excellence Award.

The Annual Progress Women of Excellence Awards honours 19 inspirational women who play an important role in our community. Women like Sandra Starratt, who are at the pinnacle of their professions, are recognized and honoured at this annual event.

Sandra Starratt has had a life-long passion for education and giving, and shares that enthusiasm daily with her students and fellow teachers. Her influence goes far beyond the classroom at Halifax West High School where she is a department head and student government advisor, overseeing 19 committees that fund-raise \$50,000 to \$100,000 annually for various worthwhile organizations.

A note for a future member's statement - under Ms. Starratt's direction, the students at Halifax West actually doubled their efforts and raised \$20,000 this year in support of the Terry Fox Run. Through her work, she encourages kindness and giving in young leaders, and has had a hugely positive impact on young people during her 30-plus years of teaching, I myself being one of those young people. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize Sandra Starratt and congratulate her on this well-deserved award.

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

**STANFIELD'S PANTS OFF FOR PROSTATE CANCER:  
SUPPORT - RECOGNIZE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, sometimes a little humour helps start a conversation about a serious subject like prostate cancer, and Pants Off does just that. Today, I'd like to recognize Stanfield's Pants Off for Prostate Cancer, in support of Prostate Cancer Canada Atlantic Region.

Thank you to the Good Clean Fun Ambassadors, Jon Stanfield of Stanfield's and Dennis Campbell of Ambassatours, and to Matt Laundry for their support of this very important day. All proceeds from Stanfield's Pants Off for Prostate Cancer will benefit Prostate Cancer Canada Atlantic, which fundraises for the elimination of the disease through research, education, support, and awareness.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer to afflict Canadian men, and this year alone, nearly 24,000 Canadian men and their families will face a prostate cancer diagnosis. But there's hope: when detected early, the survival rate of prostate cancer is over 90 per cent. Days like today will only help educate and inform men and their families.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**MCCLUSKEY, GLORIA: COMMUN. SERV./SUPPORT - THANK**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Last February, Gloria McCluskey announced her plan to retire from politics. Gloria, who served as Mayor of Dartmouth from 1992 until amalgamation and then as councillor for Halifax District 5 since 2004, has dedicated decades to public service.

Much of her district overlaps with Dartmouth South, and I can tell you she will be sorely missed by me and the members of our neighbourhoods. Gloria, who has been called Queen of the Lakes, is leaving an unparalleled legacy in Dartmouth, and I want to thank her for her service and uncompromising support for the community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Dartmouth North.

**ROWE, ALLAN - RTDNA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, there's not a day that goes by in this Chamber when many of us don't remember our colleague and friend Allan Rowe, MLA for Dartmouth South. His gentle demeanour, his passion for his community, and his integrity in his work defined this true and humble gentleman.

Recently, the work Allan accomplished before obtaining elected office was honoured by the Radio Television Digital News Association in a gala ceremony appropriately held at Dartmouth South's NSCC Waterfront Campus. Many of Allan's former colleagues and close friends paid tribute to a man who approached every story, every newscast, and every interview with professionalism, respect, and compassion.

The RTDNA Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to individuals who have distinguished themselves through outstanding service and continued excellence during the course of their career in broadcast journalism. The award is a lifetime achievement rather than a single contribution, and is one of the highest honours bestowed by the RTDNA.

Graciously accepted by his wife, Yvonne, and daughter Deborah, the award is a testament to the 17 years of outstanding work Allan accomplished as a senior anchor, producer, and news director at Global News. Please join me in congratulating the Rowe family and recognizing the growing legacy of Allan's work both inside and outside of this Chamber. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**SYMONS, MOLLIE - LT.-GOV.'S AWARD**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor presents Respectful Citizenship Awards to deserving young individuals who take the initiative to make positive changes and address difficult issues facing their schools and communities.

Sixteen-year-old Mollie Symons, a Grade 11 student from Port Williams in my constituency, was given this high acknowledgement for her involvement in a number of programs in her school. As a member of the Interact Club, she raised funds for an HIV/AIDS organization in Africa. She chairs an active ME to WE committee that gathers items for the local food bank and for Doctors Without Borders. Mollie is an international student ambassador, helping those who cannot speak English feel welcome, and a member of the Annapolis Valley Honour Choir, where she mentors junior choir members.

I ask my fellow members to join me in recognizing and congratulating the leadership and commitment that this young woman has demonstrated.

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

**ROSEWAY HOSP. - ER CLOSURES**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, on Monday, January 25, 2016, the Roseway ER closed yet again at 6:00 a.m. and would not open until Tuesday at 8:00 a.m., a total of 26 hours.

On January 31<sup>st</sup> the ER closed at 6:00 a.m. and would not open until the next day at 8:00 a.m., another 26-hour closure. On February 7<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Speaker, the ER closed at 6:00 a.m. and would not open again until 8:00 a.m. the next day. On that same day the ER closed at 5:00 p.m. and would not open until February 9<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m.

Over the course of 48 hours the Roseway ER was closed for a total of 41 hours, Mr. Speaker. At the Roseway Hospital in Shelburne, the ER was closed for 93 hours during a two-week period. To be continued.

MR. SPEAKER: Ladies and gentlemen, just before we get on to the next member's statement, I'll take the opportunity to introduce a special guest with us here who slipped in unannounced. I'd like to acknowledge, if he would rise, the Honourable Chris Collins, the Speaker from New Brunswick. (Applause)

The honourable member for Bedford.

**RICHARD, JEAN: VETERANS/BEDFORD/CANADA - SERV. THANK**

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a bit today about a gentleman who lives in my riding. Jean Richard is a veteran who served as a pilot in the Canadian Air Force in World War II. He has been a member of our Bedford Legion for many years. He is often on the executive but even when he isn't, he steps up whenever he is needed. For example, last year the Poppy Campaign Chair, Doug Shute, died suddenly. Jean stepped in, as he often does, just when you need him. He is always a smiling, friendly presence at Legion events.

In October of last year Jean received a life membership from the Legion at the annual Honours and Awards Dinner. It was so nice to have his lovely family there to see him receive his membership and I was honoured to be able to participate in the evening.

I want to thank Mr. Richard for his many hours serving veterans, the community of Bedford, and our country.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**CROMWELL, ANGELA - BUS. ENDEAVOURS**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, Angela Cromwell is blazing a successful trail with her recent opening of a hair salon in downtown New Glasgow. Although she has operated a salon for the past five years, she is expecting an increased demand for her skills and talents at her new location.

Several years ago Angela went to the Nova Scotia Community College, Pictou Campus in Stellarton, and took the cosmetology course. She was unable to find anyone teaching about ethnic hair. She began to spend every available hour to research and affectionately laughs when she tells her customers she used her children to practice her newly-found methods.

Angela is taking courses in Ontario and Alberta for hair extensions and wigs. She is attempting to establish a private quiet room in her shop to service chemo patients who wish to discuss the option of using a wig. Pictou County wishes Angela Cromwell great success in her endeavours.

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

**TROUT, JENNIE - RECOGNIZE**

MS. LENORE ZANN: On this day in 1841 Canada's first licensed female doctor was born. A lengthy illness motivated Jennie Trout to become a doctor at a time when

women were not admitted to Canadian medical schools. She was begrudgingly permitted to attend lectures at Toronto School of Medicine where she faced daily harassment. She graduated from the Women's Medical College in Pennsylvania in 1875 and was licensed shortly thereafter, commemorated then on a stamp in Canada in 1991.

Pioneering women like Jennie Trout have left a lasting impression on our society. I want to recognize her, and all female doctors who have followed in her footsteps, for setting a positive example for smart, aspiring women, and that is including my own doctor, Roya Murray, and the recently retired gynecologist, Dr. Cate Folinsbee of Truro.

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

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Before I read my statement I'd like the permission to do an introduction first.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, go ahead.

MS. WHALEN: I'd like to draw the members' attention to the west gallery where we are joined with visitors today from my church, St. Peter's Anglican Church in Birch Cove, along the Bedford Highway. We are joined by the Reverend David Dellapinna and our Church Wardens Elizabeth Snow and Charlotte Horwich. I'd like the House to please give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

#### **ST. PETER'S CHURCH (BIRCH COVE) - ANNIV. (65<sup>th</sup>)**

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, St. Peter's in Birch Cove is celebrating its 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with community and church events throughout the year to mark this important milestone. In the late 1940s the Anglican families in Rockingham attended St. John's church in Fairview. As their numbers increased they became aware of the need for an Anglican church of their own. Their dream was helped by a generous bequest from the estate of Florence Dakin who donated land for the site of a new church.

The cornerstone was laid April 30, 1951, and more than 200 people attended the first service. Some of the original families are still worshipping at St. Peter's today.

I am proud to be a member of this church, which has so many wonderful volunteers and a history of connection with the community. From the beginning it has provided a spiritual home for many and opened its doors to youth programs, sports, and community meetings.

In recent years it has sponsored a community garden, an outdoor rink, and continued to bring the neighbourhood and church together. Over the years St. Peter's has



maintained its character as a country church, while welcoming people from the many new urban neighbourhoods that have grown up around it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the House to extend their congratulations to the congregation and the Parish Council of St. Peter's Church and also to their priest, Reverend David Dellapinna, for 65 years of fellowship and worship in Rockingham.

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

**VISSERS/HARBERS FAMILIES  
- ENVIRONMENTAL FARM STEWARDSHIP AWARD**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, the Vissers and Harbers families own and operate a dairy farm in MacKay Siding, Colchester County, with a total herd of 300. The family has regularly incorporated soil and water conservation practices, ensured proper fuel and pesticide storage, and changed farm operations to be more energy efficient.

The family recently received the Environmental Farm Stewardship Award from the Federation of Agriculture and its Environmental Farm Plan.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend congratulations on the award, and commend the families for their efforts to protect and preserve our precious environment.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**C.B.: POVERTY LEVELS - ADDRESS**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, the Island of Cape Breton is currently experiencing a crisis in the high levels of poverty experienced by families, individuals, and communities. Shockingly, today in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, the poverty rate for seniors over 65 years is above 20 per cent - one in five residents. Those rates are even worse for senior women. Seniors in Cape Breton have worked hard and deserve to live their later years in peace, security and comfort, not worrying about how to make ends meet.

Mr. Speaker, Cape Breton deserves immediate and bold action to address the high levels of poverty experienced across the island.

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

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to do an introduction first, if I may.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

MS. WHALEN: I'd like to draw the attention of the House to the west gallery where we are visited by a very special young guest who has been here before. Her name is Emily Alford. She is here with her parents, Krista and John, and also with Tammy Pottie, who is the general secretary of the National Darts Federation of Canada. I'd like the House to please give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

I should tell you that Emily is a Grade 6 student at Beaver Bank-Monarch school and she is well-known to quite a few members of the House here as she is a very keen campaigner. She works on municipal and provincial campaigns. (Interruption) That's important too.

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

### **ALFORD, EMILY: NATL. DARTS COMP. - BEST WISHES**

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a champion dart player who is going to Nationals, along with Team Nova Scotia, to represent our province. The Nationals are being held in Richmond, B.C., in May of this year, and 11-year-old Emily Alford is going as our Provincial Junior Girls Champion.

Emily began to play darts at the tender age of eight and has honed her skill through practice and competition. This year marks her third time going to Nationals in the Junior Girls category, which is open to girls 15 and under.

In 2015 at Nationals she tied for third place with her doubles partner, Taylor Probert. This has been a strong year for Emily as she has won two tournaments, in addition to placing first in Junior Girls for Nova Scotia.

In preparation for the trip to B.C., Emily has appeared on the Global TV's *The Morning Show* and been interviewed by *The Laker* and the *Bedford-Sackville Observer*.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the Legislature to join me in congratulating Emily Alford on winning a place at the National Darts Competition, and wish her and the Nova Scotia team every success in competition there.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

### **JENNINGS, CHIEF WADE: DEBERT FD - ROLE MODEL**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Nova Scotia's volunteer fire brigades are made up of individuals who give of their time, skills, and dedication in the service of others. They risk their lives in the role of firefighter and must deal with great emotional stress in their role as first responder. Training, fundraising, recruitment, and public relations are additional

responsibilities of fire departments, and no individual is more involved with these than Fire Chief Wade Jennings.

Wade Jennings has been the Chief of the Debert Fire Department for the last seven years. Besides the hours he puts in for such things as training, fire calls, work nights, and monthly meetings, during the past year he also represented the Debert Fire Brigade at the CFFA meeting and sat on the executive as a representative for the Fire School. He attended directors' meetings at the Fire School and semi-annual and annual meetings with the Fire Service of Nova Scotia.

At their annual banquet, Chief Jennings expressed his thanks to the members, officers, and executive for their hard work and for their many hours of volunteer time. Chief Jennings serves as an excellent role model and has the respect of his brigade, as well as members in the areas where he serves.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

#### **ARBUCKLE, ASHLEY - BASKETBALL MEDALS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, Pictou County Lightning strikes twice. Coaches Brian MacLeod and Mark Arbuckle led the Pictou County Lightning to two silver medals at the 2016 Basketball Nova Scotia Division 3 Mini-Girls Under-12 Provincial Championship Tournament.

In the round robin they lost a hard-fought championship game 35-32 to the Windsor Shooting Stars in overtime, but defeated the top-seed Halifax Slam 32-27, and defeated second-seed Sackville Storm 34-33.

Congratulations to Ashley Arbuckle, who was named Tournament All-Star; accolades to the Lightning on taking home two silver medals; and to the coaches, special thanks for all you do for these wonderful young ladies.

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

#### **COM. SERV.: WOMEN'S CTRS. - BUDGET FREEZE**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Yesterday the Minister of Community Services, when asked about the frozen investments to women's centres, stated, "Nova Scotia has the highest per-capita spending on women's centres in Canada." Mr. Speaker, when you consider that our population is less than one million people, that claim makes sense. But the claim, however, has nothing to do with the freeze in investments to women's centres in Nova Scotia in this budget, and it does nothing to address the ongoing need for services through these agencies.

Mr. Speaker, I'm already hearing from disappointed women who are telling me that they are not fooled and they feel clouding the reality of the minister's decision to freeze investments to women's centres does nothing to serve the thousands of women across Nova Scotia who are looking for real answers and real support.

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

### **BEALES, KEONT'E - ANSMA AWARD**

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize and congratulate Keont'e Beales, who developed deep roots in music, starting his career at age seven in the junior choir at St. Thomas Baptist Church in North Preston. Keont'e won the African Nova Scotian Music Association Emerging Artist of the Year Award in 2015, which is a significant boost to his career in music. Keont'e credits his parents, family, and friends for supporting his career choice, as well as the two-year Music Arts program at the Nova Scotia Community College that has helped him to further develop his talents. The future plans of Keont'e include operating his own production company and, after several albums, touring the world.

Please join me in congratulating and commending Keont'e Beales for his tremendous achievements, and wishing him every success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

### **GLUBE, CONSTANCE: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I rise today to acknowledge the passing of Constance Glube, Nova Scotia's first woman Supreme Court judge. Constance "Connie" Glube graduated from Dalhousie University and was called to the Bar in 1956. In 1977, she was appointed as the first woman on Nova Scotia's Supreme Court. In 1982, Ms. Glube became the court's Chief Justice and was later appointed to the Court of Appeal. Among other accomplishments, Constance Glube also served as Halifax's city manager and was the first woman to hold such a position in a Canadian city.

Constance Glube passed at the age of 84 and deserves to be recognized for both her achievements and her dedication to overcoming many barriers throughout her career.

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

### **NOVA STAR - BANKRUPTCY**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Yesterday, it was reported in *South Coast Today* that the operators of the *Nova Star* still owed more than \$15 million to over 200 creditors, despite the fact that the company received over \$40 million from Nova Scotian taxpayers.

The article contained a list of 12 Nova Scotian businesses that are still owed thousands of dollars by this failed enterprise. These local businesses are no doubt disappointed with the government's decision to quickly move on to support another vessel without addressing the shortfall associated with the *Nova Star*.

This Liberal Government has demonstrated that it has millions of dollars to hand out to support the latest installment of the Yarmouth ferry, but it seems it has no money - I repeat, no money - to ensure Nova Scotian businesses are not left holding the bag for the failed operation of the *Nova Star*.

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

### **BURCHELL, ROBBIE - SPEED SKATING ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

MR. DAVID WILTON: I'd like to recognize Robert Burchell, better known by his friends as Robbie, for his medal-winning accomplishments at the 2016 Special Olympics in Newfoundland this year. He is the oldest member on Team Nova Scotia, as he celebrated his 53<sup>rd</sup> birthday last year, and he is also one of the longest-serving athletes on Team Nova Scotia.

Robbie takes part in many sports throughout the year, but it's speed skating that has brought him to national attention. He grabbed the attention of TSN, which was at the games looking for a skater to do a story on, and who better than Robbie? At this year's games, he won four medals: bronze in the 333-metre, silver in both the 222-metre and the 777-metre, and gold in the 500-metre final. He also had the honour to be the flag bearer for Nova Scotia in the opening ceremonies.

Please join me in taking the opportunity to congratulate Robbie Burchell on his success in speed skating and to look forward to watching his future success.

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

### **HANNA, ASHLEIGH - ALTRUISM**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Today I acknowledge Ashleigh Hanna from Howie Centre, who is gaining a reputation as a little girl with a very big heart. Ashleigh is 12 years old, and this past January, she embarked on a project designed to help those in need to stay warm in winter.

During and after the holiday season, Ashleigh, along with her mom, Dodie, her four siblings, and other supporters, quietly and strategically placed winter comfort kits around downtown Sydney. The kits were contained in plastic bags stapled to power poles and contained scarves, mitts, earmuffs, and hats.

I stand here today to thank Ashleigh Hanna. She is an exceptional young lady. Her mom explains that the effort stems from Ashleigh's repeated insistence over the last three years that she not receive any Christmas gifts and that the money should instead be spent on helping others.

MR. SPEAKER: Good job, and I hope the member is feeling better than he sounds.

The honourable member for Cape Breton-Richmond.

### **DON FOUGÈRE - PRIX DE L'ÉDUCATION**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Je veux saisir cet occasion pour rendre hommage à un des enseignants exceptionnels de ma circonscription qui fut honoré récemment dans le contexte de la semaine de l'éducation.

Don Fougère, natif de Petit-de-Grat, nommé par l'école Beau-Port, est lauréat d'un prix de la semaine de l'éducation pour le rôle important qu'il joue en guidant les élèves dans le domaine de la médiatique.

Le thème de cette année est Les compétences médiatiques : savoir-faire preuve d'esprit critique à l'ère des médias numériques. Le thème souligne la contribution des éducateurs qui aident les élèves à développer les compétences dont ils ont besoin pour comprendre, créer et interpréter de manière critique du texte en format imprimé, à l'écran et en format numérique. Cette année, Don Fougère, en collaboration avec une nouvelle enseignante, Mademoiselle Jannick Boudreau, ainsi que Monsieur Ron LeBlanc ont mis en place un nouveau site web pour l'École Beau-Port. Ces champions, comme Don Fougère et ses collègues à l'École Beau-Port, enseignent aussi aux élèves comment être des citoyens du numérique respectueux, responsables, et au comportement d'être éthique.

Comme a souligné la Ministre de l'Éducation:

« La médiatique et la citoyenneté numérique sont essentielles à l'apprentissage et à la réussite dans la vie et au travail . . . En travaillant avec les enseignants, les écoles, les conseils scolaires, les collectivités et les partenaires, nous sommes en train d'élaborer un programme d'enseignement innovateur qui met l'accent sur les mathématiques et la littératie, et l'introduction à la programmation informatique dès les premières années à l'école. Ensemble, nous sommes capables d'améliorer la vie de nos élèves. »

Félicitations à Monsieur Don Fougère.

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

**HOLMES, CHARLES: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a driving force in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and in the community of Sydney Mines who recently passed away. Charles Holmes, a retired teacher, served his church for decades in organizing, fundraising, choir - anything his community and church required.

It's rare to find to an individual who totally devoted his life to the service of others through his church and his community. The community and the church will surely miss him. It's a true honour to have this opportunity to thank Charles Holmes for his service. His passing will create a huge void that will not easily be filled.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**ANTIGOBASKITS/JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT COMPANIES - CONGRATS.**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, Antigobaskits, a Junior Achievement company, has recently wrapped up a successful year of business. The company, made of and operated by six students from Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School, sold study kits with the goal of helping reduce exam-time stress while turning a profit.

Through the 18-week program, the students have the opportunity to recruit shareholders, take on executive roles, plan a production process, engage in direct sales, and even pitch their ideas to a panel of experienced entrepreneurs. Now that the books are closed, I am happy to announce that Antigobaskits not only made a profit but provided a return of 20 per cent on investment to all shareholders.

I invite all the members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Antigobaskits along with other Junior Achievement companies across the province. These youths are our next generation of entrepreneurs, and it's heartening to have a program such as Junior Achievement fostering their development.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**WILKIE, LUCY**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I have been inspired by the amazing working commitment of the young people in my constituency. For instance, 16-year-old Lucy Wilkie who lives in Port Williams recently won a gold medal from the Royal Conservatory of Music for scoring top marks in Atlantic Canada on the Level 8 piano examination. She was presented with her award at the Lilian Percy Concert Hall at the Maritime Conservatory of the Performing Arts.

Lucy is a music student and a member of the Annapolis Valley Honour Choir. Please join me to congratulate this young woman on her successes and our best wishes for her future endeavours. Thank you.

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

### **BENOIT ELECTRIC - RECOGNIZE**

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Benoit Electric of Beechville. Established in 1999, owner John Benoit has built Benoit Electric to include a broad range of products and services for both residential and commercial clients. They are committed to providing a superior quality of service and the highest-level integrity to each and every job.

Everyone at Benoit Electric prides themselves on their commitment to be fair, honest, courteous, and professional in all their dealings. Their highly-trained staff are committed to helping their clients receive the best value in every interaction. I would like the members of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating John Benoit and the staff of Benoit Electric on having such a solid reputation in the business world and wish them continued success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, could I ask the indulgence of the House to revert to Government Notices of Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request to revert to the order of business, Government Notices of Motion.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 3187**

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

Whereas today the 21<sup>st</sup> of April, 2016, marks Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday; and



Whereas for many Nova Scotians, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has been the only head of the Royal Family, becoming Queen of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth 64 years ago in 1952; and

Whereas Her Majesty continues to be a great beacon of strength, conducting her royal duties and charitable work with passion and tenacity;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly send best wishes to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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.

**[STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS]**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**AIKENS, ALICIA/ROBSON, KELSEY:  
INTL. STUDENTS PROG. - MEXICO TRIP**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, two Grade 11 students from Stellarton recently returned from Mexico after participating in an international students' program. Alicia Aikens and Kelsey Robson were part of a 21-student contingent that spent two weeks in the coastal city of Campeche. Besides building their leadership skills, they went to school with other teens taking leadership and Spanish classes at school. They also helped out at a cancer care centre and participated in numerous endeavours in their community. Alicia and Kelsey also found time to visit two fortresses, as well as the ancient Mayan ruins in Campeche.

We congratulate Alicia and Kelsey for participating in this educational endeavour, and I am sure they have many memories from this student program.

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

**MACDONALD, MEREDITH - MARITIMER OF THE WK.**

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Meredith MacDonald, of Sydney, who was recently named Maritimer of the Week for her tireless work and protection of animals at our local SPCA and in the greater community. For years Meredith has been an advocate and volunteer for our local SPCA. She spends countless hours volunteering to support and provide companionship to the shelter animals.

Mr. Speaker, I believe her story will inspire more in our community to come forward and support our local animal shelters, and I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Meredith on her award of Maritimer of the Week and for her support for the SPCA in Sydney.

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

**SHRIVER, DARREN & SHERRY/FOODLAND & CO-OP LEADERS  
- DOMINICAN REPUBLIC BUS. CONF.**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: I wish to applaud Stewiacke Foodland franchisee Darren Shriver, his wife Sherry, and other Foodland and co-op leaders in Atlantic Canada, for looking beyond our communities and extending goodwill to a school in Bavara, Dominican Republic, during a business conference there this year.

With a \$10,000 budget and a willingness to pitch in and do the work themselves, 180 conference participants transformed the school, renovating, repairing, and installing much-needed equipment. Mr. and Mrs. Shriver also decided to take it upon themselves to build a playground for the school. With donations from the other leaders, an additional \$2,500 was raised for that purpose.

It is acts such as these that tell the world how caring and giving our nation, its provinces, and its communities are.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**HOCKEY GEAR GIVEAWAY: SPORTWHEELS/CLEVE'S - THANK**

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: I'd like to say first that the member for Cape Breton-Richmond's French is almost as good as yours.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about a Hockey Gear Giveaway that was held in Spryfield on February 6<sup>th</sup>. My office partnered with Cleve's Sporting Goods and Sports Wheels this winter to collect gently used hockey gear that could be distributed to families in the community who needed to outfit their children for hockey.

Throughout the Fall and early winter both Cleve's and Sportswheels set up bins where people could donate gear. The response was overwhelming. When we collected the gear it filled an entire office - there were hundreds of pairs of skates and countless sets of full hockey gear.

On February 6<sup>th</sup> we took the gear to the Captain William Spry Centre to distribute to the community. Within an hour everything was gone and hundreds of kids now had gear they needed to play hockey. With the help of volunteers from Sportswheels, we were able to properly fit the children with the gear.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Sportswheels and Cleve's for generously offering to collect gear for us. Hockey is a very expensive sport to play and requires full gear. Through the generosity of all those who donated used gear, and the sporting goods stores for collecting it, many children in Spryfield will now be able to participate in the sport.

We look forward to being able to do this again next year and hope to have the gear ready for distribution before the hockey season starts.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

#### **CHELSEA LAINE SALON & COLOUR BAR/GREEN CIRCLE SALONS - PARTNERSHIPS**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and recognize Chelsea Laine Salon and Colour Bar, in New Glasgow, for partnering with Green Circle Salons, a company which offers green options to salons in order to reduce their negative environmental impact.

Chelsea Laine is the first salon in Pictou County to seek out such an environmental program. By implementing simple green changes, Chelsea Laine Salon and Colour Bar can reduce their ecological footprint. Through initiatives such as this they are helping to make the salon industry more sustainable as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the local salon for joining this sustainability initiative and encouraging its peers to follow suit. Chelsea Laine Salon is setting a wonderful example for other businesses in Pictou County and beyond, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

#### **BEAZLEY, PAUL: NEW POSITION - CONGRATS.**

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take a moment to recognize Mr. Paul Beazley, who recently stepped down from his position as the mayor of Windsor after serving eight years.

Prior to his title as the town's mayor, Paul served as a councillor in the Town of Windsor from 2000 to 2004. Paul was very active and outspoken on several issues within the town including municipal reform, shared fire services, and ensuring the town's claim of being the birthplace of hockey. You could always find Paul on Saturday mornings for Coffee Corner, which was an initiative started seven years ago by a councillor. Residents could meet with the mayor and councillors over a cup of coffee to discuss their concerns.

Paul has accepted a position as an appraiser at Property Valuation Services Corporation in the Burnside Industrial Park, and I would like to take this opportunity and ask all members to congratulate Mr. Beazley on his new position, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

### **ROGERS, JONATHAN - SWIMMING ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like today to congratulate Jonathan Rogers of Oxford on his impressive performance in the junior provincial championship swimming competition in Truro.

Jonathan is a member of the Spartan Swim Club, which brought home a collection of place awards and personal bests. Almost 200 swimmers from across Nova Scotia were competing in this event. Jonathan Rogers recorded three personal bests, placing sixth in the 200-metre free, eighth in the 50-metre free and 10<sup>th</sup> in the 50-metre breaststroke.

I congratulate Jonathan Rogers on these outstanding achievements and wish him continued success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **MACINTOSH, OLIVIA/FRASER, ISABELLE - CANSKATE CHAMPIONS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently the Pictou East Silver Blades held their annual awards banquet, where they enjoyed a meal and the presentations of medals and trophies. I want to congratulate the skaters and their coaches for a job well done. I know the effort required during the season to make everything come together for the finale.

Olivia MacIntosh and Isabelle Fraser were both named Canskate Champions and presented with medals and ribbons. Along with the camaraderie of being part of a group, these skaters have learned the basics, and hopefully they will return in the Fall to take their skills to the next level. I wish them continued success moving forward.

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

**NATL. DENTAL HYGIENE MO. (04/16) - RECOGNIZE**

MR. BEN JESSOME: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was encouraged by Marilyn Cummings, dental hygienist and owner of All Smiles Clinic in Hammonds Plains-Lucasville, to acknowledge that April is National Dental Hygiene Month.

Dental hygiene is the sixth largest registered health profession in Canada, with 26,800 registered dental hygienists working in a variety of settings, with people of all ages; 59 per cent of Canadian children and 96 per cent of adults have experienced cavities, and 21 per cent of Canadian adults have experienced gum-related disease.

Mr. Speaker, research shows a direct link between oral health and overall health and well-being; for example, gum disease is linked to a number of other serious illnesses. Greater awareness of the proper oral health practices and the need to regularly visit a dental professional, is important to ensuring that all Nova Scotians and Canadians alike, keep their teeth clean and keep their dental health positive.

I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize April as National Dental Hygiene Month.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**MORELAND, CAPT. DANIEL  
- TALL SHIPS OF AMERICA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Dating back to the original *Bluenose*, the Town of Lunenburg has had a long, celebrated history with sailing. Captain Angus Walters is a household name in the sailing community, and so is the name Captain Daniel Moreland, the master of the sailing training ship *Picton Castle*, which makes its home in Lunenburg. He was recently awarded the Tall Ships of America's highest honour, the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to an individual who has dedicated his or her life's work to getting people out to sea and to work to preserve the traditions and skills of sail training.

In the last 20 years of captaining the *Picton Castle*, Captain Moreland has circumnavigated the globe an impressive six times. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in congratulating Captain Moreland for his long and distinguished sailing career and for receiving the Tall Ships of America's highest award, the Lifetime Achievement Award.

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

**ORDERS OF THE DAY****ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS**

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

**PREM.: ERs - MENTAL HEALTH CARE**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: My question is to the Premier. There is another case this week of someone suffering from mental illness - including in this case thoughts of suicide - being turned away from our emergency rooms. This is the same story that we are hearing in community after community across the province.

Mr. Speaker, we know our health professionals are doing their best but the system is overwhelmed. This has become the health care crisis of our time: mental health services for people when they really need it.

I'd like to ask the Premier why mentally-ill people are being turned away from our emergency rooms.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I can't speak to the specifics of the case the honourable member is referring to. I don't believe it would be appropriate for any Nova Scotian seeking medical support to be turned away from any emergency room in this province. Health care providers make a diagnosis or decision on what the next step is, so I don't know what the interaction was between the doctor and that Nova Scotian.

Obviously as we go across this province, we're working on community-based mental health intervention, as well as ensuring that every emergency room across the province has access for psychiatric care to be available. At the end of the day, somebody in that health care facility would make that decision, interacting with that patient. It would be inappropriate for me to pass judgment on that interaction.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I truly wish we were talking about only one interaction. The case this week is not an isolated one. We all saw what happened to Cody Glode of Millbrook who actually did exactly what he was told to do when he went to an emergency room, after having called the Mental Health Crisis Line. We know the case of Christopher Bagnell in Cape Breton who went to the emergency room.

Now there's another case here in Halifax. In the case in Halifax a friend of the mentally-ill person said that when someone asks for help we should give it, we should take them seriously. I'm sure everyone agrees with that in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, and across the province. I'd like to ask the Premier, what is the point of mental health services if they are sending people away?

THE PREMIER: Again, Mr. Speaker, I agree with the honourable member, everyone requiring health care services in this province should be receiving it. I can't speak specifically to the case he is referring to, obviously the health care provider interacting with that patient would have made a determination. It's one of the things as all of our families have experienced some level of mental health illness, we all reach out looking for that health care provider.

That's why we worked extremely hard ensuring we invest in SchoolsPlus so that we can identify mental health challenges early on, so that we can begin to deal with them in young Nova Scotians earlier. That's why we're investing in community-based supports so that those families and citizens who require mental health services in our community today can have them close to where they live.

It is concerning when you hear of someone going to an emergency room and having some of the results that the honourable member referred to but the health care provider has an interaction and it would be inappropriate for me to be judging that health care provider in the decision they made.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, when people have thoughts of suicide in this province they are advised to call the crisis line, to go to their family doctor or, in a real crisis, to go to the emergency room. They haven't seen a health care provider at that point, they are actually seeking that help.

I truly believe that everyone in this House wants that person to get the help they need. No one questions that. Mr. Speaker, it is not happening, I'm bringing example after example here to this House. There's no need to question our health providers when they are there to provide that help. Someone can be saved, in some cases a life can be saved.

Will the Premier now admit or agree with us that there is a crisis in the delivery of mental health, particularly when it reaches the point of suicide, and call a public inquiry so we can marshal resources and identify what is needed to close these gaps so people get the crisis help they need?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The Minister of Health and Wellness for the last two and a half years has been working diligently with clinicians across this province to transform the mental health delivery service, working with the expertise that is being provided to his department, working and talking about community-based investment.

We're working to ensure that families get the supports they need close to home. I'm very proud of the work that the SchoolsPlus program has been doing. Dr. Stan Kutcher has been working extremely hard on ensuring that we begin to identify early on in our children if there are mental health issues and that we can address them early on.

We're going to continue to work with our health care providers. We're going to rely on their expertise to make sure that we follow the best protocols in dealing with mental health issues across this province and that we're there for families when they need it. There is no question, when a family is in crisis, we need to have a robust system that is able to respond to that individual and support that family.

It pains everyone in this House when we hear some of the stories that we're hearing, but we as a government are relying on the health care professionals who are asking us to put in place the right protocols and procedures to help them deal with those patients.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

### **PREM.: VG REPLACEMENT - PRIORITIZE**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Since it took office, this government's plan has been to delay incurring any cost associated with replacing the VG. The initial work undertaken by the NDP Government has been stalled for two and a half years, while the government has been amalgamating the health authorities and picking fights with health care workers. Last year when the Centennial and the VG buildings were both in disrepair, this government actually underspent its hospital infrastructure budget by \$27 million. My question is why has the Premier put his austerity agenda ahead of the need to get going on replacing the VG?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. One of the first decisions that we made coming to government was the investment we're making in Dartmouth General Hospital. We're remodelling the third and fourth floors, removing about 50 beds out of the VG into Dartmouth. There will be four additional ORs that will be moved out of the VG to the Dartmouth site, which will require eight. The fifth floor will be renovated to provide services to those Nova Scotians.

I'm really proud of the fact that a community organization called the Hospice Halifax has been working extremely hard to provide end-of-life care in a setting that I believe Nova Scotians are looking for. We're proud to work with them, and hopefully we can find an operational agreement with them to make sure that we have that option, which means some palliative care beds will be removed out of the current site.

I'm very proud of the fact we're working with clinicians across this province and health care providers. Today we were able to announce a vision around where we're going to go in the HI site. I'm really excited about the community outpatient clinic that will be outside of the central core. I'm very proud of the fact that health care providers working with clinicians identified that there was space in Hants Community Hospital to provide over 800 surgeries down there. That's not sitting by, Mr. Speaker. That's maximizing our health care infrastructure that we have, and it's understanding what clinicians and health care providers have been looking for.



MS. MANCINI: The government's plan announced today calls for renovations and construction of existing facilities to begin in the short term. However, this work does not seem to be reflected in the budget. In fact, the budget for hospital infrastructure has been cut by over \$8 million this year. My question for the Premier is, why are planned renovations to existing facilities not reflected in the budget?

THE PREMIER: They are, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As you know, the Hospice Society will be building that piece of infrastructure, the entire capital costs. We're working out arrangements on an operational side. If she looks, some of our TCA was unallocated. It worked towards the Windsor OR that we will be able to make sure is up and running.

We've also budgeted for the design work on the fifth floor of the HI facility, the Halifax Infirmary. That work is ongoing. As well, we budgeted for the design work of the community outpatient facility and the new work that's happening on the Halifax Infirmary site, in terms of the expansion and development of that site.

It would be inappropriate for our government to make any commitment until we actually get the true costs of what that is. I made a commitment to Nova Scotians that we will do so. But in the process, as we do the design work, we're going to work with clinicians and health care providers across this province to ensure that not only do we build a new facility, but we're going to provide an environment with their expertise that will be there for the next 50 years looking ahead, not looking back.

MS. MANCINI: During today's announcement, the Premier left open the idea of using the P3 model for expanding post-operative facilities. The P3 model has been criticized by Auditors General from across the country. In the Fall, our caucus tabled a briefing note from this government's own Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness which highlighted the many criticisms associated with the P3 model.

So, my question to the Premier is, given all the evidence against the P3 model, why is he still considering this approach for health facilities?

THE PREMIER: Anytime something new comes into the system there are people who criticize. Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to make a public policy decision of the next 50 years because I'm afraid someone might criticize me. The fact of the matter is we're going to be looking at what the best economic value is for Nova Scotians to ensure that we get the health care system that they deserve, and we're looking forward to working with our health care providers to make sure that when we go out to Nova Scotians and tell them the cost of this thing, that we've looked at every possibility of funding this health care facility.

And P3 will be one of those options, Mr. Speaker, as well as we'll look at it as Nova Scotians doing it, and we're looking forward to being engaged with Nova Scotians, looking forward, solving a problem, looking ahead like Nova Scotians always do.

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

**PREM. - VG REPLACEMENT: PLAN - DETAILS**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, we know that buildings at the Victoria General site of the QEII have been plagued with floods, Legionella, rodents, and countless issues for many years.

Nova Scotians have eagerly awaited a plan to see the facility replaced and demolished. Today's announcement provided no information on contributions by the federal government - or the province's share for that matter. The Premier capitalized on how much Nova Scotians want to see a new facility by making it a purely political stunt with no plan.

When will the Premier disclose the facts and figures of this plan to Nova Scotians?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for question. I'm not sure where he was today, but it sounds like he was in la-la land. But the fact of the matter is we've made a commitment, we've budgeted for the design work for the fifth floor of the HI site; we've committed \$132 million to the renovations in Dartmouth; and we made a commitment to the design work that's going to take place at the new facility and the community health facility. We're looking forward to making sure that when we get to the design work we put out our RFP, and when the cost comes in we'll communicate that to Nova Scotians - but there's one thing that the honourable member should remember, while he sat still as the Minister of Health, this Minister of Health and Wellness has acted, and his Premier is going to support him.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I laugh at that one, Mr. Speaker. The minister wasn't even invited to the stage to talk today, so I don't know why he was being quieted down when he made this great announcement today. Maybe he knows there's actually no detail to be released to Nova Scotians on the replacement of the VG site. That's why.

Further to the lack of detail we received this morning, there was no indication on whether or not this project would be a private-public partnership, where each facility will be located, which procedures would be available. The government had once again made an announcement to make a plan, to do a plan, to do another plan, Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians deserve better than what they were provided with this morning on the replacement of the VG site.

My question to the Speaker - to the Premier is, why did the Premier not ensure a true plan was in place before making such an important announcement?

MR. SPEAKER: A question to the Speaker wouldn't be bad every once in a while you know.

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the health care providers who were there. I want to thank the members of the Public Service who were there (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: I want to thank all of the members, Mr. Speaker, of the health authority, of TIR, who were there in the briefing that laid out much of the detail the honourable member is talking about. The fact of the matter is it wasn't a political event. Why would we end up having more than one political figure standing up speaking to the issue? But, I can tell you (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, (Interruptions) Mr. Speaker, I'm sure if the honourable member follows the news, he'll have heard what the Minister of Health and Wellness had to say - that's usually where they get their information from.

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

#### **PREM. - NURSING HOMES: BUDGET CUTS - JUSTIFICATION**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many Nova Scotians are concerned to learn that the government made the decision this week to cut \$3.1 million from Nova Scotia's nursing home facility base care budget. This decision to reduce funding to nursing homes is concerning on many levels but especially so, given our aging population.

So, I'd like to ask the Premier, how can the Premier justify cutting \$3.1 million from nursing homes given our province's demographics?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, working with our partners across this province, the honourable member is referring to 1 per cent out of that budget. We believe that 1 per cent can be achieved through the administrative costs, working collaboratively among a number of facilities, whether it is through procurement. A number of these homes are owned by the same operator. We believe this is an achievable number without affecting patient care.

MR. DAVID WILSON: So what about the thousands of seniors on the waiting list - that 1 per cent they're concerned with? Eliminating millions of dollars of funding to nursing homes means that resources will be stretched thin, making it more difficult for our long-term health care workers to maintain the quality of care that is needed.

At the same time the Premier cut \$3.1 million in funding for nursing homes, he also cut \$1.3 million from continuing care risk mitigations, the very people who make sure our seniors are being cared for adequately in nursing homes. My question to the Premier is, can he say that he's proud of his decision to cut the budget from our province's long-term care system?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. First of all, I want to assure the honourable member that health care providers in long-term care facilities across this province will continue to provide the top-quality care that they have been providing, and they will do so with the support of this government.

I want to congratulate the Minister of Health and Wellness for the work he has been doing. We are at an all-time low when it comes to a wait-list for long-term care facilities. We're going to continue to work with service providers across this province to ensure that Nova Scotians receive care where and when they want it. That's why we've invested in home care for the third budget in a row.

We're going to continue to work with our providers. That 1 per cent reduction we believe can come out of administration. We're prepared to work with our providers to make that happen.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

### **JUSTICE: HRM POLICE - MIN. MEET**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: A question for the Minister of Justice. Mr. Speaker, it was very sad to hear of the deaths of two young men in this city. Our thoughts are with their families and friends - our thoughts and prayers are with them at this time.

Mr. Speaker, this brings the total number of murders up to six in HRM since the start of the year. We know the police are doing all they can investigating these matters and attempting to restore peace in the community. Has the Minister of Justice met with HRM police officials to ensure they have all the resources and tools they need to have at this difficult time?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: The honourable member opposite raises a very important question, one that certainly troubles us as well and I know is of great concern to the people of Nova Scotia. Again, I'd like to echo his sentiment about our concern for the families that have been impacted and the communities that are impacted by the loss of these young lives.

Mr. Speaker, the HRP issued a statement yesterday, it was a joint statement - RCMP and police - talking about their efforts that they're working around the clock on the

investigations, reassuring the public as well of the safety, that that is of paramount concern, and that's certainly the way the Justice Ministry regards it as well.

We are always in touch with them. I have not gotten involved in any of the investigations, but our Public Safety Branch is always in touch with the RCMP.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, it is concerning in the budget that we're seeing a reduction in the Boots on the Street program. I know there are many causes of crime but certainly this is a program that has helped, certainly correlated with a reduction in crime in the province.

Mr. Speaker, the minister was unable to say how many officers will be eliminated with that decision. Will the minister tell us today how many police officers will be eliminated as a result of that budget decision?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated before, we're about to do a review of the positions and where they can be most effective and how policing should be delivered. It's important to note, I did say the other day that the program is valued at \$16.2 million. That's a substantial commitment and it currently has, I think, 138 additional officers, paid for by the Province of Nova Scotia, to help with safety in our province. Against a backdrop of declining violent crime, it has gone down, and also the fact that when this was introduced we were well below the national average on the number of police officers per capita. We are now above that so I think that's important to note.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a document that talks about the number of police we have in the province per capita, just so that all members of the House have access to that information as well.

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

#### **TIR: NATL. SAFETY CODE 11(b) - CLARIFICATION**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal put his earpiece in. (Laughter)

Mr. Speaker, there has been significant confusion and concern in Nova Scotia about the enforcement of National Safety Code Standard 11B for trucks and trailers. The trucking industry is concerned about the inspection process for brakes. It has not been made clear to them whether wheel-off inspections will be required on all classes. If so, this would add a considerable amount of time and cost to the inspections.

My question to the minister is, will the minister clarify when wheel-off inspections will be required and how his department intends to move ahead with the enforcement of this national standard?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I missed that question, Mr. Speaker. (Laughter) Just kidding. I thank the member for struggling through that question, and it is an important one. I met with a group led by Gerry Fulton, who probably brought the same issue to the member.

The reality is that the member's description isn't that far off - it is a national standard. Our idea and the intent, and what was provided to our motor vehicle inspectors and representatives here in Nova Scotia, was that it would be applied to each and every province. The industry is hearing contrary, and they're saying it's not being applied everywhere. So obviously if it's not being applied to the full extent in our neighbouring provinces in particular, that's an issue for us.

We have taken that. We're looking at talking with the other provinces to get the full scope, and we're not going to make any decisions until we know with certainty that it's being applied across the board.

MR. MACLEOD: I want to thank the minister for that answer. The trucking industry wants to have it made clear whether the limited inspections will be acceptable, or is it going to be wheel-off inspections.

The standard applies to all commercial trucks, trailers, and buses. We know that trucks at small rural fire departments are hardly commercial and don't travel great distances, and the added cost of enforcing the standard could add costs to these departments that they simply can't afford. I will ask the minister to please clarify how this standard will be applied to fire trucks in the dozens of volunteer fire departments in our province.

MR. MACLELLAN: Again, it ultimately goes back to the regulation. Obviously, as we've discussed with the organization that came to meet me directly here in the city, we've got to know that safety trumps and paramounts every other aspect. Obviously no trucker, no organization, no private sector operator wants to put themselves or their staff in jeopardy or at risk; there's no doubt about that.

We've got to determine if this is a pure safety aspect of this inspection. It is additional time, and it's certainly additional cost to have these vehicles' wheels pulled completely off the axle. We are doing that investigation, Mr. Speaker. We do understand the impact. The group made a very compelling case, but we have to know that our fellow provinces across the board are applying this, and if that's the case, we'll look at clarifying that information. We are holding steady now, and we're going to get more information back to the group.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: FAMILY PHYSICIANS - FUNDING**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: My question will be to the Minister of Health and Wellness. During the 2013 campaign, the Liberals promised every Nova Scotian would have a family doctor - actually the member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg could use a doctor right now. When asked in October 2014 about the status of this promise, the minister said that 94 per cent of Nova Scotians had a family doctor.

This minister, I think, overlooked the more than 56,000 Nova Scotians who do not have access to a family doctor. This week Doctors Nova Scotia highlighted its disappointment in the fact that there was no investment for family physicians in this budget.

My question to the minister is, how does the minister expect this government to fulfill their campaign promise if no investments are being made for more family physicians?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I would preface my answer to the member opposite by saying today we had the most significant hospital announcement in a couple of decades. It's an announcement for Atlantic Canada and rightly so, the Premier should be making that stellar announcement. (Interruption)

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Thank you, because you didn't really answer the question there.

Not only do tens of thousands of Nova Scotians not have access to a family physician, but Collaborative Emergency Centres are being forced to close as we hear from the member for Queens-Shelburne tell us every time during Statements by Members. These centres were designed to help those living in areas with frequent emergency room closures and few family doctors. Nova Scotians are now seeing this government does not see their campaign promise as being a priority.

Does the minister plan to fulfill his government's promise to provide a family doctor for every Nova Scotian, as they promised in their election platform?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows there will always be challenges to get physicians to every part of the province where we need doctors. We also have about 3 per cent of the population that does not ask for a primary care provider. In this budget there is an additional \$6 million for physicians. I'm pleased to say that there will be 40 new physicians starting in metro, 10 new physicians in Cape Breton, and due to the residency program that we've supported in Yarmouth, Shelburne will get a new doctor come July.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**GAMING - VLTs: REDUCTION - NUMBERS**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Part 1 of the Gaming Control Act.

Yesterday the minister was so busy coming up with insults about a situation he actually knows nothing about and practising his best Donald Trump style bullying, that he forgot to answer the question I asked. So, again . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Inferring that other members are bullying is unparliamentarily, I'll ask you to retract that.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, how many fewer VLTs will there be in Nova Scotia by the end of this fiscal year?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, we're very fortunate in Nova Scotia to have a regulated gaming system that practices responsibility in ensuring that people are gaming in a safe way. While at the same time, the revenues that come from that are there to benefit all Nova Scotians. We'll certainly continue to ensure that our gaming industry runs very smoothly in our province.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, he still didn't answer the question, which is how many VLTs will there be in the end, and he knows that there was an attrition policy and they were being taken out in each of the previous years, so his number should be readily available, quite frankly.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I noticed that in many jurisdictions VLT play is declining and I will table some additional information on that today, and often it's the things like online gaming. In 2010, the only province in Canada, for example, to see an increase was Saskatchewan and that trend has continued. The minister said yesterday that they have replaced the games on terminals with more attractive products. So, Mr. Speaker, based on that statement does this mean the government is actively working to increase VLT revenue?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, we're very proud of the gaming system that we have in the province and the co-operation that we have. We're one of the only provinces in the Atlantic Region that has its own provincial gaming authority that works directly with Atlantic Lotto that is continually reviewing what is available for gaming and again, ensuring that there is responsible gaming taking place. All the terminals now have safety features that are put on them to ensure that players are gaming responsibly and we'll certainly continue to work closely with our partners to have a safe, regulated gaming industry in Nova Scotia.

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



**HEALTH & WELLNESS - HEALTH AUTH.: CALLS - RETURN TIME FRAME**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the government has no immediate plans to address the dilemma faced by many Nova Scotians who cannot find a family physician. The Nova Scotia Health Authority provides a toll-free number for patients to call and the minister has responded to my question and letter with that same number.

But I'd like to table an email sent out from the health authority to physicians that states that due to the number of family physicians, patients who call the number may have to wait up to six months for their call to be returned.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, why would it take up to six months for the health authority to simply return a call to patients in need of a family physician in Nova Scotia?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, if it's referring to recruitment for a particular location and practice, maybe it was a case of wanting to get up-to-date information. Nevertheless, I will check out why that delay is taking place. I think the member opposite does ask an important question when patients need to know information immediately.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, in 2013 the Premier promised to ensure a doctor for every Nova Scotian, and I'll table that. However, instead of attracting doctors, this government seems to be more interested in creating headaches for doctors we have now.

I'm hearing from physicians across the province who are upset with the new erroneous credentialing process being instituted by the mega health board. Physicians are already required to go through a credentialing process with the College of Physicians here in Nova Scotia.

My question to the minister is, does he not trust the College of Physicians to provide accurate credentials for doctors practising here in Nova Scotia?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, obviously we have the greatest support for the college and the decisions they make. In terms of the NSHA, what they are actually doing is reviewing the full possible scope of practice in areas where they can go; some of that is required in terms of management process. There was also some conflicting information that did come across the CBC this week and I think the department has moved to make sure that all doctors are aware of the process.

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

**LAE - TUITION REDUCTION (ON. & N.B.): N.S. ENROLMENT - IMPACT**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: My question is to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. Both Ontario and New Brunswick have announced plans to cover tuition for students from lower income households. Nova Scotia universities rely on students from other provinces to fill our seats, with only 48 per cent of our students being from this province. My question to the minister is, when will the government know the impact these changes in other provinces will have on the enrolment of Nova Scotia's universities?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. We don't have all the details from the various plans from the other provinces. It does appear that New Brunswick's is tied to students staying in that province. Ontario's, the last time we had a conversation with them, did not appear to be that way; they are in the middle of revamping so we don't have any information on that.

What I can tell you is that I have spoken to a number of university presidents and they are telling me that their expected enrolment is up because they've had more inquiries and more conversations with students in other provinces.

I can tell you that other provinces, Mr. Speaker, would be happy to have the percentage of out-of-province students that Nova Scotia has - we are the envy of the rest of Canada.

MR. ORRELL: Thank you to the minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, there are fixed costs associated with these universities, and declining enrolment due to being uncompetitive will increase the costs for all taxpayers. We can't risk losing these students to other provinces.

My question to the minister is, what plan does the government have to address losing enrolment to other provinces due to uncompetitive tuition rates?

MS. REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member. There is no indication at this point that we are, in fact, losing any students. I would remind the honourable member that the student assistance programs actually follow the students from their originating home into other provinces, so until we have a handle on what is happening with other provinces we really can't make any plans for an enrolment disruption.

Mr. Speaker, I will say that I indicated yesterday that I have met with the Saudi Arabian Cultural Bureau and we have indications that they have restored the King Abdullah Scholarship eligibility for one of our universities, and we look forward to seeing more students come as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**CCH: N.S. REG. LIBRARIES - FUNDING PROMISES**

HON. PAT DUNN: My question is for the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage. Public libraries have not seen a real increase in their core provincial-based grant in six years. Now it appears that we are looking at a seventh year of frozen provincial funding.

During the 2013 provincial election the current government assured the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library Board that they would work with all library boards to create a sustainable future. My question to the minister is, why did this government break their promise to help Nova Scotia regional libraries?

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker I'd like to thank the honourable member for his question. This government puts \$14.4 million into libraries. Libraries are vital and really important to our communities, so we do continue to work with the libraries. The library board itself came to us and asked us to do a review, and we are working on that review with them currently.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, more detail will be exposed during estimates, but Tuesday's budget showed a net position of \$71.1 million. However, there appeared to be a \$1.5 million cut to archives, libraries, and museums. Regional libraries are forced to make tough decisions - perhaps closing up to one day per week, shorter hours, and cutting staff. In fact, many part-time staff may lose their benefits.

The answer is for government to make a small investment. Even \$500,000 over three years would keep libraries afloat. My question to the minister is, will the minister commit today to providing Nova Scotia regional libraries a reasonable sum, so they can continue their core services and contribute to overall community development and well-being?

MR. INCE: Mr. Speaker, the \$14.4 million that I spoke about is just a contribution. The library boards do get funding from municipalities, from the library boards, and private partners.

That being said, as I said, there has been a review. There was a review committee struck with municipalities, with the library boards, with members from Communities, Culture and Heritage, with members from Municipal Affairs, and members from the boards themselves. They sat down, they spoke with us, and they shared with us their points of view about this review.

We are looking at it. We will reach out to those members and those stakeholders shortly, and we will continue to work with them to try to come up with a solution.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

---

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - VALLEY DIALYSIS SERV.:  
IMPROVEMENTS - TIME FRAME**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. A press release entitled "Government Investing in Health Facilities," from the Department of Health and Wellness, dated December 23, 2013, stated this: "Patients in Halifax, Kentville, Bridgewater and Dartmouth will have better access to dialysis treatment with a \$5 million investment in 2014-15 to expand services."

Mr. Speaker, my question to you for the Minister of Health and Wellness is, when will the residents of the Valley see this improved dialysis service in Kentville?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows, this is a provincial program - the provincial renal program - and they really trigger when they are completely ready with design and all of the requirements that go into dialysis. We had a meeting recently, the Premier and I, and we asked a few questions that needed to be answered. That's in process now.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I have a friend on dialysis. His name is Peter and he has to go to Halifax three times a week. It's a four- to six-hour time in the renal unit, plus travel, and he can't drive himself. He needs to have a driver. When he realized the daunting difficulty of achieving this in his life and he asked someone - I don't know who it was - in the Department of Health and Wellness what he should do, he was told, quite bluntly, "move to Halifax." That was the solution.

While we talk about this for a couple of years, my question for the minister is, is this how the minister would advise people in the Valley, like my friend Peter, about the difficulty in the realities of dialysis?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm very familiar with this program. I look at some of the advances that have been made across Nova Scotia in developing a provincial lens to meet as many regional and geographic areas as possible. It is truly a hardship when the patients have to travel extreme distances and time, along with the lengthy period of four or five hours of dialysis, and we are moving as quickly as possible to get dialysis across Nova Scotia.

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

**COM. SERV.: WOMEN'S CTRS. FUNDING - ACCEPTABILITY**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, it doesn't take much to have the highest per capita spending in a small province like Nova Scotia, where population is less than one million people, but the experience of women's centres in this province does not back up

Community Services' recent rosy claims. The reality is that women's centres across the province are struggling to meet increasingly complex needs in their communities. They're expected to hire and retain staff and offer essential programming with inadequate and unstable funding.

Mr. Speaker, my question is, can the minister please tell us if she finds the level of funding for women's centres in this budget to be acceptable?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. When we came in to government in 2013, part of our campaign commitment was a \$500,000 increase to transition houses, women's centres, and for the first time ever I might add, second-stage housing for women and children. When the funding decisions were made on that, what that resulted in was an increase in funding to all nine women's centres across the province of \$15,200, essentially bringing their funding up to \$217,000. They do great work. They do a lot of project work. They get different grants from private and public partners. So yes, I am happy with the service level agreements that will go forth in the coming months and with the funding levels that are currently available in the province.

MS. ZANN: I also agree. I think that's wonderful that they did the work that they did when they came in office. But I think we also have to give credit where it's due because for instance the previous NDP Government also gave women's centres \$500,000, which was their first raise in 20 years. We actually introduced the Sexual Violence Strategy, so I'm very happy to hear that the government is continuing on with that. This budget, however, does continue to hold the line on funding for women's centres. Although the government seems quite happy to pat themselves on the back about this, there's little in the budget that will actually advance the status of women in Nova Scotia. Could the minister please explain exactly how this budget does address the issues affecting the lives of Nova Scotia women?

MS. BERNARD: I'd like to correct the member: this government did the Sexual Violence Strategy with a three-year \$6 million commitment to every corner of this province. Don't ever mistake what we have done over the last two years as being started by the previous government. One of the first things I did as minister was that I actually took all of the women-serving organizations out of the Department of Community Services and put them under the Status of Women, where they belong, so that every time government met with every organization that serves women, it was done so with a feminist lens because for too long women's organizations in this province were lost in the magnitude of bureaucracy of the Department of Community Services. I'm proud of this budget. I'm proud of this government. We have worked with women across this province and to say anything otherwise is not true.

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

---

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORD SYSTEM:  
DELAY - EFFECTS**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Last summer, the Department of Health and Wellness pressed pause on the number of doctors who were able to use electronic medical records in provincial hospitals. I have this CBC News article that I can table, as well. At the time, Doctors Nova Scotia feared this break would deter doctors from using the systems in the future. In this year's budget they expressed their dismay that there was no investment in a single, province-wide electronic medical record system. With no investment in a province-wide system, is the minister concerned that a further delay will deter even more health professionals from using electronic medical records?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: We know that there are doctors who join on and use medical records every day. The incentive plan that was there was to get that huge number of doctors in the system very quickly. Many offices that doctors are now going to certainly will have some electronic medical records.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: From the article you can see that by pressing pause no new doctors are able to get on the system, and no existing clinics are able to transfer their information into the electronic system. Mr. Speaker, the ability to see a patient's full medical history and record can go a very long way in preventing mistakes, and more precise diagnoses. This is one of the many ways we can protect Nova Scotians and health care workers from being misinformed and encourage better patient care. After years of waiting, when can physicians and health care professionals finally see a province-wide system that is compatible in all hospitals and clinics?

MR. GLAVINE: The member opposite, a former Health Minister, asked a very important and relevant question. This was an area that we did put on hold for a year. We wanted to explore what was available in the marketplace. In fact, during this fiscal year, we will be venturing forward to advance the OPOR, and I know there are many clinicians across the province who look forward to that day.

We will also have a number of doctors who will work through the remaining years of their practice without the electronic medical records, but the goal is to eventually reach 100 per cent of our doctors using the electronic medical records, and to finally have not three systems but one system for doctors in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**CCH - CULTURAL STRATEGY: TABLING - TIME FRAME**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is to the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage. Three years ago, the government announced that it would be creating a comprehensive cultural strategy to establish a vision and direction for supporting culture.

After consultations, the final report was expected to be completed in March. Will the minister be tabling this report in the Legislature in this sitting?

HON. TONY INCE: Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I was interrupted. If I may ask the member to repeat that for me, please?

MR. SPEAKER: Can the member repeat the question?

MS. MACFARLANE: Three years ago, the government announced that it would be creating a comprehensive cultural strategy to establish a vision and direction for supporting culture. After consultations, the final report was expected to be completed in March. Will the minister be tabling this report this sitting?

MR. INCE: Thank you for that question. Our government really values a strong culture. That strong cultural sector is very important to our economic growth in this province. That being said, we have heard from many people in the cultural sector, and we are still reviewing that report. I expect that sometime in early Spring, you should get some information on that report.

MS. MACFARLANE: We know that the department has recruited companies to lead consultations on the cultural action plan. Nova Scotians want their government to find better ways to support and celebrate our vibrant and diverse culture. Will the minister please tell the House the cost of the consultants and when he expects to actually deliver the report?

MR. INCE: As I said, we will table the report, and we will provide you the information once it is completed.

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

#### **LAE - DALHOUSIE UNIV.: TUITION FEES/COSTS - ACCEPTABILITY**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, Dalhousie University's board of governors voted on Tuesday to raise tuition fees for all students, effective September 2016. When mandatory additional fees are factored in, the annual cost for Canadian students to attend even the least-expensive undergraduate program at Dalhousie will exceed \$8,000, and the cost for other programs is very close to \$15,000. It's no wonder that 200 students are using the university's food banks every month.

Is the minister satisfied with this situation? Does she find this to be an acceptable situation?

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable member for the question. Yesterday, the honourable member referenced a slap in the face. Far from being a slap in the face, our student assistance program is 100 million reasons why it's important for young people to attend school, because \$100 million is what the taxpayers of Nova Scotia spend each year to assist young people to go to school. More than \$65 million of that is invested every year to make sure that post-secondary students graduate with reduced debt.

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, Government Motions.

### **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into a Committee of the Whole on Supply unto Her Majesty.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to speak going into Supply today. It seems like a very good day to do this actually, since we have the VG non-announcement - the re-announcement, really, of things that have been in place for years, with no money attached. The one big question that all Nova Scotians have about the new plan for the VG is, how much is it going to cost? How are we going to pay for it? Clearly, one of the main elements of a plan as big as this, in particular, is how you're going to pay for it. And there was no information on that today. None.

This actually relates very directly to the budget, because now we have a government that's allocating money to a plan that has no detail - and not just a little bit of money, Mr. Speaker. As Nova Scotians learned in the budget a couple of days ago, 90 per cent of the surplus the government claims to have generated comes from a one-time windfall meant to pay for the trade centre, which has magically been renamed as a contribution to the VG - \$110 million that has been allocated to a plan where there is no information on what buildings are going to be renovated; no information on exactly which services are going to go where; a hospice plan that has been well developed by the Hospice Society and 100 per



cent paid for by the Hospice Society; and a vague reference to public-private partnership with no indication of what that might be or how much that might cost or save.

However, the government is happy to throw \$110 million at a document that says someday we hope to have a more detailed plan. Mr. Speaker, no wonder Nova Scotians are scratching their heads about the budget that was tabled the day before yesterday. No wonder they're so outraged about the Yarmouth ferry deal, which is a very bad deal that will cost them \$100 million minimum over the next 10 years, when they see the government throwing money around like this without a plan.

My colleague who sits next to me called it a "political announcement" this morning, and pointed out that the Minister of Health and Wellness wasn't even part of the announcement - a pretty good point he made, I think, backed up by the fact that there is no detail and there is no indication of total cost. All we know from the budget is that the government is going to take \$110 million that has already been put into the new Nova Centre and call it something else and spend it again on some new VG plan, details to be determined. That's not a competent way to go about managing the finances of the province, and it's certainly not a competent way to go about telling Nova Scotians what a real plan for the VG site is.

No wonder there has been so much skepticism about the budget itself. I think Nova Scotians got the picture pretty clearly the other day, Mr. Speaker, when they scoffed at the idea that it's balanced at all, when they see the Liberal Government doing exactly what they used to condemn the previous NDP Government for doing, which is creating jacked-up tax revenues that are going to magically rain down on them to say that suddenly all is good.

What's particularly galling is that the Liberal Government spent two years telling Nova Scotians that things are tough, that it's doom and gloom, that there's no money. As recently as three months ago, they were telling Nova Scotians that they may have a \$240 million deficit this year. Nova Scotians were accepting of that at the time, and accepting of the idea that we all need to do our bit. Now in one day, this week that message is thrown out and a new talking point is circulated to the members of the government caucus, which says that the heavens have opened up, that the sun is shining, and that money is falling down upon them.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians are not that gullible. They can see through that. They have seen this movie before. It was only a few years ago, as the NDP got into their third and fourth year, that they did the same thing. The person who is now the Minister of Justice was very eloquent when she pointed the fallacy of that kind of budgeting.

We all know what happened to the NDP in the end, Mr. Speaker, and no wonder. When a government makes up these magical revenue numbers to try and create the

impression that things are better than they are, you know who they're fooling? They are only fooling themselves.

I'm sure every Nova Scotian saw the editorial cartoon in *The Chronicle Herald* today, and they saw the illusion there and got the message: that there is no surplus, that it's really a deficit hidden within the surplus, and that it's a mirage that has been brought to you by today's government of Nova Scotia.

At the very least when it comes to budgeting, the actual ordering of the priorities of the government, Nova Scotians deserve the truth. They deserve an honest assessment of where we are. That's why they can't trust the budget that was brought forward the day before yesterday. That's why they know they can't trust the political announcement about the VG site that was made today, when it has no numbers and no plan, when it doesn't say where things are going or who the partners will be. No wonder they are so skeptical.

Mr. Speaker, one of the claims the government made was that there are no tax increases in this budget. Well, that's just simply not the case - other than the cigarette taxes, of course, which they did disclose. The only place there wasn't any smoke was in the cigarette tax where they were very clear that that's going up. Everywhere else, lots of smoke, but not on cigarette taxes.

I'll give you an example. They say there's no tax increase? Not true. The fact of the matter is that as long as the government insists on being the recipient of bracket creep, of reaping the extra taxes that come from having Nova Scotians pay more and more every year naturally, because our tax brackets are de-indexed from inflation - or I think an even better way to put it, de-indexed from reality - where the government just has to budget and keep quiet and millions and millions more flow into the government coffers every year from the same number of Nova Scotians making the same wages or having tiny increases in these tough times. There are no more people working, but the tax revenue is going up.

Bracket creep is part of the reason that there is a hidden tax increase in this budget, as there has been in past budgets - something that the current Justice Minister used to oppose but now is the happy recipient of. It is not correct, Mr. Speaker, to say that there is no income tax increase. There is a significant hidden income tax increase in this budget. We'll be looking for other ones. After all, when the government tries to claim that new revenue is raining down on them, really the only thing they can point to is this tax increase that's hidden in the budget.

Others have spoken about it in the past. It is not fair. If the government would just be honest and just be upfront that it wishes to tax Nova Scotians more every year, they should have to bring that to the floor of the Legislature and defend it, and we should pass it or reject it. But to allow taxes to go up naturally is not only a hardship for Nova Scotians - which is the most important point - it's very undemocratic, because it happens without any oversight in this House. It's time to bring it to an end. It is time to bring it to an end.

This budget would be in deficit today until the government came forward with an honest assessment of why they want a tax increase on income taxes, instead of allowing it to happen without any oversight. Nova Scotians are fed up with a government that reaches deeper into their pockets every year without even telling them - in fact, telling them the opposite, that there is no tax increase. Well, there is a tax increase, Mr. Speaker.

And for all those seniors who believe that, for at least a little while, their Pharmacare premiums are frozen, Mr. Speaker, after all the apologies, after all the bills have come in, for the government to apologize to them, they remain very concerned about what is going to happen in the future to their Pharmacare Program.

Part of the answer is actually in this budget. Mr. Speaker, you know, seniors certainly know, that the Pharmacare Program was set up on the principle that the government would pay 75 per cent and seniors would pay 25 per cent. That is no longer the case. The budget documents are very clear that that has shifted from the government lowering its share to 70 per cent and raising seniors' share to 30 per cent. It is in the Estimates Book itself.

The total cost of the program, \$170 million, 5 per cent more of it has been shifted onto the backs of seniors instead of being picked up by the government, which was the original intent of the program. That is before whatever changes are coming in the next budget from this government, when they bring forward the plans that they have set aside for this one year.

Again, like bracket creep, if the government had just been upfront with seniors that they needed money to make the program more sustainable, that they were prepared to continue with their own contribution, they would never have stumbled into the Pharmacare scandal that they did stumble into. But because they put out a press release where they tried to tell seniors that they were getting a break when, in fact, seniors were paying more, and in many cases a lot more, they ended up having to apologize and reverse the whole thing for now - because they were very clear that that reversal and that apology is just for now.

In the meantime, seniors pay 5 per cent more of the Pharmacare costs than they were intended to pay. That is a hardship for today's seniors. If there's one message that the seniors of Nova Scotia wanted to send the government loud and clear it is that they are on a fixed income, that you can't just raise their premiums by press release and then hope they won't say anything. When a person on a fixed income like a pension gets a big cash grab from this government, something else has to give. And that happens in way too many cases, Mr. Speaker, and, sadly, sometimes what gives is the Pharmacare Program itself, when seniors go without the medicines they need because they can no longer afford them.

The whole point of that program was that seniors could get the medicines they need, that they could afford the medicines they need, and that the government would cover 75 per cent of the cost. That's gone; it's down to 70 per cent and who knows where that will

go in the future under this government because they've been very clear that they are happy to reach deeper into seniors' pockets on Pharmacare - and if some of them drop out, they are fine with that.

Well we are not fine with that. No senior in this province should go without the medicines they need because of cost. If the government thinks they are saving money when they charge seniors more and some drop out, they are sadly mistaken. Not only is it morally wrong to push a senior out of the Pharmacare Program, we know that if they don't get the medicines they need they won't be able to stay in their homes and live actively and be out in the community, that because of the marvels of drugs that seniors are able to live active, healthy lives longer. But the minute that is taken away because of a greedy government, some will eventually end up in long-term care where the government will be looking after them at a much higher cost - or in our emergency rooms, God forbid, where they are going to need intense acute emergency assistance. What a falsehood that the government thought they could ever save money, or make life easier for seniors, by jacking up their premiums.

Now I do want to talk about the VLT revenue, the fact that it is jumping up by \$27 million in one year according to the budget. That one item on its own is more than the tiny surplus that they have conjured up. I don't know of any Nova Scotian who wants the government to try to create a balanced budget by increasing the VLT revenues. I cannot understand why the government would have it that way.

We've been asking about this in Question Period and I've heard the answers, Mr. Speaker. I've heard the answers that there are new machines and they are more entertaining - well let's put it another way, they are more addictive, and that's not right; that is the problem. When My-Play was cancelled and gamblers who are at risk were left at risk, which was well over a year and a half ago, nothing has come in to protect them.

Now we see this jump up in VLT revenues by \$27 million, another example of why the budget, the balance that they've conjured up, is just a fiction.

I'd like to go on for much longer but I believe my time is up. But as some members like to say, stay tuned.

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

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: There have been some really broad budget issues being questioned here with the recent budget that came out this week but I am going to narrow it down a little more specifically and refer back to some questions I asked of the Justice Minister earlier this week, and that relates to the Law Reform Commission.

The Law Reform Commission has had its funding cut. They had been receiving about \$185,000 from the province. They were also funded by the Law Foundation, approximately \$100,000.

I questioned the minister as to why and she provided an explanation indicating that they had had plenty of time to look for alternate funding, for a year. I think when you can understand the concept of the Law Reform Commission, you would understand how inappropriate it would be for them to do independent or private fundraising. It's really vital that their fundraising come from the province and the Law Foundation as it currently exists.

The commission - and I say this because it's vital that the commission maintain an arm's length. I believe they have proven successfully that they have been able to do that. The commission was formed in 1990. There are seven commissioners. They are appointed through the government ABCs. They have three staff. Their goal is to modernize and improve reform legislation.

The commission receives requests from all areas of the province, from governments, different caucuses, to do reviews of legislation. What they will do is they will reach out to judges and lawyers, academics, members of the public, who for free will sit on a committee and research that particular piece of legislation that they are addressing.

In speaking with the members from the commission, they've indicated to me that their many hours of free work that is dedicated to the commission, they've calculated it to be in excess of \$300,000 billable hours - that's \$300,000 worth of billable hours, and that doesn't even deal with the research and reading time.

When we think about what we are getting for virtually nothing, it's just incomprehensible to try to determine the rationale for cutting the funding to this valuable organization. Mr. Speaker. It is important for us to recognize that the work - and again I mentioned it before in Question Period - their focus is to deal with antiquated legislation.

Before I cite examples of that I also wanted to state that the minister also used, as a rationale for cutting the budget, that there is no longer a Canadian Law Reform Commission. I did point out that that was a commission that was cut under the Harper Government and it is my understanding that that position is being reconsidered.

There is also a suggestion that there are no other law reform agencies or very few throughout the country. Again I would like to stress that the law reform agencies, there are only four provinces in the country that do not have them. They may be called agencies as opposed to commissions but that's just a semantic difference. They do the same work, and all of these agencies are supported substantially by the government. The reason for that - there's a very practical reason, aside from the very crucial point of it being arm's-length. It also frees government departments. They simply don't have the capacity to undertake the amount of work that's involved to review the legislation.

Most recently, the Powers of Attorney Act was reviewed and a recommendation was forwarded to the minister, and again, the Matrimonial Property Act, which is seriously in need of revamping - they've done the work on that - but they go back to 1992.

Just as an example, we had what was called *Enforcement of maintenance obligations* in 1992. The Law Reform Commission reviewed it, and the end result was the Maintenance Enforcement Program under the Maintenance Enforcement Act, which was put out in 1994.

The reform of the jury system that resulted in the Juries Act in 1998 - *From rhetoric to reality: ending domestic violence in Nova Scotia* in 1995 - they recommended administrative reforms. In response, the province trained 2,000 people in appropriate responses to domestic violence and instituted a domestic violence monitoring committee.

*The Legal Status of the Child Born Outside of Marriage in Nova Scotia* - yes, in 1995 such a Statute existed in this province. Review by the Law Reform Commission resulted in the elimination of discrimination against illegitimate children in the Intestate Succession Act. That happened in 1999.

Adult guardianship and personal health care decisions - the Law Reform Commission provided background for the Personal Directives Act in 2008. The Department of Justice is currently examining reforms to the Incompetent Persons Act, and again, what better body than the Law Reform Commission to assist the government in that task?

Probate reform in 1999 resulted in the new Probate Act in 2000. Builders' liens resulted in the overhaul of the outdated Mechanics' Lien Act in 2004. Vexatious litigants - I'm not going to go through all of them, but I think it's really important to point that out. I will also point to *Grandparent-Grandchild: Access* in May 2007, which resulted in recognition of grandparents' rights to apply for access with leave of the court in 2012 and the inclusion of the "best interests of the child" factors in the Maintenance and Custody Act in 2013.

The work that has been done is unbelievable, and there are two really significant aspects too that I want to stress. One is that there is a business component to this, as you can see from some of the legislation - builders' liens, for example. When people are looking at coming into the province and investing in the province, they're concerned about and look at what types of laws we have and what types of regulations we have. If you don't go back and review this antiquated legislation, and businesses are concerned that they are going to be mired in unnecessary red tape, they will not be encouraged to come into Nova Scotia and invest in the province. That is a really significant component.

The other component is access to justice. The Law Reform Commission takes to heart this issue of access to justice. The Supreme Court of Canada, through Justice Thomas

Cromwell, initiated a huge study throughout the country with the goal of trying to improve people's access to justice. I think it's recognized - and I'm sure anyone in this Legislature knows someone, if they haven't experienced it directly themselves - how challenging it can be to proceed through the courts - not just through litigation, but even just whatever basic needs that a person may have when they are seeking legal advice.

Whenever they are reviewing their legislation, they view any new proposals through this lens of access to justice, how can we make this legislation more accessible to the public? So their role - I cannot stress sufficiently how significant this body has been.

I would also point out that I do have the record here of Hansard from 2000 when the honourable member for Cape Breton-Richmond spoke in the House and quoted how important the Law Reform Commission is. Rather than reading it, I believe I will just table those documents.

AN HON. MEMBER: Read it.

MS. MANCINI: Okay, I will then, since I do have the time,

“ . . . certainly as it has been pointed out by the member for Halifax Chebucto it is just another indicator of the importance of the Law Reform Commission as an independent body to sit back and review some of these different Acts that we have here in this province and try to point out to government some of the changes which should be made.”

Now who would have thought that he could be so eloquent?

“With all due respect to the staff in his department, I don't think they can ever replace the work that was being done by the Law Reform Commission . . . . It is with sincere hope that the minister and his government will reconsider the decision to cut funding to the Law Reform Commission and will, after seeing this type of legislation. I have no doubt the abundance of legislation being thrown at us by this government is certainly in no small part due to the hard work of the Law Reform Commission over the years and I hope the minister will reconsider that.”

I congratulate the member on his comments in that regard, and I will table those. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to address this portion of the proceedings, especially following the budget that has been introduced in the House this week. I had the opportunity earlier in the week, upon the introduction of the budget, to speak to some members of the media in my local area.

Of course, the question that was asked was, what's in the budget for Cumberland North - what's good in there for our area? The only answer that I really could come up with is it's all good because it's all good for Nova Scotians, and what's good for Nova Scotia is good for Cumberland North and all of the other ridings within the province.

Where do I start to explain all of the good things and the positive things that we've been able to do in the short time since being elected to office in 2013? I think I should start by talking about some of the things that we've changed and some of the things that we don't do anymore.

I think some of the most significant things to talk about under that category come under the heading of economic development. Cumberland North has, over decades, generations, certainly had its share of economic development projects and it has had its share of failed economic development projects. The old model of starting at the top and putting money at businesses and expecting those businesses to come in and give us something that we couldn't do for ourselves was a bad model, and I for one am very pleased that it's gone.

I have to say it's a very attractive model for politicians, and from that point of view I can understand why it's stuck around for so long. People are constantly asking me, when are you going to do something? When are you going to bring a business to Cumberland North? When are you going to bring an industry to Amherst? We need 100 jobs, we need 200 jobs. The attraction of that, Mr. Speaker, even as a politician and a representative is strong. Who would like to do anything more than stand there and cut a ribbon on 200 jobs?

But we've finally learned and we've finally decided that this is a hit-and-miss approach. It's done; we're through with it; it can't work anymore. What are we going to do, Mr. Speaker? We have an entirely new approach, I'll call it a foundational approach. We've got to do the small things and all the small things add up to big things and we have to start by building a strong foundation. How do we do that? We do it by focusing on Nova Scotians and on giving them the skills and the foundations they need to make our province a success.

Probably the thing I'd like to talk about most that is included in this budget is the high level of support that we are providing to the early childhood years for the children of our province and the people we give the responsibility to help our children. The early childhood educators shape our children's future. They do the things that we can't do. They provide an expertise that as parents we don't necessarily have. That's why I am particularly pleased to see the increased attention being paid to early intervention. That's a system that



identifies intellectual disabilities in children at a young age and puts those children on the right track towards receiving the support they need to develop and learn. That is very important to me.

The other very important part of this is the emphasis being placed on early childhood education and the support we have provided in this budget through \$6 million for early childhood educators and for subsidies towards daycare. Now it's an easy sell, Mr. Speaker, to say that we are going to spend this money just to provide good care to our children. If that was the only benefit of it, it would still be worthwhile.

One of the important things I think is being overlooked, with respect to this particular spending measure, is its role as an economic development tool. I see in my role as an MLA, and I saw in my previous role as a lawyer who represented numerous Legal Aid clients over 20 years, people who were in a position that they would go to work if they could afford to go to work. Being on assistance or some other form of support as a single parent, it's a wonderful opportunity that we do afford people in our society where they can have the ability and support to stay home and care for their children on a full-time basis. But they're also in a financial situation where if child care is required for them to leave the house and develop themselves as career-oriented individuals that they may have a financial barrier there to doing that, that they may not be able to afford the child care necessary to allow them to go out and go to work.

This measure that increases the subsidies for child care and provides a better wage for early childhood educators in that situation is an economic development measure that will allow those people to leave their homes and go out and ensure that their children are in good hands, while they further their careers.

The next important building blocks of this foundation that we are creating are in the classrooms across the province, in our primary education system, and in our secondary education system. Teachers work with our children and make our children into the vehicles that will shape the future of this province, and I have an extreme level of confidence in those people and the teachers of our province. I am extremely glad that our Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development under her guidance have listened to those teachers, asked them what they want, and have put in place an action plan that will help them to meet their needs, to properly educate our children in our classrooms. Teachers came back and told our minister that what they need are manageable class sizes, less paperwork, and a better, more streamlined curriculum.

The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development listened and in the budget this week we heard that class-size limits are being expanded from Primary to Grade 6, in order to give those features the support that they need to do what's necessary to help our children move on.

As a parent of three 20-somethings, I'm still somewhat occupied with the notion of getting the kids out the door and getting them off into their careers and helping them to establish themselves in the world. I'm extremely proud of my three boys and what they've done and what they continue to accomplish.

I was quite concerned about something that I heard here in this Chamber yesterday - a sentiment that was expressed by a member of this House during the time that we sat in the Public Accounts Committee. The member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River indicated in her questioning to the representatives of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education who were here that she had a fear - I think that was the way that she put it - that our post-secondary institutions were turning into, and I quote, Mr. Speaker, "little work factories," and I further quote, that they were going to be producing "little robots" who are to be leaving those institutions and going off into the workforce.

Well, I find that a very unfortunate sentiment. I've been a participant in our post-secondary education system; I've got a couple of university degrees, so I've spent approximately seven years in post-secondary institutions. I also have a diploma from the former Cumberland Regional Vocational School - a career-oriented institution, and a fine one it was. I've also spent some time as a part-time faculty member at the Nova Scotia Community College in their paralegal program - another excellent career-oriented institution.

My three boys all attended career-oriented colleges and I will assure you that they are not robots. They are creative individuals, they are athletes, they are musicians, and they produce visual arts. They are far from robots, and I think it is extremely unfortunate when the Opposition thinks that by focusing our post-secondary education system on preparing our children for the workforce, that's just - it's missing the point. It's missing the boat. It's so wrongheaded that it's not even comprehensible, Mr. Speaker.

The qualified, skilled, professional craftspeople that my sons have become are emblematic of what we need in the post-secondary institutions in this province. These are the kinds of people that we have to produce. They are well-rounded individuals who are prepared for life. Careers and jobs and work are a huge part of life.

The things that we are doing in this budget are starting with the youngest children. They are providing constant support and education to all children across the province, across all ages, so that they come out not only prepared for life but prepared for work and their jobs and their careers.

I just want to end by saying I am extremely proud of being a part of this government that has done so much to work on these foundational issues. We're building a strong, economically diverse Nova Scotia, one hard decision at a time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

The House will now have a short recess while we resolve ourselves into the Committee of the Whole on Supply.

[3:29 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CW on Supply with Deputy Speaker Mr. Keith Irving in the Chair.]

[7:40 p.m. CW on Supply rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Kevin Murphy, resumed the Chair.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole on Supply reports:

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and made considerable progress and begs leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Public Bills for Second Reading.

#### **PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 152.

#### **Bill No. 152 - Municipal Government Act and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 152, an Act to Amend Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998, the Municipal Government Act, and Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008, the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, be now read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is part of our government's attempts to reduce red tape in government. There has been a process in place for decades when it comes to debentures that are given out to municipalities that require municipalities to, in their application, actually have their physical seal on the documents. That forces all of our municipalities to apply with paper documents.

What this legislation will do is eliminate that requirement of a physical seal and actually bring these laws into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, in the digital age, which is something that we're very excited about and it probably should have happened sooner.

Mr. Speaker, just for the clarity of the House, there is the Municipal Finance Corporation which, through pooling the loans that are requested by our municipal units, is able to provide debentures at a cheaper rate from the lender. This will actually make that process easier, cheaper, and quicker for all of our municipal units, and I don't anticipate that there will be any opposition to this bill in the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for his brief words. I have very brief words as well, our caucus is obviously in favour of this. It's always important to find ways to reduce red tape and any kind of backlog of paperwork. Being able to modernize processes by making further use of technology is always important and I'm glad to see that this bill will allow the Municipal Finance Corporation to do that. So we all look forward to this bill passing. Thank you.

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

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I think maybe it's the hour, but my words will be very short on this. Anytime you can reduce red tape - I may have an issue with the word "red" tape - it's good to see the government simplify the process for municipalities and certainly, I think we're all eager for this to move on to Law Amendments Committee, and we look forward to having those insights. Thank you.

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

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make a few comments about this change in the municipal government charter. It states that a debenture shall be in the form approved by the council and signed by the mayor, warden, and clerk, and/or other designated person of council by policy, and sealed with the municipal seal.

This bill is proposing the seal not be required anymore and removed. Also, stakeholders who were provided with opportunities to engage and were informed through discussions at the Association of Municipal Administrators Board - and there's no anticipated cost to the province.

The amendments are required to be made by the Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter to allow for the Nova Scotia Municipal Finance Corporation to simplify its debenture process by going paperless; that is, the removal of

the use of the municipal seal. This will allow MFC to move the process along in a more efficient manner.

This amendment was required, as stated by the minister, as a minor housekeeping amendment, reducing red tape. The Municipal Finance Corporation issues debentures on behalf of the municipalities to help their finances and capital projects at a lower cost. I think we all believe that, and I'm hearing the Opposition's comments that they also feel this is an administrative bill and it's a good one to remove red tape, make things pass a little faster, and get debentures out to the municipalities at a quicker pace too. Thank you very much. That's it for me. I appreciate it.

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

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my colleagues for their support of this legislative change, and I'd like to move second reading of this bill so we can allow the public to provide their feedback on this at Law Amendments Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 152. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 154.

**Bill No. 154 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 154, an Act to Amend Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008, the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, be now read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, this is in continuation with our government's efforts to create a higher standard of accountability and transparency with our municipal financing during campaigns. In the Fall we brought forward legislative changes that enhanced the reporting for all our municipal units when it comes to the donations that candidates receive and the expenses that they incur throughout the course of municipal elections. This is a continuation of that work; it is a result of a specific request from HRM, particularly Mayor Savage - he has been a leader in terms of pushing for a more transparent, open, and

accountable expense regime within Halifax for municipal elections. This legislative change would be enabling for HRM to develop a bylaw around campaign financing.

There is a reason why this is going to be specific to HRM and not broad-based across the province, Mr. Speaker, because we need to recognize the unique situation that HRM is in because being our capital region, the amount of people, the amount of donations that come in is far greater than in other parts of the province where, in fact, some municipal councillors don't even fundraise or get any donations to run in their elections.

I'm very excited to move forward with this bill and give HRM a chance to develop a bylaw as they see fit around their municipal financing when it comes to election campaigns. This is not prescriptive in nature; it is simply enabling so that they are able to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Transparency and clear rules for campaign financing serve the interests of citizens and help to strengthen democracy. Having such rules in place helps to level the playing field, make elections fairer, and encourage Nova Scotians to put their names forward to run for elected office.

I am pleased that this bill will allow the Halifax Regional Municipal Council to come to an agreement and strengthen election financing. Being the largest municipality in the province, it would be a positive step forward to see clear and transparent rules. The timing of this bill is also very important considering municipal elections are taking place this Fall.

I recognize that there will be different opinions on council regarding the best way to improve the system, but it is my hope that the HRM Council will act to clarify rules and in the process increase voters' trust in the municipal elections. Thank you so much. As you can tell, we're in favour of this bill as well.

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

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, it's a delight to talk on Bill No. 154, the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. I can assure the members present in the House that this caucus does have some concerns.

Certainly, it treats HRM separately from all other municipalities across Nova Scotia, allowing HRM to set its own rules for election financing. The province is not providing any guidelines for the rules for election financing; that will be set by HRM themselves.

The power proposed to be granted is very wide and open for abuse. For example, HRM will be allowed to set the upper limits for contribution and who is eligible for that contribution.

I can assure the members here that I came from a municipal background and the limits of contributions at the municipal level. I know HRM is separate. In fact, I've seen very limited contributions, probably less than \$100, back in rural municipalities, so this particular issue has really jumped out at me.

If you're frequently watching the fundraising that's going on with our neighbour to the south, with donations - George Clooney, for instance, raised \$350,000 just to have a meal for an individual who was raising money. I'm making the extreme example here, and it's somewhere in between them that HRM is going to have to set that ceiling.

I'm going to leave you with one question to ponder. You can believe that HRM will set a maximum that will be somewhere in between those two ceilings, I would think. This is the question I want you to ponder before this bill goes off to Law Amendments: if HRM is allowed to set that amount, would not any councillor be in conflict if involved with a certain contractor who made a donation to that ceiling?

To me the question posed is, if that happens at HRM, that particular councillor would just declare conflict of interest. That's the question. So what are they trying to gain here? To me, I would say that that person dealing with the municipal issue, and if you have a \$10,000 or \$15,000 ceiling and is involved in a decision from a certain contractor, that he would simply declare conflict. To me that is a common-sense approach.

I look forward to this going off to Law Amendments and seeing if other people have that same concern.

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

MR. BILL HORNE: I am pleased to rise and comment on this. I was a municipal councillor, and I think the guidance that we can get from our changing of this amendment to allow Halifax to have the authority to enact bylaws with respect to campaign financing for elections for Halifax Council, I think that's a very simple request that allows they municipality to decide what the limit will be, who you can get funding from, and whether it's a contract or personal residents of the community.

So I think it's about time that we get those levels set because Halifax Regional Municipality - when I was helping Councillor Dalrymple to get elected over the last two elections his costs incurred running for council the first year was around \$27,000 and the second time \$35,000. That's a lot of money and you should know where this money is coming from, and maybe what you say is fine, "use their own conscience", but a lot of

times the councillor or the potential councillor doesn't know where that money is coming from, and they shouldn't know who it's coming from is my personal thought.

At any rate, the Halifax Regional Council has expressed that the current rules of the Municipal Government Act are not extensive enough for the level of campaign financing that is currently taking place in HRM. You have to thank our Minister of Municipal Affairs for his foresight in recognizing the importance of this administrative issue. It's great that we are supporting the municipalities. And this would go for other municipalities, but other than the Regional Municipality of Cape Breton, they may be in the same levels types of costing for financing. Smaller municipalities, probably it's not necessary.

Also, UNSM has demonstrated support. A thorough consultation over municipalities voiced that we're not interested in having this change through the MGA - not enough funds raised to warrant that change.

I think the biggest part that should be talked about is the Minister of Municipal Affairs is on record of saying transparency and accountability are important to citizens and to all levels of government, particularly in the democratic process of elections. Halifax Regional Council asked for the authority to make bylaws around municipal election campaign financing. So, we are making this change to their charter to allow them to do that.

I'll return to my seat, and thank you very much for the time in listening to those comments.

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

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues for their comments and I would like to thank the Progressive Conservative caucus for the support of this bill. I will say I found the position of the NDP on this to be ambiguous to say the least.

To answer the question related to conflict of interest that the member for Queens-Shelburne raised, I will say that that was not contemplated in the development of these legislative changes simply because we do have a conflict of interest policy in place that our municipal units do follow. HRM has one and, of course, our full expectation would be that they comply with that.

In the case of anybody not complying with a conflict of interest law, we do have a conflict of interest commissioner officer who actually has been recently involved in one such case in one of our municipalities. So, to answer that specific question, no, that was



not included in these because that framework does currently exist with the right enforcement in place to deal with such situations as they arise.

Again, this is in the spirit of increasing the level of accountability, transparency, and openness, when it comes to campaign financing for HRM recognizing their specific, unique situation as our large capital region and the amount of dollars that are used for campaigns here.

The mayor has been a leader, along with his council, in terms of pushing this agenda forward, and we've been very happy to partner with them as we move through this legislative process. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 154. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 156.

**Bill No. 156 - Public Archives Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I move that the bill now be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House of Assembly I introduced Bill No. 156, Amendments to the Nova Scotia Public Archives Act. The Public Archives of Nova Scotia is a significant cultural institution in this province. It connects Nova Scotians to their past, by ensuring that their documentary heritage is preserved and made available for all Nova Scotians. It shows leadership by engaging the public through social media and online collections. It also shows leadership through participation in cultural related events, like Nocturne.

Let me give you an example. This year during Nocturne, the Public Archives invited people to see themselves in the photographs of Wallace MacAskill, by projecting an image on the screen and allowing people to stand in front of that image to take selfies. People lined up for this, which is a reminder of the significance of our past in our daily lives.

In preparation for Heritage Day 2016, the Archives staff digitized and made available a scrapbook created by Joseph Howe's son about his father's life and significance. The Archives also provided online access to the No. 2 Construction Battalion Nominal Roll, during African Heritage Month. The roll lists names of all men in the battalion. That will be a resource for people across Canada, in the United States, and the Caribbean who have an ancestor that was a member of that battalion.

So much of the achievements of people of African descent remain unknown and documents like this help to uncover the history and give families and communities pride. Likewise, the work of making Nova Scotia's historical newspapers available online will help researchers and others, to learn more about their local community history, even to experience a bit of Nova Scotia's past.

This Spring, we want to modernize the legislation that shapes this institution. Staff at the Public Archives and the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage consulted with stakeholders on proposed changes. Those stakeholders are the people in this province who are most interested in this work such as the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society, the Council of Nova Scotia Archives, the Genealogical Society of Nova Scotia, and of course, the Public Archives Board and the Department of Internal Services. Their feedback was an important contribution to the amendments.

The amendments we propose accomplish four goals: to ensure that the legislation reflects government practice and accountability regarding records management; to clarify the mandate of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, that it is for the benefit of current and future generations and that it assists the province's archival community; to clarify the role of the Board of Trustees and to change the name of the board that better reflects its advisory role; and to better engage stakeholders in the work of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia.

An important reason to update the legislation was that in 2009, government changed the accountability of its records management, including associated training. That work now resides with the Department of Internal Services, under the Government Records Act, which is also being amended to reflect this change.

As well, archival practices have changed over the years, so the Act needs to change to provide proper legislative support for current standards and best practices. For example, the Archives has always ensured that the public can access the records it preserves.

How it ensures public access has changed with the Internet. Archive staff have been digitizing large parts of the collection in recent years so that people can explore their heritage from their home computers at any time of the day or night. For researchers working at home and for all others, when the Archives building is closed, they can access those records online.

The role of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia in supporting the province's archival community, and also to better reflect in the legislation - we have made that happen by

including language that specifically names this function. We need to clarify the role of the Public Archives Board of Trustees as well. The board advises the provincial archivist and will now be known as the Advisory Board of the Public Archives.

It also plays a role in engaging the archival community in the institution, and we introduced a new concept to the Act. Board members should bring information, assistance, and ideas about archival matters directly from the stakeholders and related communities to the Archives. This is a particularly exciting opportunity for the Public Archives, and we are sure it will be exciting for the broader community as well. It should prove to be useful and engaging for our most interested stakeholders.

An advisory board should not be responsible or accountable for gifts, bequests, trust funds, or amounts received by the province for the Public Archives. An amendment to the Act states that these will be managed by the provincial archivist.

Future board members will be approved by the minister instead of the Governor in Council. However, the board continues to make recommendations to the minister; that does not change. We have also moved some of the wording about board composition to regulations. Those will be developed over time, in consultation with stakeholders. This will provide more opportunities for Nova Scotians to participate in the board's activities.

Mr. Speaker, the Public Archives has done an excellent job of expanding its public outreach, and we want to ensure that its role in giving the public access to their culture and heritage is appropriately supported in legislation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for his comments. I am pleased to stand here myself and speak to Bill No. 156.

Nova Scotia is a province steeped in culture. It's a place where people take pride in reciting their family tree back many, many generations. "Who is your father's father?" is a uniquely Nova Scotian question that speaks to the pride we have in our past and the value we place on our culture.

The legislation has an element of housekeeping to it, but it would be a mistake to minimize the importance of the Public Archives. For history buffs, it's a treasure trove. The Archives acquires, preserves, and makes available to the province's documentary heritage recorded information of provincial significance created or accumulated by government and the private sector over the last 300 years. It's one of Canada's oldest archival institutions, and this bill ensures that the excellence the Archives is known for will continue because of the enhanced accountability and transparency that this bill will create.

It ensures that Nova Scotians, researchers, and visitors will continue to have access to this collection. I am particularly pleased that the Archives' work to digitize the collection is ongoing. All of us with kids know that the Internet is their primary source of information. By putting the collection online, the Archives is strengthening the ties of our kids and how they feel towards history and our culture.

We will watch with interest as the regulations governing the composition of the advisory board of the Public Archives are developed. I am hopeful that they will truly represent the diversity of our province. The Archives is such a valuable institution and I think we would all agree with that in this Chamber. I hope as these changes are made, more Nova Scotians will become aware of the collections and of course the important work that they do.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, I think the comments that have gone before me have been very well articulated to explain the importance of this particular Act. The maintenance of historical records is, of course, crucial. This particular piece of legislation is dealing with housekeeping issues. It's dealing with making important clarifications especially with regard to the mandate and clarifying the role of the Public Archivist. It is ensuring that there is enduring public access to the records that are maintained at the Archives. There's also clarity on the process for destruction of any public records. I'm pleased to support this. Our caucus supports the amendments as proposed. It is certainly in the public good in that it achieves and improves accessibility for all Nova Scotians.

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

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I just want to speak briefly on this legislation, in particular just to acknowledge that I have a number of former colleagues who actually do research and rely heavily on the resources that are available in the Public Archives. So while I haven't spoken to them about this legislation in particular directly, I do know how much they've commented on the support and the work of the people who work in the Archives for the province, and I just wanted to acknowledge that hard work. On behalf of those colleagues who I've worked with and others across the province who make use of those resources, I just wanted to acknowledge the work of the minister and this legislation's role of continuing to improve the work being done there.

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

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

HON. TONY INCE: I'd like to thank the members across the floor for their support of this bill. I'd also like to thank my colleague the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board for his nice words. Mr. Speaker, I now move to close second reading on this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 156. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 157.

**Bill No. 157 - Government Records Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Internal Services.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I move that a bill to amend the Government Records Act be read a second time.

The proposed amendments to the Government Records Act are an opportunity to demonstrate government's commitment to standardizing and streamlining the way it manages operations, including record keeping - I will not say red tape reduction, Mr. Speaker, it has been said enough.

Internal Services supports the public sector to deliver the programs Nova Scotians rely on. We are keenly focused on delivering our programs and services efficiently and effectively. Internal Services is positioned to meet our goals so other departments can focus on delivering important programs to Nova Scotians.

Our initiatives, including today's amendments to the Government Records Act, all aim to ensure quality and sustainable services for Nova Scotians. Today's legislation is important for several reasons. First, it will streamline records management processes and provide clear direction on requirements and responsibilities. For example, the Act currently contains a number of details around the process for reviewing and approving record schedules. In order to streamline the process, procedural details will be removed from the Act. Essential oversight requirements will still be maintained.

Second, a new framework for common record schedules will also be created and shared across government. This new framework will make it easier for departments and agencies to follow government-wide standards and benefit from centralized resources and services. Today's changes will mean greater efficiencies in records management, consistent records management processes throughout government, and increased

standardization. This will allow government to better leverage existing centralized resources and support this work.

The bill also reflects changes to the organizational structures of government. Records management used to be part of the Public Archives but is now part of Internal Services. The Act will be updated to reflect the structure. Similar amendments will be made to the Public Archives Act today to reflect the current structure.

On that note, Mr. Speaker, I shall take my seat and I look forward to hearing from other members regarding this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: We are pleased to see these changes to the Government Records Act. Some of the changes reflect the transition of the records management functions from the Public Archives of Nova Scotia to the Chief Information Office. I'll carry on there, Mr. Speaker.

Since that change began in 2009 it is past time for the legislation to catch up. We are hopeful that the changes in this bill will result in improvements to the current records management process. Clear, standardized, consistent records lead to greater transparency, openness, and accountability.

I note that the Government of British Columbia's Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services has developed a range of guides, fact sheets and online modules to support the effective management of government records. I hope the minister has examined this system, which appears to have informative tools for staff and others who deal with government records.

The Government of Alberta has an information management website. This site provides information on the management of the Government of Alberta information assets. This is a place to find tools and resources on the corporate records management program. It also provides access to information produced by Service Alberta, the Provincial Archives of Alberta, and other government entities to effectively manage information and all media. This is another excellent example of openness and accountability.

Mr. Speaker, we will watch with interest as this process goes forward in our province and hope the minister will provide the House with updates. With those few words, I will take my place.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: I'm glad to take a few moments to talk on Bill No. 157. Ensuring that our laws are modern and reflect present-day reality is critical, I believe, in

this day and age of government records, and government records are no exception, Mr. Speaker.

The archives acquire, preserve and make available the province's documentary history, recorded information of provincial significance accumulated by government and the private sector, and has been doing so for over 300 years. Our government records are incredibly important documents that should be protected by government and I'm encouraged, Mr. Speaker, to see this bill address keeping our records safe, accurate and reliable.

We do have some questions around the necessity to repeal the provision that actually makes the provincial archivist Chair of the Government Records Committee. I know the change will now allow for the minister to have responsibility to approve two public figures, not Executive Council.

We look forward to this going to Law Amendments Committee and maybe some explanation on why the provincial archivist will no longer be chairman, but we're glad to see this go through the process. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Internal Services.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the members for their comments and feedback to the bill. I rise to close debate on this bill to amend the Government Records Act. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 157. 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, that concludes the government's business for today. The House will meet again tomorrow, Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, from the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Following the daily routine and Question Period we will return to debate on Supply, also possibly second reading of the bills introduced today, which are Bill Nos. 158 and 160.

Mr. Speaker, I can also advise for those who are following, the Committee on Law Amendments will meet on Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 a.m., during which time the following bills will be considered: Bill Nos. 149, 152, 154, 156 and 157.

Mr. Speaker, for the members' information, the House will be meeting on Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., just so that members can plan their weekend accordingly.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow morning.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again tomorrow, Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The House now stands adjourned until Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 9:00 a.m.

[The House rose at 8:23 p.m.]



---

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 3183**

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Wayne Wolfe is a long-term resident of the Eastern Shore and currently has been living in Musquodoboit Harbour for many years; and

Whereas Wayne is a retired schoolteacher and long-time volunteer with numerous minor sports associations; and

Whereas Wayne, a physical education teacher, had instilled in his students the importance of being physically active;

Therefore be it resolved that that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Wayne Wolfe for making a positive difference for students of the Eastern Shore and wish him well in his retirement.

**RESOLUTION NO. 3184**

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Deanna Baker is a long-time resident of the Eastern Shore and has been actively involved in her community; and

Whereas Deanna is a volunteer with the Eastern Shore Minor Hockey Association; and

Whereas Deanna is always willing to lend a hand with whatever needs the minor hockey association has;

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

**RESOLUTION 3185**

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Mabel Stevens is a long-time resident of Musquodoboit Harbour and has been actively involved in her community; and

Whereas Mabel was a nurse at The Birches Nursing Home in Musquodoboit Harbour; and

Whereas Mabel was a softball coach for boys and girls and an active member of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Musquodoboit Harbour and District Volunteer Fire Department;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Mabel Stevens for giving her time and talents for the betterment of the Eastern Shore.

**RESOLUTION 3186**

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Weldon Hopkins is a lifelong resident of East Jeddore and has been actively involved in his community most of his life; and

Whereas Weldon is a member of the Jeddore United Baptist Church helping with many parish functions; and

Whereas Weldon helps individuals within his community by assisting with transportation needs for errands and appointments;

Therefore be it resolved members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking Weldon Hopkins for giving his time and talents for the betterment of residents of his community along the Eastern Shore.