



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS**

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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**Second Session**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2016**

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House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**HALIFAX, FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2016**

**Sixty-second General Assembly**

**Second Session**

**9:00 A.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

**DEPUTY SPEAKERS**

Mr. Gordon Wilson, Mr. Keith Irving

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Before we move on to the daily routine, allow me to make an introduction and make mention that a familiar face is in the House: Michael Gorman of *The Halifax Chronicle Herald*. It's his last day covering us here at the Legislature. (Standing Ovation)

On behalf of all members, I do want to say a hearty thank you for your fair and meticulous coverage of our proceedings here over the last couple of years. We've enjoyed having you, and we want to wish you all the best in your new venture over at CBC - although you have to work with that guy there. (Laughter)

We will 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 Environment.

**RESOLUTION NO. 3188**

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

Whereas today, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, is Earth Day; and

Whereas Nova Scotians are strong environmental stewards through many actions, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and according to the 2014 results of Canada's GHG inventory our province tops the list of provinces, not including territories, with GHG reductions, 29 per cent . . .

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

MS. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So let me see - our province tops the list of provinces, not including territories, with GHG reductions, 29 per cent below 2005 levels and 17 per cent below 1990 limits; and

Whereas everyone loves the earth and it needs our help all year long;

Therefore be it resolved that we all recognize today as Earth Day by making a personal commitment to reduce our environmental footprint to protect our air, land, and water, to ensure a healthy and sustainable world for all of us.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to do an introduction, if I may, before I read my notice of motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the west gallery where we have with us two very special guests today. These two individuals are making a difference in our community; they are raising their voices and moving our community towards action against gun violence. They are organizing a rally and peace march for this Sunday in response to the recent fatal shootings in our community. They are making a positive and powerful contribution to our city.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce Quentrel Provo, founder of Stop the Violence, and Tracey Williams, a community activist. I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 3189**

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

Whereas over the past few days and weeks Halifax and Dartmouth have seen three shootings, two resulting in the tragic loss of life; and

Whereas this senseless violence has no place in our city, or in any community within our province; and

Whereas our police and citizen-led groups, such as Stop the Violence and Ceasefire, are organizing their communities and raising their voices to address gun violence;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join with our police and our community leaders to denounce this violence, to support the peace rallies, including the one scheduled for Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, and to thank Stop the Violence and Ceasefire and other community groups for working tirelessly to make a difference in our communities.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.



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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 3190**

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

Whereas every day health care teams across our province touch the lives of thousands of our friends, families, and neighbours; and

Whereas the addition of a new linear accelerator in Cape Breton will help to continue to provide safe, quality care that the Cape Breton Cancer Centre is known for; and

Whereas the addition of this new equipment is made possible through the dedicated fundraising efforts of our foundations, auxiliaries, and many other partners;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature recognize the generosity of Cape Bretoners and the commitment of hundreds of donors to enhance cancer care in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 3191**

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

Whereas 11-year-old Marc Timmons has found his passion by using chainsaws to turn logs into works of art, creating a small business and receiving recognition by winning first prize at a local 4H competition; and

Whereas during a March break trip to New Brunswick with his family, Marc spent two days with professional carver Joel Palmer, who met with him last summer at a carving competition in British Columbia, learning new techniques; and

Whereas Marc has carved Christmas trees, bears, fish, decorations, pumpkins, and an owl, and sold them through his Facebook page and at last year's Christmas market, where he sold out in a few hours and used some of his earnings to buy three chainsaws and plans to buy sanders;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in wishing young Nova Scotian artist and entrepreneur Marc Timmons much success in his business endeavours.

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 member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

MS. JOYCE TREEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave for an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. TREEN: Thank you. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the east gallery, where there are many special guests with us today. Something will be happening later on today that's really exciting and involves these individuals. I'm very happy to have them here today. There are many service dog teams here, as well as a guide team and a trauma dog team here with us today.

I would like to introduce Medric Cousineau and his service dog, Thai; Jocelyn Cousineau and his service dog, Munich; Kim Gingell with her service dog, Omega; Kevin Johnson and his service dog, Maggie; Lisa Partridge and her professional therapy dog,

Rocsie; and Milena Khazanavicius and her guide dog, Louis. I ask that all our guests rise and that everyone give them the warm welcome of the House. (Standing Ovation)

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

#### **Bill No. 161 - Entitled an Act Respecting Service Dogs. (Hon. Diana Whalen)**

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

### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

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

Whereas Rachel Brouwer is an exceptional Grade 9 student at Bedford Academy who has designed her own solar water pasteurization system made of inexpensive, easily-accessible materials found in Third World and developing countries, an invention that earned her a gold medal in the Canada-Wide Science Fair, among many other awards, and which a number of countries are now using to purify water; and

Whereas Rachel is a role model for many people young and old for her extensive volunteer commitments including, but not limited to, working at her school's leadership program, working with young students, offering computer assistance for seniors, and also volunteering with Earth Day, a Christmas light campaign, Feed Nova Scotia, War Child, the Terry Fox Foundation, and fundraising for the IWK; and

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Awards honoured Rachel on Sunday with their annual Youth Volunteer of the Year award;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Rachel Brouwer on her tremendous achievements, alleviating water and security, and volunteering and fundraising. She is a truly inspirational young woman.

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

MR. SPEAKER: I'd like to remind all members that congratulatory resolutions are to be tabled, not to be read. Therefore, the resolution is out of order, but feel free to table it.

### **STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

**BUCHANAN, HON. JOHN - BIRTHDAY (85<sup>th</sup>)**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, today marks the 85<sup>th</sup> birthday of Nova Scotia's 20<sup>th</sup> Premier, John Buchanan.

Investing in Cape Breton, stabilizing energy costs, creating jobs by opening new mines, developing offshore resources, and building the first tidal power project are just a few of the highlights of his four consecutive terms as Premier of Nova Scotia. In 1990, after 12 years of governing, Premier Buchanan was called to national public service in the Senate of Canada.

John Buchanan is a devoted family man taking great pride in his loving wife, Mavis, and their five children. So today it is a true pleasure to mark the senator's 85<sup>th</sup> birthday in this place where he reigned for so long, and send along our best wishes for many more happy and healthy years to come.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**PROVO, QUENTREL: SAFER COMMUNITIES - EFFORTS**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, recent violence in Halifax has caused distress among many citizens. We're not yet halfway through 2016, and we've already seen two-thirds of the number of violent deaths in the city as there were in 2015.

There are people fighting back against this violence, and one such person that we were introduced to today is Quentrel Provo, who helped form the Stop the Violence organization, who speaks up regularly for the residents of North Preston, and who is organizing a march against violence in north end Halifax this coming Sunday.

The NDP caucus would like to acknowledge the work of Mr. Provo and what he has done in helping people get off the streets and out of violence, and his tireless efforts to build safer communities across HRM.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**SEMPLE, DWAYNE - LT.-GOV.'S MEDAL**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, on October 29, 2015, Lieutenant Governor J.J. Grant presented 14 Nova Scotia paramedics with the Exemplary Service Medal during a ceremony at Province House.

The Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal was created in 1994 as part of a national recognition program. To be a recipient of this medal, paramedics must

have shown exemplary service for at least 20 years, with at least 10 years in a position that could put them at risk. They are nominated by their peers or the public.

Dwayne Semple of Tatamagouche, Colchester North, was one of the recipients of this medal. He has worked as a field paramedic; operations supervisor; educator; quality control paramedic; advanced chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, explosive responder; certified information security manager, peer referral agent, and leader. He has completed six years as the regional operations manager for Emergency Health Services Northeastern Nova Scotia, and is currently manager of provincial programs.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

### **PASSOVER GREETINGS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, today people of the Jewish faith celebrate the festival of Passover. Passover commemorates the liberation of the Jewish people from the slavery of Egypt, and their freedom as a nation under the leadership of Moses.

Today I wish Nova Scotia's Jewish community a Spring fresh with new promises and a Passover full of joy; in other words, boker tov. Happy Passover.

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

### **EARTH DAY (04/22/16) - PARTICIPATE**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, the NDP caucus would like to acknowledge that today, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, is Earth Day. The first Earth Day in 1970 mobilized millions of Americans, and today over one billion people in 192 countries will participate in Earth Day activities.

The global network of Earth Day organizations have an ambitious campaign leading up to their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2020. Their goal is to plant 7.8 billion trees, one for every person on the planet. Trees absorb harmful CO<sub>2</sub> from our atmosphere; tree planting also has a direct correlation to reduced crime rates, increased property rates, reduced litter, and a number of other social and psychological benefits - and, Mr. Speaker, they're beautiful.

I encourage all Nova Scotians to participate in an Earth Day event in their community - and let's help grow our global forest.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**MOSSMAN, RUSSELL - LUNENBURG TOWN VOL. OF YR.**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to take the time to recognize Russell Mossman. Russell was recently recognized by the province, at the Nova Scotia Provincial Volunteer Awards, as the Volunteer of the Year for the Town of Lunenburg.

A volunteer firefighter for 44 years, he established the Canadian Firefighters Provincial Association in 1974 and participated in numerous National Canadian Firefighting Championships. Upon his retirement from active fire service, eight years ago, he became a member of the Honorary Firefighters Association. For the past 20 years Russell has been a dedicated member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 23, having served on many committees. He is best known there for his leadership of the Monthly Community Breakfast Program - on tomorrow. He also chaired the Nova Scotia Fisheries Exhibition's fish filleting and scallop shucking competitions for 30 years, and is an active member of the Lunenburg Curling Club Master's Program, having also served on the Town of Lunenburg's Recreation Committee for eight years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of the House join me in congratulating Russell Mossman on being named Nova Scotia's Provincial Volunteer Award winner as the Volunteer of the Year for the Town of Lunenburg. Thank you.

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

**NEWELL, IRENE (100<sup>th</sup>)**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to pay tribute today to a remarkable woman from the constituency of Argyle-Barrington, who is celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Widowed at a young age, Irene Newell raised three young daughters on her own, with almost no money. She lived a very humble lifestyle and looks forward to visits from her family every day. Irene still lives in the same home where she raised her family - lives independently with no home care, doing all her banking, grocery shopping, cooking, and cleaning on her own.

I'd like to ask all members to join me in congratulating Mrs. Irene Newell on 100 years of a well-lived life. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**QUEENS-SHELBURNE - HEALTH AUTH.: BENEFITS - TIME FRAME**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, during the last election the Liberal Premier promised every Nova Scotian would have access to a family doctor. Well this promise has fallen short right across Nova Scotia, in rural areas like Cape Breton, Lunenburg - oh yes, and Queens-Shelburne at the Roseway Hospital. With administration costs on the rise for the super health authority, an additional \$1.4 million in this year's budget alone, the people of Queens-Shelburne are left wondering when they will see the benefits of this new super health board.

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, it's time for another apology from the Premier, this time paid by the Liberal Party and not the people of Queens-Shelburne.

Mr. Speaker, to be continued.

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

**MACFARLANE, G. SHANE: BADDECK VOL. FD - SERV. (50 YRS.)**

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge G. Shane MacFarlane, for his over 50 years of service to the Baddeck Volunteer Fire Department. For many years Shane has been a dedicated community leader and volunteer. Aside from his service with the Baddeck Volunteer Fire Department, Shane has also served as chair of the Baddeck Village Commission, chair of the Silver Dart Centennial Association, chair of the Cape Breton Firefighters Fraternal Association, and as a member of the Baddeck Lions Club for over 49 years.

Mr. Speaker, Shane is a true community leader, one of those who always says "yes" when asked to volunteer his time for community services. Please join me in thanking him for his many contributions to the community over his many years of service.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**PICTOU CO. BLACK HOMECOMING - HISTORICAL BROCHURE**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, 25 years ago Pictou County celebrated its first Black Homecoming. People who moved away from the area were making plans to come home to visit with family and friends. Sandra Andersen and co-worker Jack Kyte decided to create a brochure to have available for local residents and visitors participating in the homecoming. They wanted people to know why it is important to celebrate their history, accomplishments, and individuals who made a difference.

The church has always played an important role in the Black community, and it was and continues to be a very solid foundation for them. The historical brochure was placed

in the Heritage Room of the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library. Students continue to use the information as a reference when completing research papers.

Thanks to Sandra and Jack for their interest and desire to gather historical facts and dates from the people who have lived for years in this area.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

### **INTRANSIGENCE: DEFINITION - ACCOMPANYING PHOTO**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: The report prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers on the economic impact of the Film Tax Credit has provided irrefutable evidence that the tax credit created great economic benefit to the province. A two-minute video has been created to communicate the report's findings. You can easily find the video by doing a Google search for "Anthem for the Nova Scotia Screen Industry." This video is not to be missed; it is informative and it beautifully captures the splendor of the Nova Scotia landscape.

I recently had cause to look up the definition of "intransigence." It is defined as the refusal to compromise or to abandon an extreme position or attitude, despite strong evidence to the contrary, so I wasn't too surprised to see the Premier's picture next to that definition.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

### **HORTON, JOHN - GOLF DISTINGUISHED SERV. AWARD**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise to acknowledge Wolfville resident John Horton, who was honoured on February 27, 2016, by Golf Canada with the Distinguished Service Award. John has spent more than 40 years promoting the game he loves and has served as the 60<sup>th</sup> President of the Nova Scotia Golf Association.

Ken-Wo Golf Club in New Minas is fortunate to call him a dedicated and active member. He has served on the board of directors and is chairman of the junior development program. He also has become an active provincial- and national-level volunteer, championing the growth of junior golf in Canada, and officiating at golf championships from the local to national level.

On behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, I would like to extend to Mr. John Horton our sincere congratulations on the recognition of his lifetime contribution to the game of golf.

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



**O'CONNELL, BETH: 4-H KEVIN GRANT MEM. LEADERSHIP TOUR**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, each year the Kevin Grant Memorial Leadership Tour is awarded to provincial 4-H members to learn more about specific regions of our province. The tour includes rural community leaders and local area resource-based businesses and rural employers including agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, mining, and value-added facilities. They are also engaged in conference-style meetings with local community groups such as Lions, Kinsmen, and Rotary Clubs to learn the impacts their services have in communities.

This past March break, Beth O'Connell from the Stewiacke Valley 4-H Club, and 16 other award recipients, started their tour at the Perennia Innovation Centre in Bible Hill, before moving on through East Hants and Halifax.

I wish to congratulate the recipients of the award and commend these future leaders on their hard work and dedication. I hope they were inspired on their tours.

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

**LEJEUNE, CLIFF: NATL. DANCE WK. - CONGRATS.**

MS. LENORE ZANN: As NDP Critic for Communities, Culture and Heritage, I'd like to acknowledge that today, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, marks the beginning of National Dance Week.

The words "never stop moving" were once said by renowned dance teacher Luigi Faccuito, who, after a tragic car accident left him paralyzed, used this mantra to inspire a rehabilitative dance technique that helped him regain complete control of his body and continue dancing.

So today, marking the beginning of National Dance Week, I want to offer my best wishes to the dance community of Nova Scotia. From highland dance programs at the Gaelic College to hip hop classes in Halifax, dance is an expression of culture, history, and emotion. It can help young people get off the street, encourage fun ways to stay active and healthy, or simply teach the benefits of discipline and hard work. I want to acknowledge all dancers as they celebrate this week, and encourage them all to never stop moving.

I'd also particularly like to congratulate (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'm having trouble hearing the speaker.

Go ahead, honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River.

MS. ZANN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. I think culture and arts and dance need to be appreciated, and I really appreciate that.

MR. SPEAKER: Your member's statement, please.

MS. ZANN: I would like to congratulate Mr. Cliff LeJeune, the executive director of Dance Nova Scotia, who has choreographed, directed, and performed for many, many years.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

### **LOCAL AUTHORS - SUPPORT**

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on March 18<sup>th</sup>, I opened my office to the community for a family literacy event. Beyond the opportunity for the community to come together to share in the importance of literacy, we recognized the sometimes-overlooked contribution of local authors. One such East Hants author is Jay Underwood.

Mr. Underwood, who passed away in 2014, was a long-time resident of Elmsdale and led a full life of interesting experiences. Highly respected as a veteran community journalist and editor, it was his passion for the railway that fuelled his writings. Some of these works include *Kings of the Iron Road: Stories of the Men Who Made Nova Scotia Railways Work*, and *Built for War: Canada's Intercolonial Railway*. Ultimately, he published 14 books, most on the history of rail.

In 2010, Mr. Underwood established Penny Dreadful Publishing, assisting four other authors to publish their works. This commitment to developing writing talent was further evident in his leading role in independent writers' roundtables and as a long-serving judge for the Colchester East Hants Regional Library Teen Writing Awards.

Mr. Speaker, this is but one example of talented authors in our communities. I encourage everyone to find a local author and support them as they tell our stories.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

### **VELDHOVEN, GERALD - SEXUAL HEALTH (N.S.) SEXCELLENCE AWARD**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I am honoured to rise and congratulate activist Gerald Veldhoven for receiving Sexual Health Nova Scotia's Sexcellence Award for his tremendous work in support of the LGBTQ community. Gerald is a very active community member in Pictou County. He likens his community activism to a full-time job, writing many articles and speaking at various engagements regarding LGBTQ causes. Gerald has also spearheaded Pictou County's annual Pride Week celebrations.

Mr. Speaker, this award is intended to signify outstanding work and leadership within the field of sexual health for Nova Scotians, and I cannot think of a more deserving recipient. Congratulations to Gerald.

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

### **NOVA STAR - CREDITORS**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Nova Star still owes 216 creditors their money. The Premier has promised to meet with those companies on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

One group still looking to get paid is a Portland-based burlesque dancing company. For months and months, I have been calling on this government to pay Nova Scotia's piper, with no action from this government. I'm left wondering if the Premier, in his meeting with these creditors, will show more interest in the Portland burlesque company than our homegrown Nova Scotia bagpiper. It's high time someone paid the piper.

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

### **RAE'S AWARENESS WALK**

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer acknowledgement of an event shared by our community. On April 9<sup>th</sup>, I took part in Rae's Awareness Walk, in memory of Rehtaeh Parsons. The Rehtaeh Parsons Society, led by Leah Parsons, holds this event in Cole Harbour every year and this year the event had its best turnout ever - over 200 people of all ages were in attendance and everyone was engaged in commemorating a young woman's life and discussing how her death must be the catalyst to bring about change in how sexualized violence affects the lives of thousands of young girls just like Rehtaeh every day.

Our community lost a bright light on April 7, 2013. The Rehtaeh Parsons Society has led an extraordinary effort to kindle light in each of us to make sure that this never happens to one of our community members again, especially young ones. I commend the work done by the organizations and extend many thanks to all community members in attendance at Rae's Walk for Awareness 2016.

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

### **JAMES HANLEY MEM. FLOOR HOCKEY TOURNAMENT - FUNDRAISING**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring the attention of the House to the caring people we are fortunate to have in our constituencies. Recently the Third Annual James Hanley Campbell Memorial Floor Hockey Tournament made a donation of \$2,272.50 to the Cape Breton Regional Hospital Foundation's Pediatrics TLC

fund. The fund supports sick children and their families treated in the Pediatrics Unit at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital.

The tournament was held February 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> at the George D. Lewis School in Louisbourg. I ask all members to join me in thanking and congratulating all the participants who took part in this very worthwhile cause.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

### **GRIMM, ELVA: VOL. EFFORTS - THANK**

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize an amazing volunteer in my community. At the age of 96, Elva Grimm is an active volunteer for the South Shore Regional Hospital. Elva has been knitting sweaters and hats for newborns for the last number of years, averaging a set a week. She was recognized last year by the hospital for her contribution and I thought it appropriate for all of us to take a moment to celebrate Elva as well.

The sweater sets can be found in the hospital gift shop with all the proceeds going back to the hospital foundation. I'd like to take this opportunity for all members of the Legislature to thank Elva Grimm for her many years of volunteer work and wish her good health and happiness.

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

### **COATES, ERIN - BOSTON MARATHON**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Erin Coates, the Grade 5/6 teacher at École Burton Ettinger School and a wonderful member of Fairview-Clayton Park. Known for her kindness, dedication and positive spirit, Erin is loved by her students and fellow staff members.

This week Erin took on a personal challenge in running in and completing the Boston Marathon. Coming in with the third-fastest time for a Canadian woman in the race, Erin showed her family, friends, and maybe most importantly her students, how rewarding pushing yourself towards personal goals really can be.

Congratulations go out to Erin, Mr. Speaker. She is a true inspiration and our kids are lucky to be able to learn from her each and every day.

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

**MACLEOD, IAN/BRAS D'OR ELEM. GR. 3 CLASS  
- MODEL COMMUN. STRUCTURES PROJ.**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: I think I'm starting to get a complex over here, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to thank Ian MacLeod and his Grade 3 class at Bras d'Or Elementary, as well as the North Sydney Heritage Museum. The students recently completed a model community structures project where they made models of community buildings. Chairman Joe Meaney provided the museum and cultural centre as a display venue for the many projects that drew a very large number of visitors to view the projects.

It's a pleasure to see our schools, students and community institutions co-operating together for the common good. This is what community is all about.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**BROUWER, RACHEL - ACHIEVEMENTS**

HON. KELLY REGAN: I'd like to tell you about an exceptional Grade 9 student at Bedford Academy. Rachel Brouwer has designed her own solar water pasteurization system, made up of inexpensive, easily accessible materials found in Third World and developing countries, an invention that earned her a Gold Medal in the Canada-Wide Science Fair, among other awards, and which a number of countries are now using to purify water.

Rachel is a role model for many people, young and old, for her extensive volunteer commitments, including but not limited to working in her school's leadership program, working with young students, offering computer assistance for seniors and also volunteering with Earth Day, a Christmas light campaign, Feed Nova Scotia, War Child, and the Terry Fox Foundation; and fundraising for the IWK.

The Bedford Volunteer Awards honoured Rachel on Sunday as the annual Youth Volunteer of the Year. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Rachel Brouwer on her tremendous achievements alleviating water insecurity, volunteering, and fundraising. She is truly an inspiring young woman. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**GERRIOR, RAQUEL - FIGURE SKATING AWARD**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer congratulations to a young skater who is a member of the East Pictou Silver Blades skating club. At the awards banquet, Raquel Gerrior was named most-improved figure skater and was also recipient of

the Program Assistant of the Year Award. Raquel has also been nominated for Skate Nova Scotia's Assistant of the Year and will represent the Silver Blades at the annual Gala Awards Show in May.

I hope Raquel enjoys the gala. I am sure it will be a wonderful way to wind down a very successful year. I know all members will join me in congratulating Raquel and wishing her the very best in her future endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**MANCINI, TONY: HRM DIST. 6 BY-ELECTION - CONGRATS.**

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, on January 23, 2016, a by-election was held by the municipality to determine who would represent District 6, the communities of Harbourview-Burnside-Dartmouth East, left vacant by our new Member of Parliament, Darren Fisher.

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Mr. Tony Mancini on his victory in District 6. Tony is well known to many in Dartmouth from being a Scout Venturer Advisor, a member of the School Advisory Council for Michael Wallace, board member of HomeBridge Youth Society, a volunteer with the Shubenacadie Canal Commission, and Dartmouth sector leader for the Scotiabank Bluenose Marathon.

Councillor Mancini also brings with him a wealth of experience and efficiency. He is a senior partner with Priority Management - Atlantica, and for over 25 years has been involved in training, consulting, and facilitating productivity and workload management programs.

I want to congratulate Tony on his win and send warm wishes to his wife, Sharon, and their two children, Lucas and Michaella, as they enter this new phase of public life.

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

**COUNTWAY, GEORGIA - JIU-JITSU BLUE BELT**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, Brookfield native Georgia Countway, at 16, is the youngest Atlantic Canadian to achieve a jiu-jitsu blue belt. She has been involved in the sport for seven years, and in March, two of her five wins in the adult division at the Nova Scotia Open were against adult competitors.

While Miss Countway attributes her successes to the efforts of her coaches, Dan Vanderlans and Scott Nauss, her achievements are also due to her raw talent and willingness to work hard. I wish to congratulate Miss Countway, wish her continued

success in her chosen sport, and commend her for the determination, discipline, and dedication she has demonstrated.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

**BOYLAN-HARTLING, CAROL  
- BERWICK REPRESENTATIVE VOL. OF YR.**

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony, held on April 4<sup>th</sup>, Carol Boylan-Hartling was recognized as the Town of Berwick's Representative Volunteer of the Year. Carol has not only been an outstanding volunteer but a mentor to her children and many in the community.

In many ways, Carol's volunteer life has become an extension of her work as the recreation coordinator for Berwick. She is at every Junior A Wildcat game, working at the door; is on the Gala Day committee; and works with several groups to assist them with their fundraising. There is so much that happens in the non-profit involvements throughout Berwick where Carol plays a key role.

A trademark of her volunteer life is that she will arrive early and stay late. In recent years, her husband Dale has been at her side on every volunteer occasion. They are the couple that continuously makes the quality of life for Berwick residents better. I ask the House to join me in congratulating Carol on her award, as well as thanking her for her tireless volunteer efforts.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**GOODWIN, STEVE**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Steve Goodwin's 43 years in journalism. Steve, a very resourceful and committed journalist, worked for the *New Glasgow Evening News* from September 1976 to November 1998. He transferred to the *Pictou Advocate* in 2000, and 16 years later, he continues to provide great attention to detail, performing accurate and credible research.

Goodwin, formerly of Amherst, has been in Pictou County for more than four decades as a sports and news reporter. He has been active in his community and has been honoured on numerous occasions, including the Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation Media Award and a St. F.X. media award for intercollegiate athletics, and was also inducted into the Pictou County Sports Heritage Hall of Fame in the media category. Pictou County salutes Steve Goodwin, a person who has made numerous personal sacrifices in order to reach strict deadlines, making sure that work was completed.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**MACISAAC'S FUNERAL HOME: COMMUN. SERV. - THANK**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Today I would like to pay tribute to an Antigonish business that has been in operation 90 years, MacIsaac's Funeral Home. Members of the MacIsaac family can be traced back to some of the earliest days of the Antigonish community. This family's roots run very deep. It was Jack MacIsaac who began the business back in 1926, and since then, after nine decades and three generations, MacIsaac's Funeral Home is still a family-owned and operated business.

Sure, there have been changes over the years. After all, they've been in the same location on Pleasant Street since 1947. Over time adjustments and renovations to the building have been needed. However one thing has always remained the same: the MacIsaac family continues to deliver personalized service. They truly look at their business as a way to honour their community.

The funeral home has always been known to provide compassionate and dedicated service to the families of the Antigonish area and beyond. Mr. Speaker, 90 years and three generations of family members running the same business is a remarkable success story, one that should be told and celebrated, so I'm proud to stand in my place in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to pay tribute and thank this amazing family for the service they provide to our community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**EARTH DAY (04/22/16) - CELEBRATE**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, we all have a global responsibility to protect our environment. Today I stand to recognize Earth Day. Earth Day is a worldwide event held every year on April 22<sup>nd</sup> to demonstrate support for environmental protection. The Earth Day movement, started in the 1970s by John McConnell, has since seen billions take part in planting trees, cleaning up local neighbourhoods, and enacting more progressive environmental laws.

While today is incredibly important, we must do our best to keep our province clean every day. We are so lucky to live in a province with beautiful forests, fresh water, and clean air. We must make sure we look after it for generations. We all should do something today that makes our environment better. Please pick up litter and make an effort to use less waste. These are great ways for all Nova Scotians to celebrate Earth Day today. Help keep our province clean. Happy Earth Day to everyone.

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



**JACKSON, ZACHAEUS - DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD**

HON. KEITH COLWELL: I would like to recognize and congratulate Zachaeus Jackson on obtaining the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, which creates opportunities for young people to develop skills, get physically active, give service, and experience adventure. The award can play a critical role in development outside the classroom. Zachaeus Jackson of Lake Echo achieved the distinction of receiving the gold award though just 16 years old. This award gives Zachaeus international accreditation for his experiences and allows his achievements to be recognized worldwide. I applaud and commend Zachaeus Jackson on his tremendous achievements and wish him every success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**PEILL, AVA - ACTING ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Ava Peill is a young woman whose interest in show business has really taken off. As an elementary student in Canning, where she continues to live, Ava had the leading role in the 2008 film shot in Halifax called, Paper Hearts. Now at 17 years of age, she has also appeared in two short films, commercials for the 2010 Olympics, and two television shows shot in Halifax. In 2012, Ava landed a recurring role as a student on CBC's Halifax-based television program Mr. D. Besides attending school locally and participating in part-time employment and outside activities, Ava has completed acting workshops in New York and Halifax. Please join me to congratulate this young lady on her success.

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

**LITTLE, JOCELYN - JIU-JITSU ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

MR. IAIN RANKIN: I would like to recognize 10-year-old Jocelyn Little of Whites Lake. Jocelyn has excelled in her chosen sport of jiu jitsu, and she will be competing in the 2016 Ontario Open International Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Competition held on May 1, 2016, in Brampton, Ontario. I would like the members of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Jocelyn for her success to date and wish her all the best in her upcoming competition.

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

**KEOUGH, ALISON - BASKETBALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to recognize Cape Breton University's Alison Keough, who has once again been recognized for her efforts on the basketball court.

Alison Keough, a third-year Capers player from Marion Bridge, was recently named as a CIS second team All-Canadian. Allison is a graduate of Riverview High and was both the AUS and CIS Rookie of the Year in 2013-14. She's a perennial AUS All-Star, and earlier this season she won the CIS Player of the Week award.

I'm very pleased to congratulate Alison Keough and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

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

**ELLIS, BRANDON: CBU STUDENT UNION PRES. (2 YR. TERM) -  
CONGRATS.**

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take a moment to rise and congratulate Brandon Ellis on his successful two years as student union president at Cape Breton University.

Brandon is from Whitney Pier, and for the last two years has been a strong advocate for students at home and across the province. I want to take this opportunity to ask my colleagues to congratulate Brandon on his two years of service as president of the student union of Cape Breton University and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

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

**LIVE SHIP LOGISTICS/BIONOVATIONS:  
JOINT VENTURE - APPLAUD**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the joint venture between Live Ship Logistics of North Sydney and BioNovations of Antigonish.

Presently, a lobster is handled 35 times before it gets to the consumer. That number will be reduced to two times with the new crate developed by the Antigonish company. Live Ship Logistics plans to acquire 12 containers this year and over 120 over the next five years. The goal is to lower distribution costs and increase market value with fresher product.

It's a pleasure to have the opportunity to recognize the efforts of these two groups. I wish them luck in this combined experiment.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**SPRY CTR.: SYRIAN FAMILIES - WELCOME EVENT**

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, on April 17<sup>th</sup> I had the honour of meeting the newest members of our community. I was honoured to partner with the Honourable Lena Diab to host a welcome event for the new Syrian families. The Captain William Spry Centre was filled with the newcomers; our non-profit organizations; our city councillors, Councillors Mosher and Adams; and many other families from the community.

The new families were welcomed to the community and our non-profit organizations were on hand to offer their services and to introduce the families to the resources available in their new community. Everyone had a chance to mingle over a cup of coffee and some sweets. The room was abuzz with a mixture of English and Arabic conversation, but the smiles of everyone in attendance needed no translation. I was honoured to be a part of this welcoming committee, and my heart went out to them, knowing what they had to endure before they came to Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Immigration, Minister Diab, deserves an enormous amount of credit for her hard work as a minister, but more importantly as an MLA, for helping her new citizens . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order. I'd remind the member that he's not to use members' proper names when addressing them in member's statements.

The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

**GORMAN, MICHAEL: FUTURE ENDEAVOURS - WELL WISHES**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to take a moment as well to recognize Michael Gorman. He has announced that today, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, will be his last day covering Province House for *The Chronicle Herald* and *Local Xpress*.

He has been a great asset to the press gallery, and I'm sure we'll all miss him. We'll especially miss his tough questions that always begin with, "with all due respect, minister, but."

All joking aside, I'd like to thank him for his tireless commitment to Province House coverage and helping to get our work out to Nova Scotians across the province. Many late nights we'd see him here in the gallery or down in the Howe Room, working hard to produce stories for people that matter: our constituents.

On behalf of the Official Opposition, we'd like to congratulate him on his new position with the CBC and wish him all the best in his future endeavours. We know he won't be around as much, but we still hope to see him from time to time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island.

### **WIJERATNE, DINUK - JUNO AWARD**

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Dinuk Wijeratne, Composer in Residence at Symphony Nova Scotia. Mr. Wijeratne won this year's Juno Award for Classical Composition. It was his first nomination; his piece that won the coveted award was "Two Pop Songs on Antique Poems," featured on the Afiara Quartet album Spin Cycle.

I'm so happy to see that a Haligonian - a composer at Symphony Nova Scotia and a staple of our city - has been honoured on a national scale. I invite the House to join me in offering congratulations to Mr. Wijeratne.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

### **TWO PLANKS & A PASSION THEATRE - MERIT AWARD**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform members of the House of a most active and successful theatre in my riding.

On March 21<sup>st</sup> the Two Planks and a Passion Theatre received five merit awards. For its performance of *The Tempest* Two Planks summer classic won the Outstanding Production Award.

Two Planks Artistic Director Ken Schwartz received the Best Director Award and three additional directing awards of the 13 nominations the group had been nominated for. This summer marks the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the theatre which has received 26 trophies for its artistic involvement over the years.

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

### **HAMMONDS PLAINS AREA BUS. ASSOC. - WORK ACKNOWLEDGE**

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to take a quick moment and acknowledge the work of the Hammonds Plains Area Business Association. Last night I had the opportunity to participate in a town hall where probably 60 local residents came out to ask questions of myself and their councillor, Matt Whitman. It was a great chance for residents within our community to express themselves, to express what is important to them, and it was a good chance for them to receive feedback from their representatives.

I should also highlight that the Hammonds Plains Area Business Association continues to showcase the great work that is going on from local businesses in our community. It has grown a significant amount in membership over the past couple of years.

My hat goes off to them, and I wish them all the best as they continue the work they do in our community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **COHOON, JULIE - SKATING ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, Julie Cohoon is a young skater from Pictou East who has had a wonderful year as part of the Silver Blades Skating Club in Thorburn. She was CanSkater of the Year for her home club and has been nominated for the Nova Scotia CanSkater of the Year Award also. She has been invited to attend the Ice Gala and Awards in May, and will be participating in group routines.

I know Julie loves to skate and it is evident in her passion and her progress. It's a true pleasure to congratulate Julie on her accomplishments, and I wish her well as she takes on new challenges.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

### **LUNENBURG FOODLAND - STORE OF YR. (SOBEYS)**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to recognize the accomplishments of the Lunenburg Foodland. For the second time in five years the grocery store has been named as Store of the Year by Sobeys, its parent company.

Upon taking over ownership of the store, Dave Robb engaged his staff to become not just employees of the store but to become part of it. An emphasis was put on communication and honesty with customers - in a small community that goes a long way. It's a small-town success story that proves that going the extra mile for your customers pays off in the long run.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of the House join me in congratulating the staff at the Lunenburg Foodland for being named Store of the Year by Sobeys.

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

### **FRASER, GEORGE/GRANT, LLOYD: CHURCH/COMMUN. - SERV. THANK**

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate George Fraser and Lloyd Grant of the Knox Presbyterian Church in Ross Ferry.

Mr. Fraser retired last year as treasurer of Knox Church after faithfully doing the job for 48 years. Mr. Grant has served the Boularderie Presbyterian Pastoral Charge as an elder for the past 55 years and will continue on as elder, but in a limited role.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank both George and Lloyd for their service to their church and community and wish them the best of luck in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: Barring more members' statements, the House will recess until 10:00 a.m.

[9:58 a.m. The House recessed.]

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

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

#### **PREM. - BILL NO. 143 (2015): FISH. & AQUACULTURE MIN. - COMPLIANCE**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Just a few months ago, this House passed the Premier's own Regulatory Accountability and Reporting Act. That Act included a Charter of Governing Principles for Regulation which states, "The government will regulate to achieve its policy objectives only . . . where analyses of the costs and benefits demonstrates that the regulatory approach is superior by a clear margin to alternative, self-regulatory or non-regulatory approaches". That's something we all agree with.

Mr. Speaker, it's hard to imagine that actually happened in the case of the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture imposing a unilateral lobster course, or more red tape on our lobster buyers. I'd like to ask the Premier, why is he allowing the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture to ignore his own Charter so shortly after it was enacted?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As he would know, the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture has engaged the industry for months on this issue. We know there are businesses in this province that are currently actually doing what the minister is proposing as he goes across the sector.

As he knows, this has been a tremendous boom in the exporting of our lobster and seafood under the great work done by the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. We continue to work with them. We want to make sure that we continue to have that high quality, particularly as we're getting into markets further afield.

I'm really pleased with the growth we've had in Asia. Next week I'll be making an announcement in relation to Asia. This kind of continued work with our private sector industries will continue to ensure that we grow that exporting market.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I hope the Premier isn't giving credit to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture for the growth in the catch of our lobster fisheries. We all celebrate it but we know the reason. In fact what the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture said was that the reason (Interruption) Well it's not because of the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Leader of the Official Opposition has the floor.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture certainly did not consult with lobster buyers because if he did, he would not have said this about why he is imposing new red tape on them because the reason he gave was, and I quote from him, ". . . some people just don't really understand lobster." Well that's an insult to lobster buyers who have been doing their job, in some cases for generations.

My point is it flies in the face of the Premier's own Charter on Regulations. I'll ask the Premier why is he ignoring his own red tape legislation by allowing the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture to create more red tape?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As he would know, this is about ensuring that quality of our seafood continues to remain high. I do want to recognize the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture who has worked extremely hard, along with the industry, to ensure that we double our exports into Asia. That's exactly why the price of lobster is high, because we've opened up more markets, working directly with industry to ensure they we are getting maximum value for that product and we're enjoying that.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to work with our private sector to grow good jobs in this province.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, our private sector, including lobster buyers, would have a lot more confidence in this minister and the government if they didn't say one thing and do another, if they didn't pass a charter saying there would be less red tape and then months later impose more red tape on lobster buyers.

The charter says that they have to look at non-regulatory and other options before imposing new red tape but it did not happen. I'd like to ask the Premier, will he confirm that his charter was followed and that analysis was done of other options, besides more red tape? If it was, will he table it in the House?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the good work being done by the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness. I'm very pleased with the work that has taken place. We've been able to streamline the process. At the same time in going through the process where we can add to ensure that we maintain the high quality that we have, high quality live product that we're shipping further and further afield, identifying where we can provide support to that sector so that we continue to get top dollar for the good quality product that we have.

The minister, like every minister on this side, will continue to work with the private sector to ensure that the opportunities are in this province and that we get real value for the products as we sell them across the world.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**PREM. - VG: REPLACEMENT PLAN RELEASE - DELAY EXPLAIN**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to replacing the VG Hospital, this government's main objective has been to incur as little cost as possible during the term, placing its austerity agenda ahead of the need for investment in public infrastructure.

Yesterday the Premier said "right after becoming Premier, the file of the VG came on my desk." I'll table that, Mr. Speaker. My question for the Premier, if the VG file has been on his desk since 2013, why after two and a half years are we just hearing about a so-called replacement plan?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question, Mr. Speaker. The reality of it is, one of the first decisions we made was to invest in the Dartmouth General, the third and fourth floor, which is clearly related to the Victoria General Hospital. Fifty beds are being moved out of there. We're moving four operating theatres over there, which will add to eight on the Dartmouth side. We then went out and did something that the former government did not, which was engage clinicians and health care providers to make sure as we designed the growth, as we move out, that it fits the needs of the next 50 years.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to collaborate with our health care providers to ensure that not only will we build this facility on time and on budget but it will meet the requirements of the health care workers and the citizens of this province.

MS. MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, the Premier has had no answer for repeated questions about the cost of replacing the VG or how this unknown cost will be paid for. The lack of details around cost and revenue suggest yesterday's announcement was nothing more than a plan to make a plan. With much work to be done in the short term, there's also concern that the budget released Tuesday does not reflect these short-term costs.



My question for the Premier, when it comes to replacing the VG, where is the fiscal plan?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member - and she should not be insulting the hard-working Nova Scotians who have been working to ensure that these health care facilities get placed across this province.

We've been engaging health care workers, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that when we continue to do the work on the Dartmouth General, which has been costed and put out there, we budgeted this year to do the design work for the new builds at the HI site, not only the fifth floor but the new construction as well as our community-based outpatients clinic that will be outside of HRM. That design cost is a part of this year's budget. We have allocated in our TCA that we'll be able to do the work in West Hants to ensure that the second OR is open, 800 surgeries that will be moved out taking place there. I'm going to tell you, outside of this House every Nova Scotian who has spoken to me about this has said, finally, a government is acting prudent.

Mr. Speaker, a member from the Progressive Conservative caucus said yesterday in the media, maybe the Premier should just guess at the cost, instead of doing the prudent things that Nova Scotians expect him to do.

MS. MANCINI: The Premier has repeatedly said that being in government requires you to make choices. Well, Mr. Speaker, past governments have made the choice to use the P3 model for public infrastructure, including a few Liberal Governments in Nova Scotia. As the Premier's own Deputy Minister of Health . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable Leader in the House of the New Democratic Party has the floor. There are plenty of questions left here so everybody will get their chance.

MS. MANCINI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Premier's own Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness has pointed out, those choices ended up costing taxpayers millions of extra dollars. My question to the Premier, has he not learned from past Liberal Governments in Nova Scotia who chose to use the P3 model?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As I said, we're going through, preparing the design work, making sure the facility meets the needs of Nova Scotians for the next 50 years and meets the needs of the health care workers who are providing that service to our citizens. When that comes out, we'll put full costing out to Nova Scotians and we'll look at how we finance that.

It would be irresponsible of our government, or any government, not to look at the P3 model and see if that is a better way to finance it. It doesn't mean we've agreed to that position, but we'll certainly be exploring it.

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

**PREM. - BILL NO. 143 (2015):  
FISH. & AQUACULTURE DEPT. - CHARTER BREACH**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: You know, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's Charter on Governing Principles for Regulation is supposed to mean something. Certainly to our lobster buyers it meant the government wanted to cut red tape and yet, months after they'd passed the charter, they imposed new red tape on lobster buyers. They do good work, the quality of Nova Scotia lobster is high because they know what they are doing; they don't need more red tape to make that so. The Premier passed a charter, his own charter, which assured them that wouldn't happen.

I'm going to ask the Premier, does he now see that what the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department is doing actually breaches the Premier's own charter on red tape?

THE PREMIER: I want to congratulate the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture for the tremendous work they've been doing working with the sector across our province. They're continuing to grow export opportunities, continuing to grow revenue for the province and for the private sector. I want to thank them for the tremendous work they've been doing on the aquaculture side - looking forward to growing that sector. Nova Scotians are optimistic about the future, particularly those who are out there in the private sector driving opportunity because they have a government that is working with them in partnership.

MR. BAILLIE: Those Nova Scotians who are lobster buyers want the government to get off their back. That's the point, which they told them in law they were going to do. But instead, rather than having confidence in them, they thank them by telling them they have to fix the job they do by imposing more red tape on our lobster buyers just when they have a chance to move ahead.

It's inconceivable that a government would say one thing in law and then actually do the opposite for an industry that is so important to the Province of Nova Scotia. Here is a chance to actually cut some red tape. Will the Premier honour his own charter and cut this needless red tape for our lobster buyers now?

THE PREMIER: We're continuing to work with the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness to cut red tape across this province, unifying situations across the Atlantic Region. The private sector has been involved in the decisions we've been making. They're optimistic about the future. We're seeing the most confidence in small business in all of Canada is right here in Nova Scotia. They are endorsing the direction of this government and we're going to continue to work with them to provide opportunity here at home.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - VALLEY REG.: GYNECOLOGISTS - OR ACCESS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Women across Nova Scotia are without proper gynecological health services. In a briefing note prepared for the minister, which I know we used in the last session, it states that obstetrics coverage in the Northern Zone is tenuous. That is a great concern to expecting mothers and their families. The minister's briefing note also shows that surgical wait-times in gynecology have risen by 20 per cent in the last two years. Valley Regional has seen the most significant increase, over 62 per cent after gynecologists have had their access to the operating room reduced.

I'd like to ask the minister, what steps has he taken to improve operating room access for gynecologists in order to meet the high demand for this important service?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I thank the member for an important question here in the Assembly today. What has taken place just in the very short period of six months is that now we're able to move residents from one part of the province to another, for services. I think if he gets an update today, he'll find that in fact some of that wait-list has gone down.

MR. DAVID WILSON: We're talking about a segment of the population - moving to far-off communities could be a challenge when you're an expectant mother. That needs to be seriously looked at. These services need to be available close to home.

Mr. Speaker, not only are expectant mothers worried about obstetrics, but many are equally worried about access to midwifery services. In Nova Scotia, midwifery services are available in only three sites and the demand for these services far exceeds the capacity. I'd like to ask the minister - it looks like this year's budget doesn't reflect the urgency to address the needs to increase midwifery services in Nova Scotia, which could help relieve some of the anxiety and concerns that Nova Scotians have for these services.

MR. GLAVINE: Just a little note of clarification first. In terms of gynecological services and surgeries, these are planned, and we're not talking about expectant mothers.

In terms of midwifery, the member opposite is absolutely correct. It's an outstanding service where it is provided. We know that in the past number of months the health authority has been doing a clinical services review, and when that is complete, they will start a provincial program of advancing midwifery further throughout the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**ENERGY - MUSKRAT FALLS PROJ.: COMPLETION ASSURANCES**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the Minister of Energy. Nalcor has a new CEO and he has openly said that he will be re-evaluating the Muskrat Falls project. My question for the minister is, what assurances has the minister received that the project will be completed?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: I had the opportunity to speak to Minister Coady, the Minister of Natural Resources responsible for the file in Newfoundland and Labrador following the resignation of Mr. Martin as Chairman.

As you know, in Newfoundland and Labrador the new government has undergone a review of the project, and with that there have been some issues raised. Minister Coady did assure me that their government remains committed to this project. In fact, they are looking at receiving updates as far as what the new construction timelines will be, in light of some of the delays that have been experienced. We expect to receive that information once the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has received it.

MR. HOUSTON: Nova Scotians have been asked to pay for the \$1.5 billion Maritime Link through their power rates, and they are obviously concerned about what might happen to power rates, given the risk of the cancellation of the project or skyrocketing costs.

Can the minister tell Nova Scotians that their power rates will not go up due to the turmoil in Newfoundland and Labrador?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the agreement that was reached between Emera and Nalcor is between two companies, not the Province of Nova Scotia. The taxpayers of Nova Scotia are in no way on the hook for the subsea cable that is being built. That is the responsibility of Emera. That is something that Emera - not Nova Scotia Power but Emera - is responsible for. Ratepayers are not involved in that project in any way at all.

The electricity plan which we provided does have provisions for Muskrat Falls being part of our energy mix. I certainly indicated to Minister Coady our concerns of any delays in that project, which is why I was pleased to hear her commitment to seeing the project take place and to provide us with updates as to what the construction time frames will look like as soon as they receive them.

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

**COM. SERV.: SOC. WORKERS/CONSTITUENTS - COMMUNICATION**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services. Reform in the Department of Community Services is very much

needed. We all know that. People struggle to find the necessary resources to live in this difficult time.

One of the complaints that comes from many constituents is the difficulty they have in communicating with their social workers. Is communication one of the reforms that is being considered?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: I thank the member for his thoughtful question. The number one complaint I hear in my own constituency is "I cannot get in contact with my front-line worker." One of the things that we changed almost immediately when coming into government was to look at a realignment of home visits, because we know home visits are needed, particularly in the rural areas, but they are not always needed in other places.

Oftentimes home visits were a means to check in on clients to make sure they were doing what they needed to be doing. We've since changed that policy, because it was really important that people be available at their desk, that they be available for communication. We tried to set up guidelines so that we get back to people within the day - if not, the next day - just to ensure that that service delivery is increased and that people can speak to the people who are providing them services.

MR. HARRISON: I do appreciate that. I'm hoping that there still will be some leeway for the social worker to go to the home to visit, because in some cases it's necessary.

How far along are we on the reform road map?

MS. BERNARD: The transformation actually started within the first six months of my ministerial role. We are about halfway through Phase II - it is a three-phase approach. We are anticipating the outcome and the finality of the complete transformation to be in 2018.

I'm very encouraged with the time frame. We have met all targets in terms of time, investment, and where we want to go.

The first phase was the internal restructuring of our department, which was a complete overhaul of the collapsing of the regions, centralizing a lot of the services to improve service delivery, and for the first time ever having somebody responsible for service delivery standards in the department.

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

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - HEALTH AUTH.: BUDGET INCREASE - EXPLAIN**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. When this government set out to amalgamate the district health authorities,

there was plenty of talk about the administrative cost savings - \$10 million or \$15 million, they promised Nova Scotians.

However, the budget released this week calls into question just how much money will be saved on administration. For this year the administration budget for the Nova Scotia Health Authority is \$13.6 million higher than what was spent last year. So, I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, can he explain why the administration budget for the Health Authority is \$13.6 million higher than what was spent last year?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I want to be able to say to the member opposite first and foremost is that the Health Authority's budget is all ready to be passed by their board and, when that does come out within the next few weeks, he will see, the Province of Nova Scotia will see, the great leap forward in holding cost and saving huge amounts of money.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, two and a half years ago, this government had been adamant about the need to stick to the fiscal plan giving Nova Scotians the impression there was no new money for much-needed investment in public infrastructure such as hospitals; however, we learned in the budget released Tuesday that the budget for hospital infrastructure was underspent by over \$27 million. Can the minister explain why the hospital infrastructure budget was underspent by such a significant amount of money?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, we all know that planning and long-range development of hospital infrastructure will sometimes get behind; this is absolutely nothing new in our province or right across the country. What I do know is that we'll soon be opening an outstanding addition in Guysborough; the work in Dartmouth is well under way; the medical centre in Shelburne will get started this year; and, perhaps, I shouldn't give any further list.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**COM. SERV.: ENHANCED FAM. SERV. SUPPORT PROG.  
- FUNDING SHORTFALL**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services, and I think the minister is expecting this question as the family let them know they're expecting to hear from the minister today, and they're in the gallery with us.

The Enhanced Family Support Program is intended to provide support to parents where children with disabilities live with their families. The problem is while a family might meet all the criteria, the minister has not authorized enough funds to actually deliver the program to all those who qualify, and there is currently a two-year wait-list according to staff.

The Jones family is with us in the gallery. Their adopted son, Leo, is 22. He has Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and yet they are struggling through the transformational plans underway at DCS. Last night, they were told: regarding the enhanced support, I have followed up and Leo continues to be wait-listed but there are no additional funds at this time; and I'll table that.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the member have a question?

MR. YOUNGER: I do, sir. Why didn't the minister address the funding shortfall for this critical-care program in the first place?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: I thank the member for the question. We actually have addressed the shortfall in this upcoming budget. We've invested a further \$3.3 million to build capacity in the community so that we can actually enhance and build up the capacity needed for persons to move from residential care into the community and also to make day programs and other programs that are available in the community more robust. That's on top of the further \$9.9 million investment for the Disability Support Program.

MR. YOUNGER: I understand in 45 seconds the minister can't get all the information on the case frame, but her own staff said, in fact, this has not been topped up. As well, for three years they have been trying to get a group home space. They were told in a letter that I just tabled that this individual is ranked a priority number one but for three years they have been told that Community Services has those spaces on hold due to "transformational change".

When their son, Leo, attends programs like Stone Hearth Bakery, his parents have to attend with him because DCS is unable to provide somebody for them and they say it's due to funding. That means his parents can't work when they have to and it's affecting the finances of the family. Does the minister think it's right that this family is being hurt because in three years the department hasn't been able to address the wait-list for priority one housing and what does she plan to do about it?

MS. BERNARD: Nobody puts their name on a ballot to be accused of hurting families in Nova Scotia, and it's a disingenuous question in that regard. There are pressures within the Disability Support Program, we all know that, we all deal with that with programs and families in each one of our constituencies. The wait-lists are being managed within the Department of Community Services. We also have the highest rate of self-identified disability in the country and we're trying to keep up with the growing demand and the complexity of needs.

I'm excited about the new investment, our commitment to the roadmap is steadfast, and families know that. I understand that people can be impatient with that, I totally get that, I totally understand that, but we are doing a transformation to the best of our ability at this point in time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**BUS. - RURAL AREAS: CELLPHONE SERV. - MIN. ASSISTANCE**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Business. There are several areas of rural Nova Scotia that still don't have cell service - and I don't mean adequate cell service, I mean no cell service. Many of these areas have aging populations and it's a real safety concern. Just last week in Garden of Eden area in Pictou County an oil truck went off the road close to the lake, complete dead zone, no cell service - even emergency responders' devices didn't work there.

So, my question for the minister is, what is the minister doing to help those rural areas that desperately need cellphone service?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, the industry itself continued to assess and analyze the needs of cell service across the province, and those industry entities are investing their own capital in expanding the availability of service. We've seen recently a number of towers that have been erected, they continue with that strategy and we support them in that private sector-led initiative.

MR. HOUSTON: Well, support for those industries isn't working for many rural Nova Scotians.

There is technology now that if you have cell service you can also have Internet service through that. I have areas where local residents have offered to give the land to the service providers to let them put up a tower - I've had that in Lorne and I've had that in the East River Valley, and the service providers have come back and said even with the free land, the business case doesn't work for us. So, it's not going to happen in these areas and they need cell service and they deserve cell service.

My question for the minister is, will the provincial government partner with any of these companies to help that cell service get there where we need it?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, the objective, whether it's cell service or high-speed Internet, is to advance and broaden the availability across the province. Industry is taking the lead in that regard and we are supporting them through the consultations we're having, through the studies and research, that we've just recently completed, specific to high-speed Internet. We'll continue to engage industry, and as industry has told us, get out of our way, allow us to lead. We're supporting the industry's efforts in that regard. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I'd like to remind all members that when you do pose a question it would be parliamentary to listen to the answer. (Interruptions)

The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.



**HEALTH & WELLNESS - VG: LEGIONELLA BACTERIA  
- REMEDIATION COSTS**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker. (Interruptions)

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

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I guess our comment to that would be it is nice to have an answer every once in a while too.

Yesterday the government announced an overview of what the transition out of the Centennial Building at the Victoria General site should look like. Some services may be moved to the Dickson Centre, or the Dickson Building, which will be undergoing renovation at some point during the process.

For years Legionella bacteria has caused issues in the water supply at the VG site, including the Dickson Centre, but we have yet to hear whether or not it will be addressed and eradicated during the renovations.

So, my question to the minister is, in the planning for this renovation, has the minister received a cost analysis of what it would take to eliminate Legionella bacteria from the VG's water supply, which includes the Dickson Centre?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, as the member knows from his time as Minister of Health that, yes, it has been a perennial problem, Legionella in the VG. We also have the Dickson Centre now in scope for a refurbishment and an expansion. We wanted to become the centre of cancer care excellence in Atlantic Canada. We have the clinical teams that are supporting that concept and we will be moving forward to make that a reality.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Our province is blessed with world-class physicians and health care workers who offer services that are second to none. But when our hospital facilities deteriorate to the point that the issue of drinking-water safety persists for nearly 20 years, it is time for a change. When Nova Scotians are in the hospital, they deserve a guarantee of clean, safe water. Can the minister guarantee Nova Scotians that the water supply at the VG site will be free of Legionella bacteria, once the renovations are under way?

MR. GLAVINE: We know that at the VG provisions have been made, they've been ongoing for years, to provide potable water and to make sure that safe drinking water is in place there. I think what Nova Scotians are looking forward to is a safer, refurbished site at the Dickson Centre, and we will stay the course and get that completed as quickly as possible.

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

### **EECD - REGULATED CHILD CARE: RECOMMENDATIONS - FUNDING**

MS. LENORE ZANN: On Wednesday the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development encouraged me to have a closer look at her government's report on the review of regulated child care and indicated that her government is prepared to act on every single recommendation. I'll table that.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the minister that I have read the report, but I've also read the budget. I see no money to ensure the efficiency and sustainability of the child care system. My question for the minister today is, how does the minister intend to act on these recommendations without providing the funding necessary to make the changes?

HON. KAREN CASEY: I'm pleased to hear that the member did read it. I would encourage all members to read that report; it is probably one of the most significant changes that this government will make in early childhood education in this province. It was made very clear, Mr. Speaker, that there is over \$6 million that has been put into this year's budget. I'm not sure if the member can find it or not, but I'll find it for her.

MS. ZANN: Well, in the theatre we would say to that response: the lady, methinks, doth protest too much.

Mr. Speaker, in 1983 the Nova Scotia Task Force on Day Care made recommendations to address the high cost of child care and support training. In 1991, the Round Table on Day Care presented a series of recommendations. In 2001, the Report on the Nova Scotia Child Care Funding Review called for actions on wages, staff training, and child care affordability. I'm sure that in her response the minister will say, well the NDP had an opportunity to do something. But I have to say she was the Minister of Education for three years for the Progressive Conservatives. Will the minister tell Nova Scotian families today how they plan to use what amounts to an investment of \$63 per child to address these issues that have plagued early childhood education for 30 years?

MS. CASEY: To the member opposite, I would encourage her to go back and perhaps re-read the report because it's very clear where the money will be spent.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

### **NAT. RES.: MINING IND. - FUEL TAX REBATE**

HON. PAT DUNN: My question is for the Minister of DNR. Speaking about the government's failure to honour their promise to the mining industry to introduce a fuel tax rebate, Sean Kirby, executive director of the Mining Association of Nova Scotia, told the

media it will further harm the province's representation as a place to invest. Nova Scotia cannot afford any further harm in its representation for investment in mining. The Fraser Institute again has ranked Nova Scotia last in Canada for investment attractiveness in mining, and I'll table that, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the minister is, could the minister explain how his government can justify breaking this promise, harming the province's reputation for investment and killing potential jobs?

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. I was very pleased yesterday to be invited to speak at the AGM for the Mining Association of Nova Scotia. Like all good businesspeople - as this government is and that association is - we put the issues on the table. At that meeting, I was very pleased to hear the Mining Association's position on this.

Earlier I spoke about the process that we have here. Our first commitment in this province is to good fiscal management, and it's on the table. When we are in a position to be able to honour that commitment, we will do so.

Also, Mr. Speaker, it is worthy of note that the mining industry in Nova Scotia is enjoying quite a considerable break from fuel prices as they conduct their business.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, the former Minister of Finance and Treasury Board told the industry in 2014 that the government would introduce this tax rebate in 2015. That did not happen. I'll table that.

In 2015 the former Minister of DNR said the rebate would be distributed in the course of their mandate. Mr. Speaker, I'll table that. Now, just this week, the current minister said that it is under consideration. If the desk will hold the weight of these papers, I'll table that also.

Mr. Speaker, no wonder the province's reputation has been damaged. My question is, will the minister clear this up once and for all and tell the industry when or if it actually plans to implement this important tax rebate?

MR. HINES: I would draw the attention of the House to April 28<sup>th</sup>, when CEAA will make its final utterance on a major mining project for Nova Scotia at the Vulcan site in Black Point that has the potential of 80 full-time, well-paying jobs for at least 50 years, to assist Nova Scotians.

I want to talk about Atlantic Gold, who very soon will have equipment on site and are interested in operating their facility. There are exploration activities occurring across the province. Donkin Mine is the gem that will bring mining jobs back to Nova Scotians. So where's the problem?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**ENERGY: ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SUPPLIER  
- PURCHASING TIME FRAME**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy. Industry experts have been saying that this government's plan will not lower electricity prices and that no real competition will come forward. Nearly three years later they are proven right, because Nova Scotians continue to pay their power bills to the exact same utilities as they did before the election.

My question, Mr. Speaker - and maybe we'll get an answer; maybe you can help us see if we actually get an answer to this question - when can Nova Scotians expect to buy reasonably priced power from a new, alternative energy supplier?

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to give him an answer. He may not like it, but he's going to get one just the same. The fact is that prior to our government being elected in 2013, it wasn't even possible to talk about competition in the electricity marketplace in Nova Scotia. We changed that.

Mr. Speaker, there's a process to be followed. We brought in legislation in this House, and that was passed. The next thing that had to be done was to go to the Utility and Review Board. That process is now working its way and the fact is that the small business advocate, John Merrick, has said that with the decision of the Utility and Review Board there is now a new day in Nova Scotia to allow for competition.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, lots of talk there. The question was when and the answer was "a new day," "someday" - no answer to that question. Nova Scotians are still waiting for this government to deliver on its promise, and it's not happening. There's no time in the future when it will happen. The minister can't say when Nova Scotians will be able to buy reasonably priced power. It won't happen, so he won't say when.

I'll ask him, does the department have any estimate? Can he give us a number of how many Nova Scotians - how many, the question is - will be able to buy power from a new supplier within the next five years or 10 years? Pick a number - how many Nova Scotians?

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, this process (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. SAMSON: There's a process to be followed through the Utility and Review Board. They have provided their first decision, which has been greeted by renewable

energy producers as going in the right direction. The process will give the final numbers as to what will have to be paid by renewable energy producers. (Interruptions)

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

MR. SAMSON: The decision that will be made to provide competition in this province will be made by private industry, not by government. We were clearly told, get out of the way, allow the process to be followed, and (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. SAMSON: The only people left in this province who don't believe we'll have competition are the cynical members from Pictou East and the Leader of the Official Opposition. Nova Scotians asked for competition and we're allowing it to happen. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Eight more minutes, that is all we've got.

The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

#### **FISH. & AQUACULTURE: LOBSTER HANDLING COURSE - CONSULTATION**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, apparently yoga class must have been cancelled last night.

My question is for Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. Just in recent months, the minister announced a lobster handling course that would be mandatory to all lobster buyers across Nova Scotia if they wanted to renew their lobster-buying licence for the next season. My question to the minister, is will he tell the House if he consulted with the lobster industry first on this topic?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Indeed, we have consulted with the industry, and we have come to an arrangement with the industry.

MR. BELLIVEAU: I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, a yoga class may come in handy on this one.

Simply put, the minister does not understand the science behind the creation of a soft-shell lobster. I'm going to ask the minister directly, will the minister withdraw this scheduled lobster handling course and consult first with the lobster industry?

MR. COLWELL: We have consulted with the industry; we've made arrangements with the industry. (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture has the floor.

MR. COLWELL: I'll give the same answer. We have consulted with the industry; we've made arrangements with the industry; and it will be announced shortly.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **TIR - NOVA STAR: DEBTS - DETAILS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. It was reported on November 23<sup>rd</sup> that the Liberal Government paid \$1.9 million to Nova Star. Documents filed with their bankruptcy showed that they had \$42,000 left in cash. I remember at the time, when that money went out, this government said we're going to keep an eye on this, we're going to get reports and see where the money's going. Nova Star was supposed to report their spending to the minister, weekly, I believe.

My question to the minister is, where did the \$1.9 million go, and why do we have so many Nova Scotian companies that didn't get paid?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: We did follow the obligations that we had with Nova Star. The commitment that was made last year, \$13 million, was fulfilled on behalf of the Province of Nova Scotia. Just like any other arrangement we have with a private sector operator in any part of the functions of government, we fulfilled our obligations.

Clearly, as we've discussed many times here publicly, as part of estimates I'm sure there will be more, we made a change in operator for a number of reasons, and we're moving in the right direction. There's a long history with Nova Star and we've moved on with Bay Ferries and I hope the member and the Party opposite support it, because we have to make sure that Nova Scotia ferry works for the entire province.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure all those Nova Scotia companies that got burned by this last deal and didn't get paid from the \$1.9 million, they'll probably feel pretty good about that from the minister there. We'll have to see. The expression of once burned, twice shy doesn't seem to ring through very well because under that agreement Nova Star had to report its spending. The minister was going to look at it weekly. Under this new agreement it's just whatever the costs are we'll keep paying them.

My question for the minister is, why should Nova Scotian companies trust this second ferry situation, when the first one went so horribly wrong, even when they said we're watching closely now?

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker. Again to the member opposite, look there is a history. We identified a number of challenges with Nova Star - the operations and the agreement - which is exactly the reason why we entered into a process to identify a new operator, a new service with a new business plan for the Nova Scotia Ferry, without question.

The member opposite knows the vital importance of ferries in his riding, in his community. Northumberland provides a tremendous service and economic activity for his area. For the members from Cape Breton obviously the Marine Atlantic run is vital to our local economy there.

Mr. Speaker, as we've said many times and will continue: Bay Ferries is the right operator; Mark MacDonald is the right person, we believe in him, he believes in us and the people of this province. Despite what the Opposition is saying, this ferry will succeed for all Nova Scotians. It's a good decision. We support the people of southern Nova Scotia with the entire province and we stick behind that, thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

#### **BUS.: TOURISM STRATEGY/AD CAMPAIGN - SCHEDULE**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Business. Nova Scotia tourist industry relies on bringing first-time visitors here and having them tell their friends and family about the beautiful province and friendly people, and we want them to come back again and again. The low Canadian dollar now offers a great opportunity to attract more American travellers.

Mr. Speaker, my question is this, with Nova Scotia taxpayer money going to an Ontario ad agency and tourism season underway now, when will we see a tourism strategy and ad campaign?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is quite correct, the strategy is to attract first-time visitors, to have them stay longer and spend more money and as they return home, they in fact become the ambassadors for the Province of Nova Scotia.

My colleague referenced money spent out of province. I don't know where the confusion lies, Mr. Speaker. If we're going to promote the Province of Nova Scotia, we do that outside of the province. Regardless of where that marketing contract went, Mr. Speaker, the most significant money would be spent out of province for marketing in Ontario, Quebec and the northeastern U.S.A.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, if the minister thinks that spending money in Ontario in an ad agency is going to improve tourism, unless there's an actual campaign, I can't fathom that. When will the ad campaign start, that's the question?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, the recent videos that were released as part of that strategy, the work that is being done both by the contracted corporation - and Trampoline is the local agency they've partnered with - this is all driving towards our objectives of doubling tourism revenues in Nova Scotia. Those ads have started, Mr. Speaker. We're seeing a response from travellers. They are expressing an interest, the hits on our website. There's a significant amount of work being done and we expect this will be another banner season in tourism in Nova Scotia.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nova Scotians are concerned that with the release of the budget on Tuesday, there is no real investment in health care to improve services across our province. We see increases in wait-times in almost every sector and services delivered under health care, and no answers from this government. They've spent two and a half years amalgamating the district health authorities with no new initiatives to improve services, no new initiatives to decrease the emergency room closures that we see across this province, and Nova Scotians are suffering because of the lack of moving forward with important services like that. I'd like to ask the Premier, why doesn't he think health care is a priority?

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

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Today in Question Period the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture announced that he had consulted on the topic of the lobster handling course. Earlier in media scrums he announced that he did not . . .

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a point of order; this is a disagreement of facts. We'll now move on to Government Business.

### **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 the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Supply unto Her Majesty.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, it gives me honour to speak going into Supply this morning, partially to discuss some things that are in the budget, but a lot of it to discuss some of the things that aren't in the budget.

Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to hear that we're going to invest in our young people, in decreasing class sizes from the Primary to Grade 6 level, investing in our SchoolsPlus programs and investing the money in early childhood development. Our children are our most valuable asset here in our province. To give them a good footing to start off their lives, to enhance their education as they move forward through life, to give them choices to make sure that our children achieve the highest quality standards in education they can is essential for our province moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, it's good that our children have that base so that any challenge that comes to them in their life they will be able to handle - one in learning and one in life skills in general. It's good to see there's some money invested in the mental health system and some stuff going on in the classroom, but I question if it's enough.

The first thing we heard is they are not going to reopen the mental health centre in the Aberdeen Hospital, an area that our members from the Pictou County area have said is vital to that area in dealing with mental health issues. The money that was there for that institution is going to be moved into the Truro area.

Mr. Speaker, I can speak from experience that having a loved one with a sickness, not necessarily a mental illness but a sickness, and having to travel to another area to receive treatment is not only hard on the individual but it's hard on the family as well. The individual doesn't have that family support on a regular basis, and the treatment can last a lot longer and be more difficult for the professionals to deliver.

I haven't heard much mentioned of the mental health budget being delivered to my area in Cape Breton which tells me that other areas of the province, if you have to move people, it's going to be a difficult challenge for the people who work in the mental health system in Cape Breton.

Mr. Speaker, the budget supposedly has a surplus - razor thin, \$17 million I believe - on a revenue increase of \$371 million. Now when you look at this budget and you look

at where this money is going to come from, a lot of it is an estimate up over last year that they didn't achieve, because all of a sudden we went from having a deficit of \$200 million and \$97 million to now nothing, with a surplus.

They say the ordinary recoveries, they're going to get another \$20 million this year; in government business, \$30 million; personal income taxes are going to increase by \$130 million. Mr. Speaker, with the employment situation here in our province, especially in the area of Cape Breton, unless there are more jobs created or income tax levels are raised, I can't understand where they're going to get that money. It's like me going home this weekend and telling my wife that we're going to buy a new car. We really can't afford a new car but I think we'll get more money in our pockets next year because we're going to get a raise, we think, or we'll decrease our spending on groceries this year or our power rates because we think it's going to be okay.

Mr. Speaker, that's not a way to run our household, and I don't know it's a way we can spend dollars that we don't have already. If we don't create more jobs in the province or raise our personal income tax levels, where is that money going to come from?

They're already saying that the income from corporate taxes is going to decrease, which tells me they're expecting businesses to pack up and leave or do less business in the province. (Interruption) The member for Halifax is saying that our businesses are going to do all kinds of investment. If they're going to invest, that would mean more income for them, which would mean they would pay more tax.

I'm not an accountant, Mr. Speaker, nor do I claim to be. But I do run a household, and I do have to pay bills. I can only pay those bills when I have that money in my pocket or my wife's pocket, because my kids are taking out of that pocket for their education. If I know they're going to take more out, I've got to be able to put more in before that can happen, or I have to borrow that money. Borrowing that money means no surplus.

They say the fuel costs - they're going to take in \$10 million more in revenue this year. The price of oil is down. The prices of gases have been down. They do seem to be rising a little bit over the last little while; I think they're down a little bit today. But on average, I think they should be able to tell what that cost is going to be and budget that in there.

I can't see there being any more than what people are spending already. With the unemployment rate the way it is, people aren't driving as much as they were. We're trying to promote active transportation, and we're trying to promote the transit system within our cities. We're promoting bike lanes. I don't know where that extra fuel tax will come in.

I understand there's a tax going on tobacco. People who are smokers probably won't mind paying that tax, but there are going to be people who quit because of that increase in taxes.

But if you're basing a budget on a tax that people are going to stop buying, again, that's irresponsible. When you get to that stage, I just can't see where that kind of money being brought in is going to add to a surplus if that's all down.

Our net debt is going to rise, so the service costs on that debt are going to cost us money. I didn't see that mentioned in there, Mr. Speaker.

I listened here yesterday going into Supply. The member for Cumberland North spoke about all the good things in the budget. He talked about economic development. He's proud to be part of these good things, and I guess we'd all be proud to be part of these good things, but there wasn't one mention about economic development in Cape Breton. He never mentioned one thing about the bad things in the budget or the things that happened over the last year.

A fresh way to get income, or a way to keep income, was with the Film Tax Credit. There was a study done - I think by PricewaterhouseCoopers, a respected agency in this province - that said the revenue gained from that was about \$100 million. That revenue is down. The people employed in that industry are down. There wasn't one mention about that in this gentleman's speech yesterday.

We've heard a lot about a deal for the Nova Scotia ferry out of Yarmouth and the cost of that ferry, and there's really no cap on that cost, Mr. Speaker. We're not by any means saying that a ferry is not essential to that area and the economy of the province, but if those numbers don't come across on that ferry, like they've shown not to in the last two years, with an elaborate-type ferry that carried trucks, where is that money going to come from? If there's money lost, where is the money going to come from to pay for that?

We were told in Public Accounts Committee that there's really no way that Bay Ferries can lose in this deal. They get a management fee that we don't know about, and they're going to get compensated for their losses.

One of the questions asked in Public Accounts was, if Bay Ferries loses \$1 million, they're going to get compensated for it; if they lose \$750,000, they're going to get a bonus for saving \$350,000, which to me makes no sense.

The rise in the Pharmacare - we don't have to talk about that, Mr. Speaker. We've seen the upset in our senior population about the chance, the idea, the theory that their Pharmacare costs were going to rise significantly. I know most people who can afford it didn't mind a little extra to help the people that can't. That's the type of people we are in the Province of Nova Scotia. We'll help those who can't help themselves, and we don't mind doing a little extra to have that happen. To think that we're going to get all this windfall from taxes - gas tax, cigarette tax - enough that we're going to have that kind of a surplus when the numbers haven't been there in the last couple of years, that to me talks of irresponsibility.

I didn't hear one mention of any money in the budget to go and help the Port of Sydney. They're looking for a minimal amount of money compared to what they're spending on other transportation modes in the province to increase the port traffic and the ferry traffic, which will bring a huge amount of money to our area and to the province.

An active, good cruise-ship system in Sydney adds to the ability of the cruise ships to stop in other parts of the province - in Halifax, for example - or other parts of the Maritimes like Moncton and St. John's. Without that, it's a big loss to us because the bigger ships can't pull into that dock or they can't dock two at the same time, and most people who go on a cruise don't want to be ferried off that cruise ship in the Sydney port. So with that, those people stay on board and that's a loss of revenue to our area, to our province, to the small businesses in the Sydney area that depend on that number of people coming. To me, that's just a good, solid investment that will have returns for a number of years to come.

We've been talking about doctors here in our province and the ability of people to have a family doctor for every patient - that's not happening at home. We had an unattached patient clinic - an orphan clinic, say - for people who didn't have a family doctor to go to. They can go to this clinic and get their medical needs look at. As of today, in an article in the *Cape Breton Post* I believe it said that clinic is now full, they've reached the capacity of 1,000 people. They can't take any more because these doctors are working their regular practice, their emergency-room practice, and volunteering their time to work in this unattached clinic. The staff challenges there are amazing. So if there are more people, where are they going to go?

We have talked about some new doctors coming to the area. Is it enough? If there's 1,000 people that go to the clinic who need it, how many more people are there that can't get in or won't go to the doctor or go to the emergency room because they don't have that doctor? When those medical care costs rise, they have to come from somewhere, and it's got to come from the budget.

That assumption that they need 10 more doctors in the area - where are they coming from? It'll be easy for them to fill up a caseload, but we have to have them first.

I hadn't seen a job plan. Recreation, health and wellness - not a pile of money there for people in Cape Breton. But I think the part that bothers me most is the fact that money which was put into a program called Boots on the Street is going to be taken away. The budget is cut there.

Now, we heard in here the crime rates are down that they probably don't need that money anymore. Well, logic would tell me that because that money is spent, because those extra officers are into street crime, cybercrime, drugs, anything that they put extra into - extra people with extra training on the streets and in the backrooms to prevent this stuff - that's the reason why the crime rate is down. To suggest that taking that money out of there

is okay would only put us back in the same situation we were in 10 years ago when this came into play. Now that it's under control, why would we reverse that? We know in an area of high unemployment, in an area where there is chronic illness, an industrialized area, crime is going to go up when that stuff rises.

We've got a great police force. We've got great management in that police force and they're telling us that this program is essential, essential to the well-being of the people in our community, but if they have to cut them, they are going to cut programs and by cutting programs, our best and brightest, our newest on the force there, the ones who take this training, the ones who have provided the service are gone. When they leave, Mr. Speaker, so do their families, so do the grandparents and so does everybody else who is connected with them because they have to make sure that family matters.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those few words I'll take my seat and we'll see how much of a surplus there is this budget in the coming months.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Happy Earth Day.

I rise today to address the budget that the Finance and Treasury Board Minister made on Tuesday, and I want to say how pleased I am that this government is working to make a stronger Nova Scotia. We see this in the way that this government is investing in youth, education, and job training; how it's supporting Nova Scotia's most vulnerable citizens, and providing services and care to create a healthier Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot even express my happiness, my elation when it was announced that \$6.6 million will be invested in child care. Finally, finally there is a government who is going to address child care. They are going to make and take action, to make child care more affordable for parents and to address the shameful, shameful low wages for child care workers in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I'm an early childhood educator and I did not go into the field for a big salary or paycheck. I went in because I love working with children and I love to teach, and I continue to love children and I continue to love to teach children - but do you know how low the wages are for child care workers? I know many child care workers with a four-year degree from Mount Saint Vincent who are making minimum wage, and if they're lucky they're making \$12 an hour. There are many, many child care workers and early childhood educators here in Nova Scotia who are making minimum wage and to insult that, many of them are fundraising on their hours off, on their weekends, to pay for their own salaries.

Mr. Speaker, when I moved to rural Nova Scotia, I was shocked at how low the wages were and the lack of retention for child care workers in rural Nova Scotia. It wasn't long before I discovered that people paid their evening babysitters, teenagers with no training, more money per hour than they did their day-long child care providers. It didn't take me long to discover that when I had children and I wanted to work in the field of early childhood education, I didn't receive a salary that would make it worthwhile for me to put my own children in child care and be out in the field working. So I used my early childhood education skills to do other work in rural Nova Scotia, but many of my colleagues that I had worked with previously have stayed in the field, going from centre to centre, hoping to get a few cents extra an hour to make a better living for themselves and their families.

The investments of this government in this budget to make child care more affordable for parents and increase the wages of early childhood educators, shows what this government values.

I'd like to point out to the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River that when the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development was Minister of Education in 2007 to 2009, early childhood education and child care were in Community Services and not in the Department of Education.

Mr. Speaker, the turnover of staff is very common in early childhood centres. This is because of the low wages. The increase in wages will make it easier for child care centres to recruit staff and to maintain their staff. It will ensure continuity and consistency for the families that use child care, and also for the children who are daily in child care centres. Imagine coming one week and another staff person gone and a new person there. We need that continuity for our children.

Investing in child care shows our government's commitment to families here in Nova Scotia, it demonstrates the values of this government, and it ensures that our children will start well in their early years. It's what they deserve, Mr. Speaker, and this government is going to make sure they get it.

I'll just wrap up by reading what the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board said in his statements: "Those who came before us worked to sustain their families, their communities, and their connection to this province. They worked hard, they sacrificed, and they persevered to ensure the generations coming after them would have something better. They were committed to giving their children a better future, a stronger Nova Scotia. Now is our time to do the same."

Mr. Speaker, this government is going to make a better Nova Scotia for the future generations coming. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Barring any more speakers, the House will now recess for a few minutes while it resolves itself into the Committee of the Whole on Supply.

[11:12 a.m. The House resolved itself into a CW on Supply with Deputy Speaker Mr. Gordon Wilson in the Chair.]

[3:26 p.m. CW on Supply rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Gordon Wilson in the Chair.]

MR. SPEAKER: The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House 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 Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the Subcommittee on Supply in the Red Room is still doing the estimates of the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. With the unanimous consent of the House, rather than wait for that to be done, we are looking to be able to do two government bills on second reading, so if you could ask the House for consent to proceed to Public Bills for Second Reading.

MR. SPEAKER: There is a request to revert to Public Bills for Second Reading.

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, if we could just take a quick recess to confirm things.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will recess for five minutes.

[3:27 p.m. The House recessed.]

[3:32 p.m. The House reconvened.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, if I could ask you again to seek the unanimous consent of the House to revert to Public Bills for Second Reading.

MR. SPEAKER: There is a request to revert to Public Bills for Second Reading.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed?

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, thank you to my colleagues. Would you please call Bill No. 160.

#### **Bill No. 160 - Blueberry Associations Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 160 be read a second time.

I'm pleased to rise today to speak on Bill No. 160 - An Act to Repeal Chapter 42 of the Revised Statutes (1989), the Blueberry Associations Act.

The Blueberry Associations Act was proclaimed in 1928 and is still enacted. We want to repeal this Act as it no longer provides a necessary or needed function, and our government is committed to cleaning up old and irrelevant legislation still on our books.

The fact is this Act has not been used in many years and is no longer relevant. The Blueberry Associations Act was created to encourage the cultivation of wild blueberries. However, all matters associated with are now dealt with through other pieces of legislation. There are no active associations incorporated under the Blueberry Associations Act in the Province of Nova Scotia. Today, if a group wants access to Crown land for wild blueberry cultivation, or for any other reason, leases are issued under the Crown Lands Act and the Natural Resources Ministerial Land Transactions Regulations.

The Blueberry Associations Act was also drafted in response to the problem of careless burning of wild blueberry fields on Crown lands. Protections against this activity are now set out in the Forest Protection Regulations under the Forests Act.

Mr. Speaker, the province no longer requires an Act to protect and preserve Crown lands, specifically, from careless burning of wild blueberry fields. Lessees are required to



comply with provincial legislation, which includes the requirements associated with burning, as set out in the Forest Fire Protection Regulations under the Forests Act. In addition, there are no active associations incorporated under the Act.

Last year, growers exported \$123 million worth of Nova Scotia blueberries and government announced \$1.08 million over three years to increase the amount of land for the wild blueberry-growing industry, so it is important to use modern legislation to protect the crop. We are cleaning up the legislation on record by removing this redundant and unused Act.

We encourage the cultivation of blueberries in Nova Scotia. Indeed, I've learned from my colleague the Minister of Agriculture that wild blueberries account for half the value of fruit production in Nova Scotia. Blueberries are Nova Scotia's top agri-food export. The incentive for growers to invest in their operations will stimulate more economic activity in supporting industries and supporting new and current small businesses, and lead to the creation of new jobs and the expansion of the provincial tax base.

Nova Scotians now know about the multitude of health benefits from enjoying blueberries, and thanks to market demand, again, wild blueberries are our largest fruit crop. It is worth more to our economy than any other fruit. Perhaps that is because more and more people are seriously considering the health and environmental benefits of their food.

Consumers' expectations are changing as, more and more, they recognize the value and importance of the products they purchase to feed their families. Repealing this redundant legislation sets us in that direction. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise today and speak for an hour or so on the importance of blueberries in Nova Scotia. In fact, in Pictou East I have a lot of major blueberry areas, and it's something that we're all quite proud of, to be honest.

I try to take a few days every blueberry season and go out and work with the harvesters and be around the fields and this type of stuff. I can tell you that I'm always struck by the diversity of the technologies that are employed in some of the different operations and stuff. It's really quite neat. I've had a chance to go through all facets of the program here, from being in a warehouse and taking the cartons of blueberries and loading the truck. When the blueberries show up at the facility where they get sorted and packaged to go off, you'll see some that will show up in the back of the station wagon, might just have a few pounds, and some will come in a pickup truck and it will be piled up to the top, and some come in great big box trucks. It's amazing.

I think it speaks to the importance to the economy, because you have everyone, from people who have a few acres of blueberries to people who have hundreds of acres of

blueberries, and they all look forward to blueberry time. It's a source of their annual income or it's a bit of pocket change - whatever the case may be. It's important to all of us. Most of the people who live in those areas enjoy driving through and seeing the changing of the fields and seeing when the blueberries are ripening up. Everyone knows when it's blueberry time, with blueberry festivals and all the things that go around with it - the ceilidhs. It's just a really important time.

Certainly one of my favourite things is the Blue Mountain Ceilidh, which they'll have in Blue Mountain at the volunteer fire department. It's important to the people of that community and beyond. When you go to the Blue Mountain Ceilidh, they have a barbeque, obviously; you can have your supper there. Then they will have a whole range of desserts - blueberry desserts of all different sorts. I recommend the blueberry pie there. It's a couple of the ladies from that community and the men from that community, excellent bakers, excellent bakers and certainly worthwhile.

But then of course you have the ceilidh aspect and you have the variety of music and just the people out enjoying a nice summer evening, being part of the festival. It's a part of the lifestyle in many rural communities.

I'll go back to being on the harvester and the different types of harvesting machinery that's available. Some of them are kind of push harvesters and some of them are obviously big huge tractors, John Deere and otherwise, that go through the fields collecting blueberries. It's amazing to me how efficient these harvesters are at collecting the blueberries without causing damage to them - I mean, the amount of squished or otherwise damaged blueberries is pretty miniscule when you think of the amount of acreage that they're covering and the number of fields that they're going through.

It's just a good experience for everyone in those communities and you'll see young kids working, a little bit of a summer job there. I know that every year when I try to get out to Garden of Eden area and beyond, out to East River St. Marys, with John Cameron, and that family has been involved in blueberry harvesting and blueberry distribution since a couple of generations; they are well respected in that community.

When I think about the people that grow in that area, and I know I have a constituent that has 200 acres of blueberry fields and he'd be in his 70s now, and his father before him had some blueberry fields, but certainly during his career he was purchasing fields and aggregating fields and kind of building it up to where he now has a couple of hundred acres of blueberries and this is an area he always has a lot of good stories for me about the bears in that area. Seeing the bears out in the blueberry fields eating the blueberries - and I guess a bear is also, like a harvester, is very efficient with the berries, the bears are also quite efficient as well, and he would certainly tell you that the bears can eat just the blueberries and they'll leave many of the leaves intact. I see the pictures of the bears in the fields, and big bears, and the amount of blueberries that they have and you see them with the blueberries all over them as well too.

So, it's just an interesting thing, but it's so important to this economy, because people are really starting to realize the health benefits of blueberries - and I do want to talk a bit about that. It's interesting that if you take a cup of blueberries - and I'm going to have some statistics here that really surprised me and they may surprise you as well, Mr. Speaker, or they may not. These are statistics that came from the Wild Blueberry Producers Association and if you take a cup of blueberries, a cup of blueberries contains no fat, contains no sodium, and no cholesterol, and the cup of berries, it's only 80 calories per cup. Now, I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, that's a pretty tasty little snack to be completely void of fat, sodium, cholesterol, and very few calories when all is said and done.

The importance (Interruptions) and the antioxidants, that's right, I'm going to get to the antioxidant properties of them, but I appreciate the minister pointing that out to me.

What the Wild Blueberry Producers Association would say, and this is pretty much a known fact, but I will quote what they're saying, the Wild Blueberry Producers Association says, "As people age, they often suffer from memory loss and experience a decrease in motor ability." A study that the Wild Blueberry Producers Association was quoting from by the USDA has shown that wild berries reverse the problems. Eating the blueberries can reverse the onset of memory loss and it can help people to avoid a decrease in motor ability.

But above all that, eating wild blueberries can fight the overall effects of aging. We often hear about the fountain of youth and how people seek the fountain of youth. Right here in Nova Scotia, we have significant blueberry production, and we have our own fountain of youth of sorts right before us. So it's important that any time we get the opportunity to acknowledge the blueberry industry, and to champion the blueberry industry, we should definitely be doing that.

That USDA study was very interesting in the fact that what they did was they took aged rats and they fed them blueberries. They fed them a diet of wild blueberries. Remarkably, this group of aged rats, just from eating wild blueberries, showed improvements in their short-term memory and their motor skills. Of course, that was as compared to the cohort of aged rats that were fed a diet without wild blueberries. Obviously this study was all about taking one cohort of aged rats, feeding them blueberries, taking another cohort of aged rats, and not feeding them blueberries. What the people conducting the study determined was that the aged rats who were eating the blueberries showed improvements in their short-term memory, and they showed improvements in their motor skills. I think it would be very interesting to have that full study to see how exactly that was measured. (Interruption)

My colleague here has a suggestion as to where we should use wild blueberries, but I'm trying to stay on track because this is an important study. It's an important study for our economy and our wild blueberry producers.

I would imagine, Mr. Speaker, if you envision that type of a study, and the tests that they were running the rats through, and to think of rats responding to wild blueberries and certain memory things, I think that would be a pretty fascinating study to be a part of. I certainly tip my hat to those people who were behind that and congratulate them on the job that they did so well, because it's an effective marketing tool for us as well.

My colleague across the way mentioned some of the other properties of blueberries. The outward signs of aging may be combatted by wild blueberries, since the antioxidants help the skin maintain its elasticity. We cannot under-stress the importance of including wild blueberries in your diet. We're blessed with many, many fields and many farms of wild blueberries, and it is a tremendous opportunity for us.

I was listening with great interest yesterday in estimates when the Minister of Agriculture was talking about some of the technology advancements around blueberry farming and how some of those technology advancements are taking place here in Nova Scotia. He referenced one - and I know the members will find this interesting - a computer-based technology that fits on to existing farm tractors. These would be obviously the large farm tractors as opposed to the lawn tractor variety. This computer can fit on to these tractors and sit underneath the tractor and it is looking at the actual blueberry plants as it drives along, and it is identifying weeds and spraying weeds - not spraying blueberries, not spraying the crop, not spraying the blueberry plants, the leaves on them or anything, it is exclusively spraying the weeds. Just imagine how important that is to help with the production, to make our fields more productive.

This is a technology that was developed here in Nova Scotia. I'm not sure how close it is to commercialization or what the cost of it might be but the minister did say that the computer processor of this piece of machinery has to be so powerful and so fast because you can imagine driving along and this thing is seeing plants and trying to identify weeds and then spraying them, there's a lot going on there in a short period of time. Even the computer processor element, the CPU, kind of the brains of that thing, there really weren't any computers on the market that could be that fast. That was part of the development that happened here in Nova Scotia, they actually had to develop that computer technology and all the moving parts there.

I think that is incredibly impressive and that speaks to the abilities of Nova Scotians when people will say: they come from away or we can't do that or we have to bring consultants in. I'm happy to know that situation, because that is certainly one that I will be able to point to.

When we think about some of the incredible health benefits of blueberries, one of the things that in researching for today - because I was hoping we'd have an opportunity to speak about blueberries at this hour on such a nice day, I wanted to make sure I was completely prepared for it - one of the things I didn't realize was that urinary tract infections, which are quite a common health problem, they may actually be prevented by

eating wild blueberries. So when you go all the way from helping with skin elasticity and memory issues and motor skills, it's pretty impressive how much good blueberries can do for you. I hope that all members of this House certainly get their fill of blueberries when it's blueberry season.

Now the reason that blueberries help prevent urinary tract infections, I heard one of the members across the way say it's because of the tannins that are part of the blueberry, and those also exist. They do exist in cranberries and maybe someday we'll get a chance to vote the appropriate amount of time to speak about cranberries in here, but for today, I would say that that is an interesting side effect of blueberries: the tannins that can prevent the bacteria which can cause urinary tract infections. The reason is that bacteria would often attach to the wall of the bladder and the urinary tract. So you have these tannins that help prevent that from happening, and you get that just from eating blueberries. Who wouldn't like to eat blueberries, whether you sprinkle them on your vanilla ice cream or pie or crumble or cereal?

Actually went I went for lunch this afternoon, I went to get some lunch and I ordered my lunch, and as I was waiting for my lunch to be prepared, I was looking at - I made the mistake maybe or had the good idea to look at the case of desserts there. I saw some blueberry cheesecake and I thought, my oh my, I wish I had seen that before I ordered such a hearty lunch because it certainly would have been something that I could have used. But I passed on that. (Interruption) There's a risk we have to bear sometimes.

A lot of our blueberries obviously go to the United States; that's a big customer of ours for any type of product we have like that. A lot of them also go overseas to Japan and areas like that in the East. In Japan they call the blueberry "the vision fruit," and I didn't know if members were aware of that because a lot of people think carrots are good for your vision and I think that's something that's kind of an old wives' tale, I don't know if it has actually been proven or not, but in Japan they refer to blueberries as the vision fruit because they have a belief - they have identified that blueberries have the ability to relieve eyestrain. And in fact, studies have shown that a cousin of the wild blueberry is capable of improving night vision and help the eyes adapt to different levels of light.

So imagine that. Imagine eating a nice little fruit like a blueberry and having all these benefits of improving night vision, relieving eyestrain and just really helping your eyes adapt to various levels of light. Further study is always going to be necessary to isolate what's happening here but there will be further studies that will examine the effects that blueberries may have on controlling vision problems, particularly as relates to diabetes.

So, where is all this going? All this is to say that blueberries are very good for you and we should all eat lots of blueberries and fortunately for us in Nova Scotia we have access to a lot of fresh blueberries.

So studies have shown - and I don't need to put too fine a point on this for the members today, but I will - studies have shown that a proper diet and eating habits that include wild blueberries may prevent cancer. When you think about the amount of money that is spent on cancer research and cancer prevention, wouldn't it be interesting if we could really get the rest of the world to understand the benefits of Nova Scotia blueberries, and if we could really get them eating more and more blueberries, how much better that would be for our economy here and our producers and growers here.

If we can show, and these studies are happening now, but if we can definitively show that wild blueberries contain compounds that may be able to fight cancer, and may keep certain enzymes that are responsible for duplicating cancer cells from working, imagine how important that would be. When you think about that in the context of a cup of blueberries having no fat, no sodium, no cholesterol, only 80 calories, helping with your memory, helping with your motor skills, helping you avoid urinary tract infections, helping your eyes, relieving eyestrain, and maybe even fighting cancer along the way.

I would say when it's blueberry season I always end up buying a few boxes of blueberries, and bags, even the crates from the fields, and we purchase and eat an incredible amount of blueberries in my household during that time and it's something that we all enjoy, I know the children will enjoy blueberries for sure as well.

So, just like there's a perception and people know or believe it to be the case - and I certainly do believe this to be the case - that red wine lowers the risk of heart disease, and they will say that that's mainly due to the dark red pigments in the wine, which are called - the minister might help me with this one - anthocyanins. Guess what? Those same pigments can be found in wild blueberries. So if you needed one more reason, it's very reasonable to expect that eating wild blueberries would help lower the risk of heart disease. I don't know that, in the face of all the health benefits I just described, we needed one more, but there is one more.

It is important that we support this growing industry and the potential that this industry has. Much potential is being realized at the moment, but there's more potential. I found it interesting to see where we rank in the production of blueberries in Canada, so I did a bit of research about the distribution of blueberry production in Canada. These figures are the most recent ones I could find, Mr. Speaker, and they're from 2001. I'm certain they're probably still pretty relevant.

At that time, there were seven regions of Canada that were identified as being blueberry production regions. I'll be happy to table this for the benefit of the members, Mr. Speaker, when I'm done with it.

In British Columbia, their percentage of national production - and this is based on the Bering area - is 19 per cent. So 19 per cent of the national production comes from British Columbia. They have a total of 7,653 cultivated hectares - 19 per cent.

This may surprise people - certainly people in Ontario - but blueberries are not really a big industry in Ontario. Ontario only provides 1 per cent of the national production. Just 1 per cent. That was a bit of a surprise to me, but their cultivated area is only 277. (Interruption)

Yeah, Quebec is coming up next. Quebec is certainly impressive, especially the Saguenay region there. So Ontario, not a huge player. British Columbia, at 19 per cent, is pretty significant.

I was going to wait for Quebec, but I can see the member is anxious to see exactly where Quebec fits in, so I don't want to keep him in suspense. Quebec is the largest player in the blueberry market: 39 per cent of our national production comes from Quebec. Their cultivated area is 27,911. That's pretty significant, and thank goodness for the health. It would be interesting - I wonder if there's been any studies that compared the health of people in that region, because presumably they eat a lot of blueberries in that province, especially in the region that they come from.

New Brunswick is not really a slouch either, when it comes to blueberries; they have 15 per cent of the national production. That comes from 11,301; that is their cultivated area.

Prince Edward Island has blueberries; much more blueberries than even Ontario. Where Ontario had 1 per cent of the national production of blueberries, Prince Edward Island has 6 per cent and that comes from 4,899 - pretty much 4,900 is their cultivated area. But the members may have realized, as I went through this list, I have yet to say what we have here in Nova Scotia. What we are producing in Nova Scotia is 20 per cent of the national production of blueberries. We're right there with British Columbia that is at 19 per cent; we're at 20 per cent and we're getting that from - 7,560 is our cultivated area.

When you think about the various farm production across the country and the different types of fruits and vegetables that are being harvested, when you talk about blueberries and when you talk about Canadian blueberries and wild blueberries, you really need to talk about Nova Scotia because we are a player in that market at 20 per cent of the national production, back in 2001. That is a testament to people like Calvin Fraser who have been harvesting blueberries for generations, and the Camerons. These people have got it right when it comes to blueberries. We should always be looking at legislation in this House that supports those types of industries and supports those types of people.

Now I wanted to make some sense out of the national blueberry production numbers in terms of farm cash receipts because, when you talk about just 20 per cent of the national production, it really doesn't mean anything until you give it some perspective around what that means in dollar value. If we look at - and these are only Nova Scotian numbers - when we look at the value of blueberries in terms of farm cash receipts to the province, in 2011, when we were at 20 per cent of the national production, the value of that to our province

was \$22 million, so it's certainly real money. That was at that time. That had been steady. Before that, back in 2010, it was right around \$22 million as well, so it is kind of steady. I don't have back before that, Mr. Speaker, but I'm guessing it was in that range.

Look at what has happened over the next few years, because while I didn't have the production data past 2011, I do have the farm cash receipt data and I do want to take a few minutes and share that with the House. Now I mentioned in 2011 - I'm going to put that \$22 million into perspective, just in the value of all of the farm. Total farm cash receipts in Nova Scotia, in 2011, were \$528 million - the total farm cash receipts.

Now if we think about just the crop receipts, it was \$139 million - so total farm, \$528 million, crop \$139 million; within the small fruits, \$31 million. So small fruit, \$31 million, total farm receipts \$527 million - and where were blueberries at in the small fruit? Blueberries were \$22 million, as I mentioned earlier, part of \$31 million, so pretty significant; and \$22 million part of \$139 million total crop receipts. So that's pretty significant, I would say. If you didn't think blueberries were important before those statistics, you surely did afterwards. But that was in 2011, and what I found very interesting is that since that time the value of our blueberry crop has gone up significantly. Just get a load of this now - if we think about from \$22 million in 2011, and \$28 million in 2012. That is a significant jump, but it doesn't end there; it doesn't end there. I suggest you hold onto your hats until you see what happened the next year, in 2013, from \$22 million to \$28 million.

I want to keep the suspense, but I'm so excited to tell you that I really have to tell you that in 2013 it was up to almost \$31 million. But the next one is really going to knock your socks off because in 2014 it was up to \$39 million. So from 2011, \$22 million; 2012, \$28 million; 2013, \$30 million; and 2014, \$39 million. It has almost doubled in that period, folks - and that is impressive.

That doesn't just happen - there are a lot of good farming practices behind that to help with that production and, obviously, bees and pollination of the plants are important to get us there too. We will come around to that because I think it's important to talk about the pollination of the plants.

So all of this has happened in the face of an Act that was on the books that had really kind of passed its time. And that was the Act to encourage the cultivation of blueberries, and that Act has been on the books for quite some time now. I think at the time that that Act would have come into play I would hazard a guess that the drafters of that Act would have just dreamed about the types of blueberry production and the cash receipts we're having from blueberries. They wouldn't have been able to fathom it. I'm guessing they may have - maybe I shouldn't sell them short - maybe this was exactly what they thought would happen as we got into cultivating blueberries and growing blueberries and encouraging blueberry production.



So the concept brought forward by the Liberals today of repealing the Blueberry Associations Act is an important one because that is an Act - it's past its day, and I didn't hear from the minister in his opening comments, he may have said it, but I don't believe there are any associations that are still incorporated under the Act. So in the absence of those associations being incorporated under the Act, it's probably time this Act moved along.

Before we repeal these types of Acts, we need to really kind of put ourselves in the shoes of what were they trying to accomplish, and is it still relevant today or is it not. And obviously, if it's still relevant, then we shouldn't be repealing it, but if it's not relevant, then maybe we should.

I would say time has changed since this Act came into being. Time has certainly changed and the current process is different now; we do things a little differently now. The current process has to do with leasing parcels of Crown land, and I think that has been happening in Cumberland and in Colchester Counties with some success.

I think what the department needs to be looking carefully at is - what is that process for leasing those parcels of Crown land, and is it an open and fair process and one that is available to help everyone? We have a lot of Crown land here in Nova Scotia and some of it is very fertile blueberry-growing land.

There was an RFP that had gone out for leasing out of the Crown land and the first RFP that went out was cancelled due to a lack of interest. I don't know if that was cancelled because of the size of the parcels, maybe people looked at the RFPs and said well for that size of a parcel it doesn't do it for me. I don't know if it was cancelled because of the lease conditions.

I hope that the second attempt at an RFP for Crown land will certainly garner more interest. I think that has a tender closing date of late this summer, so hopefully - we know that this is an important crop, we know it is a good revenue generator for our economy and we know that blueberries have incredible health benefits - hopefully we can find a way to get more land into production, particularly if it's Crown land that is suitable for that, because the harvesting and the exporting of blueberries has been very positive for our economy and it will continue to do so - and it will make more positive impacts as more and more people come to know about the health benefits of the product.

We do understand that this Act should be repealed. We will be watching closely to ensure that the approach to leasing Crown land for blueberry harvesting makes sense and that it is achieving the intended results. Even though in 2011 we had 20 per cent of the national production of blueberries, I think we have the potential to increase that. Quebec does 39 per cent and that potential is there for us to be a much more significant producer as well. We can do that in the face of competition from the other principal wild blueberry producing areas because the other ones we know are New Brunswick, Prince Edward

Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec of course, and where we are located geographically we always have to consider Maine. Maine at the moment is the largest producer, and that's representing up to 55 per cent of the production.

Newfoundland and Labrador is a small producer - they are only between 1 and 2 per cent of the North American production. Maine is significant, and Maine will be a competitor for us in the blueberry production and many other areas as well. We need to make sure that our laws and rules and regulations give our producers a chance to grow.

I would hope that the department will look to - we have a lot of abandoned farmland in this province and much of that is growing up with alders and other types of vegetation. I think there is a big potential for that abandoned farmland for vineyards in certain areas of the province, there is a big potential for that abandoned farmland for blueberry production in other areas of the province. That land is abandoned farmland; it has already been levelled. It has been cleared of large rocks and trees at some point in time. It's perfectly suitable and available to put back into farm production. I think we should be looking at how to do that. Many, many productive blueberry fields can be developed from these former lands.

The interesting thing about the blueberry industry, and I started with this, and in my last few minutes - I wish I had a bit more time - I'm going to try to circle back to where I started, being on the fields and in the warehouses where they're coming. The interesting thing about this industry is that it is a grassroots industry in so many ways because it's where growers of all sizes deal directly with processing companies. We know lots of other areas where that's not the case; there are a few middlemen.

When you're at one of these warehouses and you see these blueberries coming in - as I said in trailers or station wagons or old pickup trucks and stuff like that - and you talk to the people on the receiving dock who have been working there for a number of years, they'll just say, oh, that's so-and-so, and he's from out in East River St. Marys. They'll tell you how many acres that person has and they'll know everything about them because it's a community business at that level, where people rely upon those distribution facilities for good pricing, for good product movement, for good service, and for just general community camaraderie. It's very rare that the growers switch to another distribution centre. They have these relationships that they've had for generations of their families. It's important to them.

We have an industry that we can support, that there is value in supporting. Part of it is in clearing the legislation and making the path clearer for the growers. It's time that this Act was repealed. I'm a little surprised it didn't get done the last time this government was in power, but all things in good time, I guess, because we can support this industry.

I hope that in a context of abandoned farmlands and overgrown fields, some of our young farmers, our next generation of farmers, can get involved in the blueberry industry.

I know there are government programs around. FarmNEXT is a program for new farmers over the age of 19. Maybe one of those types of government initiatives, where the government can support our farmland, can be useful to those young, and not always young, but new farmers and people who want to get into farming.

It is an important industry to us and we often talk about new industries and wanting to develop new industry, high tech, incubators, and all this stuff. Those are obviously areas that I'm interested in and passionate about myself, but we have to support our traditional industries. We have to support our fishing and our forestry and our farming. Any chance that we get the opportunity to speak about the important aspects of one of those industries, and today it happens to be farming, we should take it.

I'm optimistic that we'll hear from additional members today about how important the blueberry industry is and about how important it is to have proper legislation in place that is helpful to farmers and to people who want to make a living there because \$22 million of farm cash receipts in 2011, and all the way up to \$39 million in 2014 - you can see which direction that is headed. That will only continue to grow, to go higher as more and more people understand not only how tasty blueberries are but how important they are to a healthy lifestyle.

We heard about the benefits for memory loss and for your skin elasticity and for helping to fight against urinary tract infections - eyesight - and possibly combat heart disease and cancer. Who wouldn't want to avail themselves of those benefits just by eating a piece of blueberry pie or a cup of blueberries? That's the interesting thing. This is not some type of medicine you have to take and grin and bear it. It's a tasty treat. (Interruption)

I did talk about the antioxidants. Maybe I should stress that again for the benefit of some of the members who might not have caught that.

What I would say in closing, if I may, Mr. Speaker, is that this is a good piece of legislation that the minister has brought forward. We're happy he did it. With those few words, I'll take my seat. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see that the folks at Leg TV didn't need to be woken up and stimulated to keep going. (Laughter) But no, in all seriousness, he made a lot of good points over the last almost 40 minutes on blueberries, and it's important.

To add on to a little bit of the facts of blueberries, one reason why I asked the member about production in Quebec is, for those who don't know, there's a certain region in Quebec where, if you are from there or born there, they actually call you a "bleuet." In the Saguenay region, or Alma Lac St-Jean, where I was born, people call you a "bleuet,"

or “blueberry.” It’s interesting. I don’t know if they call people from Oxford blueberries, but anyway, interesting Fact 101 about blueberries and bleuets in this country.

We know it’s important that we look at pieces of legislation that are irrelevant or may be redundant. We’re moving from our laws here in the province, but it’s interesting, Mr. Speaker. Much of the work of that over the years has been done through the Law Reform Commission which, interestingly enough was just cut in this budget. So I don’t know if they played a role in advising the government that this was a piece of legislation they needed to repeal but it will be interesting to see what ramifications we have going on to the future if they are not able to look and find other funding for law commissions.

We look forward to this going through the Legislature. We do know people within our own Party who are blueberry growers. We put the call out to see if they are concerned with this, and as it stands now, we haven’t heard back from anybody. But we’ll be interested to see if any concerns come out of this piece of legislation going through. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, it’s my pleasure to rise and say a few words about Bill No. 160. When I look at Bill No. 160, it’s probably one of the shorter bills we’ve ever had in this Legislature. I think it’s only about eight or 10 words. (Interruptions) I didn’t say it was a bad bill. I said it was a short bill.

I know it refers back to a much more lengthy bill, which is something which is in the history of the province. It was a different way of organizing how the blueberry industry operated. It is now an outdated method of operations so we’re taking that bill out and it is essentially what would be called housekeeping. I know that we have talked about housekeeping bills in this Legislature in the past and had differences of opinions about housekeeping bills, but I do think that housekeeping is important and obviously we all try ourselves to keep house.

The blueberry industry is certainly a significant industry to our province. I noticed that when I looked back, this bill had information on how the blueberry industry organized itself in the early days of the industry. Groups of people could become an association and form together, operate on Crown land and have some sort of right of control over that Crown land. It’s interesting to see how in those days that evolved. In some ways that was a true wild blueberry industry that was going on at that time.

There were regulations in the Act that related to how blueberries were burned. I notice that the burning of blueberries is no longer done but probably many people can remember blueberries being burned. This was something that was discovered accidentally, that when you burn a piece of ground, for whatever reason, blueberries will come back stronger and better than they were before. It was an effective method of weed control that

would wipe the slate clean and allow, for whatever reason, the blueberries to jump back in quicker than the other wild plants.

So, that was how it was done. It's not done that way anymore or if it was, we would all have most of northern Nova Scotia clouded in smoke in the Fall, likely, if we were still burning. It's achieved through other methods now. In the industry, burning is no longer done but the Act that was there did provide some protection to the people who were managing these wild blueberry plots. I suspect, if the fire got out of hand or damaged something else, or if there were complaints, they had the right to do this sort of burning.

It's interesting too, for whatever reason, blueberries have remained a crop that has been very difficult to cultivate in any way other than simply to allow it to grow. It's not really well understood but, in every other agricultural crop that I know of - there are probably other ones that are similar to blueberries in the world - but in my experience in all the different crops that I've seen, in every other crop I can order the seed from Vesey's or from another seed house and either plant it directly in the ground or plant it in the green house and we can have those plants come up and I can establish a field, or a farmer can, right where they want it.

With wild blueberries, it's a different story. Those blueberries have to be there and if they're not there you're not going to have a blueberry field. Even now in this - I know we've talked a little bit about the program which is a very good program for the government to allow Crown land to go to blueberry producers and I notice that's starting to happen. There already has to be 50 per cent blueberry coverage there for them to consider that worthwhile. Then they will clean that land off a little bit and clean it up, level it out and then they can continue to grow blueberries.

If the blueberries are not there, it's not worth trying to make them be there and there's in fact no way. In fact, on our farm in the Annapolis Valley it would not even be possible to get blueberries to grow, because we've already put lime for many years on the land and raised the pH. Blueberries need a very low pH and if at any time in the history of the field it has ever had lime, you're not going to have blueberries there. That's one of the reasons why our industry is in the wilds of Cumberland County and not on the Valley floor - most land on the Valley floor had lime.

However, when I was a child we had a field across the road, just a few hundred yards from home, and we would go there to pick blueberries and there were good blueberries there. It had been a cattle pasture and never had lime. So, blueberries grow in every part of the province, if the conditions are right. We really don't know what makes those seeds grow but there is speculation that somehow the blueberries passing through a bird or an animal, and landing on the ground, the seeds will pass through the digestive system of a bird, land on the ground, and somehow that will trigger that seed to grow. The reason blueberry farmers believe this to be the case is because it seems like the best

blueberries are always underneath the power line. So, that leads to the speculation that that digestive system trip will somehow trigger that seed to grow.

The blueberry industry is of course of immense importance to our province, and it has been very interesting to see, in the last few years, how the blueberry industry has changed.

It's a little bit of a surprise to me that we would be talking about Bill No. 160 in that I'm not sure in what light this sort of housekeeping needed to take place. We have lots of bills on the books in this Legislature that never see the light of day but which could be eliminated through housekeeping.

The one that we've often pointed out is that there's still a \$10 fine if you don't take your part in shovelling snow. That goes back long into the history of the province when the only way to get the roads cleared was every able-bodied man had to shovel snow, and if you didn't shovel snow, you had a \$10 fine. That probably is the monetary equivalent today of a \$1,000 fine, so you can imagine the pressure you were under to get out and shovel snow when there was a big snowstorm. If you think back to two years ago, you can imagine just how much work that would have been 100 or 150 years ago to keep the roads clean. But that bill is still on the books.

I'm not sure why in particular this bill needed to be removed. I'm saying it's a housekeeping bill, but I was not aware of any way in which the old Act impeded the blueberry industry in any way. We have some very successful blueberry organizations in the province. We have the Wild Blueberry Producers Association of Nova Scotia, which functions very effectively, and the Wild Blueberry Producers Association of North America, which functions very effectively. We have a very successful industry which continues to grow and see massive yield increases.

It's very interesting to see how that has all developed. My colleague from Pictou East drilled down into several things that are going on there. One factor is that at one time there was an enormous amount of human labour needed to harvest the blueberries. I'm not sure, but I think just like in P.E.I. or in New Brunswick, they would close school for potato harvest up until recently, up until maybe the last 20 or 30 years. In New Brunswick, in places, they would do that. I'm not sure but I think that even in Nova Scotia, the blueberry harvest would have maybe caused children to miss school. The timing is a little bit earlier; it's more in August than in the late Fall, but it's still enormously important.

What has happened is that the blueberry industry has mechanized in a way which I don't think our ancestors could have imagined possible. That has been largely through the Bragg family developing blueberry harvesters. These harvesters have enabled the industry to pick blueberries, obviously not quite as well as they can be picked by human hands, but really fairly effectively. They go through the field, and they can pick substantial amounts

of blueberries. It's my understanding that the standard blueberry picker just recently was maybe only five feet wide.

It wasn't that long ago that the Bragg family went down into the United States, bought a second-hand combine - I'm not sure, I presume it was John Deere - and took it and retrofitted it so they now had a blueberry harvester that maybe would almost span the width of this room - probably not quite but maybe 20 feet. That allowed them now to go through and harvest at four or five times the rate at which they were harvesting.

One of the things in that process that has become redundant is those little hand-held tubs that they were using are no longer adequate; they had to go to larger sized tubs. The industry is again going through another revolution in production, which has allowed it to propel itself and go forward through the creativity of individuals in the industry to have the vision to see how this machinery can be improved.

As my colleague said, the method of spraying this machinery has also changed. I really wasn't aware of that until the minister was talking. I hadn't seen that machine, but certainly that has been talked about in the agricultural world for years, the dream of having a computerized method of controlling where agricultural chemicals went so that the chemical was not wasted and it was applied directly where it was needed to be applied. The cost savings of that are immense if you can imagine the cost of agricultural chemicals and also the benefit to the environment of cutting down where indirect spray goes.

The industry has also seen an immense growth in yield as the importance of bees has been discovered in the blueberry industry. Pollination was always known to be a factor in the blueberry industry. One of the issues is that bees are not that active in the Spring when the blueberries need to be pollinated. It tends to be in a little bit cooler climate. They've always put (Interruption) This is more interesting. The bees are not as active in the Spring when it's cooler.

I know one of the things about the beekeeping industry in Nova Scotia, one of their complaints is that it's a moving target. Every time they say how many beehives they need for blueberry pollination in the province, every few years that number seems to get larger. It's not just because the acres are slowly increasing, it's because the blueberry producers have realized that more beehives per area of land pays off money. It has really driven the beekeeping industry in Nova Scotia in a big way, as the Minister of Agriculture said earlier in estimates.

What has happened is a beekeeper can achieve \$150 rent to a blueberry company for allowing that beehive to go out to the blueberry industry for a couple of weeks. What the blueberry industry does is all very scientific. When they place a beehive in the middle of a blueberry field, they know the size of the field; they know how many bees they have there; they track the daily temperature, and they know how far the bees will move depending on temperature, if it's very cold. They were actually doing the math on this

equation to know when the bees have covered that field. The moment that they're satisfied that that field has been adequately covered by the bees, they're moving those beehives. I can presume if you have a couple of warm days, the bees will cover that field.

One thing they know about bees is when they're relocated - they always relocate them at night - but it's always a little bit of a difficult transition for these bees to be relocated. The first day they'll go, even in ideal conditions, they will travel about 500 metres in any direction. If it's good conditions, they'll keep expanding their territory, and as soon as they've got that field covered, the blueberry grower will move them to another field.

The bees will ultimately, if left in one spot and allowed to forage, cover an area of five kilometres in any direction, which is about a 25-kilometre grid of area, which is fairly staggering and is something which the presence of those bees benefit the nature around them all summer. They go in every direction for food.

I don't really want to talk too much more about the bees. It's interesting to note that what happens is we have about 20,000 beehives in Nova Scotia and we bring in about 5,000, and then those hives in Nova Scotia and the ones that have been brought in slowly track north as the season progresses, their early-Spring season, because as the Spring warms up and moves to the north, the blueberry flowers become ready towards the north. In other words, you probably have fields in Cumberland County that are ready to have pollination about two weeks before you would have in fields up in the Tracadie-Sheila area. So the bees get brought into Nova Scotia, and then the ones we have in Nova Scotia and those ones that were brought in move north.

What they've discovered was there was always - just to talk briefly about the blueberry industry in New Brunswick - there has been massive growth in the blueberry industry in New Brunswick. In the past there always was a belief that you couldn't get the yield out of the blueberries in northern New Brunswick. What they discovered was that in northern New Brunswick, if you've ever been there, Spring comes really quickly. Like, one week is winter and five days later it's like summer. It just happens like that - or that's the way it seems - it's really fast.

What they discovered is that the window of opportunity to get that pollination done is very small in northern New Brunswick, but if they had adequate beehives there in that field, when that window of opportunity opened up, they could go from getting 500 pounds an acre to getting 5,000 pounds of blueberries an acre. In other words, they could have an almost 10 times increase in the yield of blueberries in the field. So this is sort of how this industry has changed, and in case you are wondering what is going on with a Nova Scotia company putting a massive investment into the Tracadie-Sheila area of New Brunswick, I can tell you that is what has happened - they have discovered how to get the yields.



Unlike Cumberland County, that area up in Tracadie-Sheila is quite flat and it is quite easy to farm, if the yields could be had. So I expect to see in the future that we'll see northern New Brunswick become a much more significant player; at the same time, I would hope that we would see more areas of Nova Scotia have a blueberry industry grow in it. That's a little bit of the history of the blueberry industry.

I know you probably are all aware that there are two kinds of blueberries: highbush blueberries and lowbush blueberries. When we use the term "wild" blueberry, we're referring to lowbush blueberries. Highbush blueberries I can actually say are grown right around my area in Kings North. I have a number of friends who are highbush blueberry growers; my next-door neighbour is a highbush blueberry grower. The highbush blueberry has also begun to dominate the world of blueberries and it is a small shrub, so it's a large plant, it would grow taller than me and produces a very large (Interruptions) Highbush blueberries produce that very large, massive blueberry. We have seen enormous increases in the yields of highbush blueberries too - more so for overall management reasons, not just pollination.

The highbush blueberry, there are a number of different varieties and the way in which you propagate and start that is much more straightforward. If I chose to do so, I'd have no trouble at all becoming a highbush blueberry grower, but it is really a totally different product, even though it kind of competes on the same market as the lowbush blueberry. People tend to be committed to one or the other, depending on their point of view, but in fact certain varieties of the highbush blueberry are incredibly filled with sugar and very sweet. We've seen the highbush blueberry industry really expanding in Nova Scotia, mainly due to a company called Blueberry Acres, which has been instrumental in encouraging other growers in the area to start up and grow these highbush blueberries.

These are exported to England and down into the United States. This is a global market and there are highbush blueberry growers in Chile, highbush blueberry growers in British Columbia, highbush blueberry growers in Africa, and at any given moment of the year there are highbush blueberries available.

The wild blueberry is what we would also call the lowbush blueberry, which is the one I have been describing as being very difficult to propagate. We've talked about the impact that the beehives have had on the industry, we've talked about the impact that the machinery, the mechanization has had on the industry.

One other very large impact it has had is that the growers in northern Nova Scotia have invested heavily in automated equipment to handle this. If you think about a 75 million pound blueberry harvest happening in a four- or five-week period you have to wonder, how do they manage to make that work? They've invested very much, the Bragg company has, through Oxford Frozen Foods, in massive plants that have the capacity to pull in the 75 million pounds of a very perishable product that, if not handled within 24 hours of picking, is going to go bad.

How they deal with that is they have very large specialized machinery to grade and sort those blueberries. One of the most amazing pieces of machinery they have is a machine that's called an electronic eye sorter. If you ever have the opportunity to see one of these machines working, it's quite amazing. I've seen it work with the little square-cut carrots, where there's just a mass of square-cut carrots flowing over this machine, faster than the eye can see them move by. There's an electronic eye looking at them, and if there's a brown carrot - so you know, when you buy your bag of frozen carrots at the store, there's no little brown ones - but if there's a little brown one in it, if this machine sees it, it gives a little shot of compressed air and knocks that one out of the stream.

It's quite staggering to see how quickly this can be done, and this is what is done in the blueberry industry. Going back to my statements about automatic harvesters, you can imagine that the automatic harvester doesn't differentiate between a green berry and a blueberry. It's going to pick them all. How you get those green ones out is you have these massive electronic eye sorting machines that cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and are computerized and will sort out all of that stuff, and will knock those out of the stream.

Then presumably at the end of the line they have a human eye watching just in case something got missed, but in reality, 99.9 percent of the work was done by these expensive machines. They're quite something to see working. If you ever have the opportunity, I would encourage you - if you enjoy how modern equipment works, this is quite a unique piece of machinery. This is how the industry has been able to manage this.

The second way the industry has been able to manage this massive 75 million-pound crop coming in a five-week period is by investing in refrigerator storage. (Interruption) My colleague is talking to me. What has happened is that, in particular, the Bragg's Oxford Frozen Foods and the Bragg Lumber Company freeze these blueberries. They're frozen and put in storage, and sometimes they can have almost a year ahead of crop, or a year and a half ahead of crop in storage.

If you think about the cost of that, the immense cost of keeping a product in frozen storage, with electrical costs - but that's what they do. There's no other way to do it. It's a fresh product, so it goes through a process called IQF, which means "individually quick frozen." Each one of those berries is frozen, but they're not all frozen together in a solid glob. If you open a bag of frozen blueberries, they're all going to roll out. They're all frozen individually.

This is put into storage this way, and it allows Oxford Frozen Foods to sell blueberries on the international market as a food ingredient. This has changed the way blueberries are marketed. They have these frozen blueberries, which presumably they sell in totes. They are selling them into the Japanese market and the North American market. When you buy a blueberry muffin from Tim Hortons, I would venture to say, I would be almost certain, that that would be a Bragg's Oxford Frozen Foods blueberry - a frozen

blueberry that became an ingredient, entered into the world of ingredient supplies, and was used in this way for the making of these blueberry muffins.

If you think about what the demands are for a modern food company - and Tim Hortons would only be one example - when they buy an ingredient, they invest in - if you were a manufacturer of cereal, if you're advertising that it has blueberries in it, you're making a multi-year commitment to a product. You've got to know you have the supply or you're not going to make that commitment.

So Bragg's Oxford Frozen Foods having that kind of supply of blueberries has allowed them to assure the world - and they have the quality programs in place to ensure a safe product - it has allowed that blueberry industry of Nova Scotia to grow to the extent that large multinational companies can have the assurance that they can create products using these blueberries and know that they will have the supply of blueberries to meet the market. The worst thing that could happen is they create a popular product and then suddenly don't have any blueberries. They're not going to even take that risk. That can't even be in the cards. They have to know that the supply of product that meets the standard of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency is there, and all of these things. I could go on about the blueberry industry, and I'm not sure if my colleagues want me to go on. (Interruption) I've been encouraged to keep talking about the blueberry industry, so I will delve into another subject of the blueberry industry.

In fact as I think I elaborated earlier, no one knows what the method of propagation of blueberries is, but obviously there's something going on there because pollination is happening. That is a sign that something is happening, and we need the bee to facilitate that pollination. Clearly, the blueberry is a type of seed. The issue is, from a farmer's point of view, what makes that seed really grow? I can't answer that. Obviously there's something happening there that's been very positive.

One thing that can be said is that the blueberry industry has been enormously beneficial to our province and has been a leader in exports. We know that the mink industry was leading for a few years, for a very brief few years. In 2012-13, I think the mink industry actually led the province in agricultural exports, but I think it would be fair to say that consistently before, and maybe even now, the blueberry industry is probably our number one agricultural export. It's an enormously important product for our province. It's been very beneficial.

To have the industry grow in the way that it has, with a lot of vision from the people who have participated in it, has been really fundamental to the economic health and well-being of some of our rural counties. I know that a good piece of blueberry land has sold for as much as \$5,000 or \$10,000 an acre. They haven't gotten the money, recently, for the blueberries per pound that they were getting in the past. It's probably because of international conditions, but likely with the change in the exchange rate, the blueberry industry will see better money in the future.

One of the things that did happen is, just looking at it from the outside, they've had a few absolutely record years of yield, and the production has outstripped the market demand. One thing that I think, as I was saying, knowing that the product is there will encourage the international ingredient industry, which supplies the big international food manufacturers like Nestle, Quaker, Unilever, and these big companies, to take advantage of those ingredients if they know they're there. It's anticipated.

I know the owners of Oxford Frozen Foods believe that there is no end in sight to the demand for blueberries; it will continue to grow. The world will continue to need food. It has certainly been a star performer for Nova Scotia, that's for sure, and we're very privileged to have a company like Oxford Frozen Foods, in my opinion, leading the charge on this. I know there are a number of other companies that are also participants.

Recently, a year ago, I went to the Blueberry Producers Association of Nova Scotia annual meeting. It was to my great surprise that I saw some of my neighbours there. I know they don't have blueberry farms in Kings County. I said what are you guys doing here? They said the old family homestead is up in Cumberland County. We've got 100 acres and we're farming that, too. They were living in Kings County, farming in Kings County, but had a blueberry farm in Cumberland County. It was a sign to me of the importance of this industry that they were able to do that.

You might wonder how somebody can manage that, to farm a blueberry farm in Cumberland County and have a strawberry farm in Kings County. The way that that was managed was that in the blueberry industry one of the things that has happened is that you can contract out most aspects of production. (Interruptions) My colleagues are encouraging me to go off topic. However, I do want to stay on lowbush blueberries.

As I was saying, the way these growers are able to deal with living and working and having a farm in Kings County, and in fact have a 50- or 100-acre blueberry farm on the old homestead in Cumberland County, was that the industry in Cumberland County has evolved to such an extent that every aspect of that production can be contracted out. So whatever needs to be done from Spring to Fall, including harvest, can be contracted out and they simply get paid for the blueberries at the end of the season.

I think that is one factor that has allowed an enormous number of small blueberry producers in Cumberland County to stay in business. I know that when you do that as a farmer, if you contract out every aspect of your business, you do take a hit on ultimate returns to you because you've allowed someone else to take, even though you've taken the risk, it certainly cuts into the profitability for those growers.

I know that when I've talked to them they are actually quite concerned about the price per pound of blueberries. As I've said, we've had a couple of record years of yield and that over-supply kind of cuts into the price of blueberries. However, the feeling is that

with the change in the Canadian dollar, that likely will open up the opportunity for more production of blueberries.

Back to this bill, what we've seen is a changing industry evolving over time and the methods and sort of how the industry organizes itself and how it manages its own affairs has changed dramatically. The bill that we are debating here reaches back in time into an era when the land was owned by the province and groups of people would create an association to presumably pick the blueberries on one hill or one field or one meadow and it would take a lot of people to pick even a small amount of blueberries by today's standards but they would have sort of control over that area and would manage it. This was the Act which enabled them to do that.

We are about to repeal that Act, I guess - Chapter 42 of the Revised Statutes, the Blueberry Associations Act, Bill No. 160 - so it just reflects the changing times in blueberries. That's one of the reasons I've talked about the changing times in blueberries because this Act is sort of a moment in history, a time gone by. Probably we could go through that conversation with most every agricultural product, the world of agriculture is rapidly evolving, becoming much more scientific.

I know that one of the advances in blueberries in Nova Scotia happened a number of years ago when the then NSAC, now Dalhousie Agricultural College, had a Blueberry Research Chair appointed, partly through industry funding and partly through government funding. That research has enabled the industry to make some of these important changes mentioned by my colleague from Pictou East in terms of spraying and stuff like that. Obviously Dal AC is all in on that and that has been very important to the industry.

I know that I've had a lot to say about the blueberry industry and I hope that I have enlightened you a little bit. I could say more about the blueberry industry but with those few words about Bill No. 160, I'll take my seat.

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

The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise to close debate on Bill No. 160. I want to thank the members opposite for their presentations. I must remark that it surely must be a record for the repealing of an 88-year-old Act of all of 13 words that we would be treated to such eloquent oratory by the members opposite.

Perhaps the Official Opposition are particularly invigorated by the colour of this popular fruit. Suffice to say that this wonderful berry gift from Nova Scotia to the world will continue to be an important product for Nova Scotia.

I move that we close debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 160. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 158.

**Bill No. 158 - Securities Act.**

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

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 158, an Act to Amend Chapter 418 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Securities Act, be now read a second time.

This legislation will help further protect Nova Scotian investors. The amendments to the Securities Act will allow certain enforcement orders from other provincial regulators where there has been a finding or an admission of breach of securities or derivatives laws to have effect right away in Nova Scotia. Securities laws are written and enforced by individual provinces. When a provincial regulator identifies a violation or conduct that is detrimental to public interest, it is investigated; and an enforcement order may be issued. Those orders however are only valid within the province that issued them.

Because the capital markets operate nationally and internationally, other provinces are often affected by the violation. As it currently stands, the Nova Scotia Securities Commission, our provincial regulator, would have to duplicate the efforts and costs of the originating jurisdiction to provide the same protection to Nova Scotian investors. The Nova Scotia Securities Commission exists to provide investors with protection from activities that undermine investor confidence in Nova Scotia capital markets.

The Nova Scotia Securities Commission protects our investors through education, compliance, registration, and enforcement of Nova Scotia securities law. These amendments will eliminate duplication of investigation and enforcement efforts by the Nova Scotia Securities Commission and will provide immediate protection to Nova Scotia residents from people or companies that are subject to orders issued in other provinces. The amendments will improve investor protection in Nova Scotia and promote harmonization with other Canadian jurisdictions' securities legislations.

With that, I will take my place and listen to the comments from my colleagues.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A pleasure to rise today and speak to this bill. It's obviously important - any time you have legislation around the investment industry, it's important to protect investors and protect Nova Scotians.

When you think about what investing is and when you have an investment, you're going to have at least two counter parties of people on each side of that kind of placing a bet. As to one person who is purchasing an investment, they're hoping to get a return on that; and the other person is selling the investment maybe in the publicly-traded market, maybe they had it for a while and maybe they held that investment for a certain period of time and now it's time for them to sell it in the publicly-traded arena; that might be what's happening but it could be an initial offering where a company is selling securities to raise money for operating cash, but there will be any number of situations and counter party arrangements and different types of investments. I hope to use a few minutes this afternoon to walk through the various types of investments and to talk about some of the things that could go wrong, and why it is important that investors are protected.

Recently I had the opportunity - I was watching a movie with my son. We were watching *The Wolf of Wall Street*. Some of the members here might be familiar with *The Wolf of Wall Street*. It's one we could talk about. (Interruptions)

I'm glad that the member is so interested. It's partly due to him that I've decided to talk this afternoon. He challenged us that maybe we didn't want to work, so we'll do a bit of work here this afternoon. I hope he is paying close attention. Maybe he can get up and speak a little bit, too.

*The Wolf of Wall Street* is the story of Jordan Belfort. It's a movie from his perspective about his experience working in the investment arena. It's his perspective. He is a salesman, and it's funny - at the start of the movie he is just a young guy with very few assets. He is trying to get out and get started in life and he has the line - and it finishes the same way - where he has had some serious highs and lows in his life.

I'll just talk about the ending for a second - not to spoil it for anyone, but it's just a funny thing. People know his story - highs and lows. He was convicted of securities fraud and had pretty significant fines, I believe in the hundreds of millions of dollars. He did his time, and now he is on a speaking circuit.

As the movie closes out, he is in Australia or New Zealand, and he is talking about the Jordan Belfort sales techniques. He comes down off the stage and he has a pen. He says to the guy in the front row, sell me this pen. The guy looks at it and he says, well, it's a nice pen; it's a blue pen. He says no. He takes it and he says, sell me the pen.

The next guy says, well, you can write with this pen; you could sign stuff with this pen. He says no, sell me the pen.

It fades off because earlier in the movie he had been teaching some people in his company, as he was growing up, the idea of how you sell something is people have to want it. They have to need it. What he was looking for was for the person that he was saying "sell me the pen" to to ask him to sign something, and then he needed the pen to sign it. That's a little sidebar on that, which I found very interesting, and even my 14-year-old son was kind of struck by that. He said, oh, that's pretty neat.

How he made most of his money was with this type of investing scheme which is called the "pump and dump." What happens in a pump and dump is you have an equity - usually a common stock instrument, publicly traded on a market, generally what they refer to as a penny stock - so it is trading for a few cents. You'll have a bunch of salespeople, a team of brokers - sometimes they call them sweatshops or whatever - people may have seen these types of movies where people are in the back and they're just phoning and phoning and cold-calling, selling the idea of making money off this stock. You might get cold-called and somebody will talk about this fascinating opportunity, and you say "put me down," and you buy some of it.

Obviously the way the markets work is when there's a demand for a stock like that, a penny stock, and the demand is coming in, it might be thinly traded - which refers to the volume of the shares per day - maybe it only trades a couple of thousand shares a day at a few cents. It's kind of a small equity and a thinly traded market.

Then all of a sudden a few people are promoting this stock, pumping this stock. This is the pump part of the pump and dump. They are calling and they get somebody to buy, and now the volume goes from a couple of thousand shares a day to maybe 5,000, 10,000, 15,000, 20,000 shares a day, and that demand is pushing the price up. The price may go up from a couple of cents to six cents to eight cents. Sophisticated schemes like this can really, really drive a stock; they can just drive the volume up. Maybe now that stock that was a couple of pennies when it started might get up to around a dollar or maybe a little higher than a dollar.

Imagine if you were behind this scheme and you had millions of shares you had accumulated at a couple of cents a day, and all of a sudden you're pumping it, and you get it up to \$1, or you get it up to some level, and it's pumping and pumping and pumping. Now it comes to the dump part. The people in the know start to sell their shares. They're selling their shares, and they're hitting the market. They're selling them into the hands of the people who are getting called and getting excited about this - you need to be part of this; you need to get in. Those people are still buying where the people behind the scheme are selling. They're dumping. So you have the pump and the dump.



These types of schemes happen all the time. They happen much more than people would expect, and they happen because of the human desire to be on the winning side of that. People want to be on the winning side of that. They want to think, wow, this is really going up; I have to get some of this, and I can participate, and I can make some money. They say that greed drives markets, and that would be an example. Greed is good was an expression from a movie; I forget which one. (Interruption) Gordon Gekko in Wall Street said greed is good because he knew, those people know, that you can use people's greed for your own benefit if you properly position things.

Why do I talk about the pump and dump? I talk about it because it underscores the importance of protecting investors from things that may be happening. They want to be part of the stock market. Society tells them they should be investing their money. They should be saving for their retirement. They should be doing all of these societal pressures that put people in the positions where they want to invest and earn their own return. Of course, they want to earn a higher return; we all would want that. What does that do? That drives people who may be unsophisticated or it may not be their forte; it's not their profession.

There are very few people who make a profession in the investment market. There are people who are, and they're specialists. They're research people. They're investment advisors. They're brokers. They're traders on the floor of an exchange. There are any number of professions around the investment industry, but most people are not investment industry professionals. They want to participate in the investment market, so they are relying on the experience and the expertise of the people around them.

If you have somebody who feels like they should be investing, they just feel that innately and what they've been told is that they should be investing so they feel that way, so they do. They take their savings and they get on a plan where \$50 a month goes into an investment account or whatever, because they feel like they're doing the right thing. In that, they have to rely on other people. They have to rely on investment managers or other professionals. So we need to make sure that those people that other people are relying upon are properly versed and doing the right thing because when you get into the world of investments, the different types of investments that are available are really pretty breathtaking, really pretty breathtaking.

Even when you think of what people would say is a normal investment, people who are familiar, it would be an equity investment in a common stock or shares in a company. Well even just in dealing with common stocks you can short them, you can go long, you can sell covered calls, or you can buy puts to get into a position. That's just with common stock. You can buy individual stocks, you can buy mutual funds - and I do want to take a bit of time to talk about all those different alternative ways to get into common stocks because I think it's important, I think it's important when we're considering this bill that we think of and try to envision the types of pitfalls.

So, most people when they think of investing think of common stocks, and when they think of investing in common stocks they generally think of as what would be referred to as going long common stocks. That is buying a stock, just passing your money over and buying a stock. You can do it on margin and - well hopefully I'll make a note and we'll make sure we don't forget to talk about the use of margin. If we go long a stock we are buying an ownership stake in a company, in an underlying company and we're hoping that that company performs well and the value of that stock will go up over time. That's a long position.

But you could bet the other way and you could short a stock, and if you were to short a stock that's the exact opposite, you're selling a stock that you don't own. The reason you would do that is that you expect the price of that equity to go down over time, and while you're shorted, while you've sold it and you don't own it, you think to yourself, I can buy it later - you can buy it later at a cheaper value and replace it and close out your position on that.

Now, it's a matter of personal perspective I would say, and opinion, but to me shorting stocks is much more risky than going long a stock. The reason I say that is when you buy a stock, let's say you buy 1,000 shares at \$5, for \$5,000 that company could fail, and if it were to fail you would lose your \$5,000. You have a kind of a - you understand the risk on that position. If you are to short a stock your risk can be infinite because you don't know how high it might go and, remember, you've sold it and in this case let's say you shorted at \$5, what happens if it goes to \$100 and you're sitting there in a short position and you have to buy that equity back to cover the short?

You could be buying it back at \$100, you could be buying it back at \$200, or you could be buying it back at some much higher amount. The risk is really kind of unquantifiable while you're short. On the long side the risk is quantifiable; you could lose your investment. On the short side you could lose your investment plus you could lose a lot more if you're wrong. If you're wrong and that equity, the price of that goes up and that company does better, you could lose much more.

Then you can get into, just when you have a - even if you're long if you have a long equity position, you could sell some calls off on that in that option market and you could put yourself into a covered call position where you would say I would be willing to sell - maybe we should continue with our example of the \$5 stock, Mr. Speaker - and you might say to yourself, I bought this at \$5 and I would be willing to sell this at \$8 and feel good about that. Then you would sell off, you would sell an \$8 call, and of course you would get some money in for that, you might get 50 cents or 25 cents depending on how volatile the stock is, but that would be a covered call.

You could buy yourself some downside protection, you could buy some puts on that, and you could say well I bought it at \$5, I couldn't really take selling it at much less

than \$3, so I want to protect myself on that downside, and you can buy what they call a put.

This is just in common equity positions there are various different things you can do. I don't know if most members in this House would be surprised by the different investment vehicles just around common stocks or not but I know most people in the public would be surprised. You could see a situation where somebody is new to investing and they decide they are doing the right thing getting involved in investing. Maybe they have an advisor who doesn't properly evaluate their risk perspective and maybe they suggest to them that they sell something short. Now we just talked about how risky that might be and that might not fit their profile. These are all things that we need to think about.

Then of course, there's mutual funds. The concept of a mutual fund would be to spread some risk because instead of buying an individual stock, you are buying a unit of a mutual fund, which is then going to buy a whole series of stocks. People would say that with a diverse portfolio of stocks, maybe the mutual fund risk might not be as much risk in that as just betting on one company. That may or may not be true because a lot of it will come down to the management of that fund - are they good managers or are they not?

You need to look carefully at what the rules are around the mutual fund. Are they only going to invest in exploration companies? Are they only going to invest in major utility companies? Is it wide open? Even within the mutual fund are they long only, short only? You may think you are buying a mutual fund and think to yourself well, it's a mutual fund, it's less risky, but it could be a short-only mutual fund and there could be some more risk there.

That is just on common equity and the various different vehicles you have around that. We have a whole proliferation of investment vehicles. We have hedge funds, we have alternative investment strategy funds. These are all types of things that the ordinary lay person won't be that familiar with and may not understand the risks associated with them. Where it becomes dangerous is because they may not think they have to be because I have a professional that I am relying upon. That is why it's important that we have good regulation around keeping people on the straight and narrow on that stuff.

Now I did have a chance to look on the Security Commission's website. I just did a little scan of different sanctions that have been levied by the Securities Commission. As of December there was a list of 85, let's call them investment dealers who had been sanctioned here by the Nova Scotia Securities Commission. Some of the sanctions are up to \$1 million of sanctions: \$430,000, \$150,000, \$356,000, \$518,000. These are very significant fines and penalties. I didn't have the opportunity to research some of these to see what drew those fines and penalties, but I think it would speak to the need to having good legislation, good rules, and a powerful commission there. I think that would speak to it.

It goes all the way down, there's a couple here for \$500. So we are talking about the entire spectrum of what would be infractions in this case, a whole, wide range of infractions - some very offensive and some what would be considered maybe a slap on the wrist. But the commission deemed necessary to sanction all of them - 85 just at that point in time. To me, that was a bit of an eye-opener.

Then I went and I looked at the commission's website. I looked at some of the alerts they've issued. Even today, as we sit here, there are active alerts on that website. They're always trying to warn people about schemes and scams and everything else that is going on. I don't know how many people are hearing about these. To me, personally, it was a surprise that there were this many alerts. I found that surprising. I'm sure maybe many other people would find that surprising as well.

But if you look at some of the types of alerts that are being issued - you had an alert about medical marijuana stocks. I've noticed just personally in discussions with people over the past year or year and a half that that's been an area where people really thought they could make some money: medical marijuana stocks. Certainly there were people who were hoping to make a fortune in that. When you have those types of situations developing, people will prey on that and try to sell investments in a medical marijuana company that maybe doesn't even exist in some of the cases.

I'm sure some of these fines and sanctions had to do with that as well. They could be as a result of pump and dumps, which we talked a little bit about earlier. But these are just situations where the commission is saying to Nova Scotians, "Be careful about this." That's the message from these types of alerts.

There was an alert there which I had to go and do some research on, because I didn't really know what it meant. That probably wouldn't surprise many members of this House. It was an alert for people to be on the lookout for "unregistered binary option platforms", which I guess means that there also are some registered binary option platforms. We didn't really get into a fulsome discussion on options, and maybe we should do that if time permits this afternoon.

From some research around what binary option platforms are, it said that binary option platforms allow investors to bet on how a particular underlying asset will perform over a time period. This would be your calls and your puts and your straddles and your leaps. My colleague might know a few other different types of option options. But these would be platforms, I guess, that possibly purport to do some of the work on your behalf.

Maybe a computer system is going to say, here is our recommendation. I remember at one time - and I don't know if it still exists or not - on the Yahoo finance page, you could go under their options link there, and you could put in the symbol for an underlying equity, and it would return some pricing charts for you on the premiums, what you're going to get on the calls and the put sides. Actually, you could get it to run scenarios for you where it

would recommend different strategies and what the likelihood of success or failure on that strategy was.

This is what happens when computers get smarter and smarter and investment markets get smarter and smarter. Sometimes with things like momentum trading and different platforms, they almost become self-fulfilling. If you have a momentum trader who's seeing the volume on a stock pick up and seeing all the indicators around that stock pick up, then people want to get into that - the momentum traders - and it just kind of fulfills it and fulfills it until it's time to get off that trade and then you hope you get out at the right time.

I found it interesting myself, the number of alerts that were being issued by the commission and for the diverse range of things that those alerts were being offered. When we talk about anything around security's rules and regulations, we should talk seriously about it. I would say from my perspective, when you're talking about a complex industry like the investment industry, we need good laws around that. We need good regulations around that and we need to know what we're talking about when we're changing them.

So, I look forward to seeing this proposed piece of legislation move along and see what we hear from the different people and with those few words I'll take my spot and let my colleague have a few of his.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I was enjoying listening to my colleague speak today. I think he shared a lot of information with the House. I think he deserves a hand.

Mr. Speaker the security for investors is very important and when we look at the personal savings rate today, I was just looking at it - and this is in the United States, it wouldn't be far off in Canada - the annual savings rate on a percentage from 1959 to 2016 was about 8 per cent. It went to a high in 1975 of 17 per cent but then about 10 years ago, in 2005, it was as low as about 2 per cent.

The reason I mention that is we're certainly living in an environment where there's not a lot of safe return out there, at least in traditional savings vehicles like bonds, because the interest rates are so low and of course that can cause people to choose riskier strategies to try and make some return on their money.

We're living in an environment where there is more reward to spend your money. Certainly mortgage rates were at lifetime lows for any of us in this room and really, rates can't go much lower. If you look at some countries - in Japan the rate of interest is actually a negative rate of interest, because they actually want to go a step further and they want to

penalize people keeping their money in cash, which is not something we've ever seen here, to my knowledge.

It's interesting because it shows you the depths that some countries are going to, Mr. Speaker, to try to stimulate expenditure and stimulate investment. It really is almost a sign of desperation and some people believe that this kind of activity doesn't give us a lot of hope for a good investment climb in the near term. It reminds me of a funny saying that I read recently in a book I was reading about the stock market. It was a book written a long time ago in the 1920s, *Reminiscences of a Stock Operator*, it's a famous book, and one fellow was heard to have said that the market was so bad that not even a skunk could make a cent. I kind of liked that; I've tried to commit that one to memory.

So, certainly, Mr. Speaker, when markets are not great - and we can't say they've been that bad. I mean things have been great certainly since about January 26<sup>th</sup> of this year, the markets have been wonderful. But we've had a lot of volatility, and there have been periods like the crash in 2008. People are worried. You have people who are retiring or about to retire and they might have a defined contribution pension plan and, well, it's certainly not guaranteed in terms of their pension, so they're going to take out a lump sum when they retire and all of a sudden the market crashes, and they are in an unenviable position.

Many people had to keep working. People who were planning to retire around 2008 had to keep working. That puts pressure on people to try to get better rates of return. It also puts pressures on advisers. I know my colleague was talking about some of the alerts he had seen on the security regulator website. Inevitably there are people who do things that are not legal - sometimes maybe trying to help clients, but perhaps more often trying to help themselves.

In an environment where people are looking for that quick, easy return, they may get lured down a path that they shouldn't go, because there aren't those traditional easy routes of return.

I know I had a little bank account when I was growing up, and back in the 1980s you could get a pretty decent rate of return just inside your bank account. You could get 8 to 10 per cent at one time. If people could get those rates today they would be more than pleased, and we would probably have a higher rate of savings in North America if rates were higher.

My colleague was referring to a couple of movies there, and I thought of one movie - well, it was just rotten, but it would strike you as funny because it was so rotten. That was the movie *Glengarry Glen Ross*. It was Alec Baldwin, I think, as one of the main characters. He has a few very notable lines. One of them is "A-B-C. Always be closing." Suffice it to say his goal was to close the sale no matter what. They had a competition, and the first

prize for the winner was a new car; the second prize was a set of steak knives; and the third prize was “you’re fired.”

I laugh, but it kind of gives you some insight into the pressure that is on advisers and the old term “stockbroker,” which is not really used anymore. It gives you some insight into the pressure that some of these individuals are under, personally and financially.

We also must consider and accept the fact that some of the people, although they have certainly not made the right decision in convincing clients to make bad decisions - but you can understand people in a situation, under stress, why that might happen. I think sometimes these advisers have put their own compensation above the interests of their clients. We saw one famous Nova Scotian case; we saw an adviser given a jail sentence for that just a few days ago.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of people are not really familiar with investing. They might be at a period in their life where they’ve got some savings and they think there’s a really great opportunity, and they may be lured in a direction that they will be very regretful of at some future point.

I think it’s very important with this bill. I know it’s about sharing information and ensuring that somebody who is licensed to sell securities to investors in this province, if they are doing it in other provinces - if something happens in another province, people in Nova Scotia can be protected against that happening to them, in the sense that people will know if their licence is suspended in another province and understand that it will be suspended here as well.

It is very common, Mr. Speaker, for advisers to be licensed in more than one province - very common. In fact, it makes you wonder why advisers can’t just register in one place. I know that advisers would prefer that, because I think it’s between, roughly, \$300 to \$400 per province that you are licensed in, so the cost if you’re licensed in a few provinces is not insignificant. Certainly, the question, I guess, that would be begged to be asked would be: for what purpose? If it’s to raise revenue for government, well that’s obvious. One must consider where the benefit is either to the adviser or the investor in that case. Why not just be registered in one spot, a central registry? That way, people can be protected and we wouldn’t need to go to the lengths that we’re going to with this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it’s very important for investors to be protected. The industry is a self-regulated one. That gives a lot of power, a lot of influence, and a lot of responsibility to the industry. Certainly the industry doesn’t want investors having bad experiences because that doesn’t make for good publicity; it doesn’t make for good investor relations; it doesn’t support confidence in investing; and really, in a self-interested way, it doesn’t help the industry make any more money itself.

I remember when I worked in the industry, you would see reports of advisers who had run afoul of rules, may have cost their clients money as a result, and they were being fined. There was a lot made of that. I know firms certainly didn't want their own names dragged into that. So there is a lot of incentive to protect investors.

But we also have to remember that we have to protect the investors from the industry itself from time to time. If we look at the stock market crash in 2008, Mr. Speaker, a lot of that was caused by the ratings firms which would place their stamp on a security - usually a bond in most cases, because there is a lot more money invested in bonds than stocks - much, much more. People often invest in bonds. There are various ratings. You can have junk bonds that can be very risky, or you can have very safe bonds like a Nova Scotia Government provincial bond, which would be very safe. The ratings agencies were placing their ratings, their stamp of approval, on bonds and saying they were safe when they weren't. They had either not done their due diligence, or they had turned a blind eye for some reason, but the end result was a stock market crash like we've not seen since 1929.

I remember, as I've said in the Legislature before, working in an office at that time and seeing advisers who had been in the business for sometimes well over 30 years. I remember looking at the look on their faces when the stock market would be down 600, 700, or 800 points. It was pretty scary because you would be looking to these people as ones who would be confident, people who have seen a lot, and to see the look on their faces, clearly there was something very seriously wrong. Investors were getting hurt. It was quite shocking.

The point of this, Mr. Speaker, is it is incredibly important for governments to be vigilant about the markets and not to hand all of the power away to the industry and to the markets because bad things can happen, and they do happen. It was very embarrassing, and I remember somebody had travelled down to New York, and they were down on Wall Street, or they were at a meeting or a conference, and one of the Americans was feeling kind of puffed up and they had said something about Canada being kind of a socialist country. Very quickly the person had made a quick comment back, well could we be any more socialist than how the American Government bailed out all of those big banks that had caused a lot of these problems? Very quickly there was a silence.

Once again the point being, Mr. Speaker, that government cannot let go of its responsibility to ensure that the investment markets are as safe as they can be for the investor, because that is ultimately what makes our world go around. There are lots of companies and private businesses out there that operate and don't need a stock market, but many of the companies that operate in the world, like it or not, are very large and they are all capitalized through the markets. It is an integral part of how the world works and how wealth is transferred.

Sometimes that can be a good thing. We won't get into talking about how wealth is shared in the world, Mr. Speaker. There's also the challenge of too much wealth in too



few hands. We've seen things like - not so long ago, although it seemed to kind of die off - those 99 per cent rallies and protests and really people speaking up who feel that too much of the wealth in the world is concentrated. I can certainly see why people would feel that way. It is a reality that may not be healthy for our world. It is certainly not healthy for the people who are living without in our world.

Mr. Speaker, it's very important that people be protected because really, when you think about it - and this might be kind of a funny little sidebar - people who are very successful are not always good people, certainly not in every case. There are people out there - and we heard my colleague talking about the movie *The Wolf of Wall Street* and Gordon Gekko, the very famous character could certainly be considered a bit of a psychopath, but a typical example of somebody who really rises to the top.

We see this in a lot of fields, pretty well any field where people are successful. You can have people who are dominant and for some reason they have a real strength or a real talent. The same is true in the financial industry. You can have people who are very motivated by money, who would just love to make a quick gain, a paper profit, at someone else's expense and they would not see anything wrong with it. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing wrong with it, at least in the sense that people can invest, people can accept the risk when they do invest.

There has to be some protection. I know this bill is aiming to improve that protection and I think that's a good thing. There are various elements - you know, we are only seeing one very small part of it here today with this bill. I also think about the industry itself being self-regulated. It has a lot of power and sometimes I wonder if it has maybe too much power. If we look at - the industry is self-regulated. The people who sit on that board are all experienced people in the financial industry. They would have many shares in the big financial institutions. Certainly there would be some interest on their part to ensure that things stay the same, that things stay profitable.

I think probably one of the reasons why we have some of the highest mutual fund fees in the world is because of that. In Canada, an equity fund - this is a few years ago - the average fee was 2.46 per cent. If you're an investor, Mr. Speaker, before you get a one basis point of return, you're going to be paying that fee to the fund manager.

So, Mr. Speaker, there may be things that are in place that keep that that way, to protect things, because there are interests at play that may be desired to be protected. I know one of the challenges, too, is we have all of these provincial regulatory authorities, provincial security commissions. They're all operating independently and it probably keeps the regulation a bit fragmented. It keeps it a bit harder for the regulation side to come together to change things. I mean a lot of people who are working in regulation, certainly for the firms, they're working on behalf of their firms as well. They know who their employers are. They are not going to be requesting changes that might affect the profitability of those firms.

These are kind of heavy matters, Mr. Speaker and certainly not ones that I would want to go into too much today. I know we're getting kind of close to the weekend. We're just minutes away now, and it's kind of a heavy topic, as I suggest. There are things that I think about and things that I think about that could improve things for investors in terms of getting them a little more return, which makes a big difference overtime. If you get an extra per cent every year, over time it can turn into a very significant difference in your favour, over the long run.

I also think about advisors out there who may be just as well off without - there needs to be obviously oversight, but one would question how much value firms are bringing to that picture. They certainly don't want to give up the power to license advisors because that would be giving up the power to collect that revenue.

So, those are things I think about and certainly we wouldn't be getting into those with this bill. I think about whether we want to win the first prize of the car, or do we want the steak knives, or do we want to get fired? Mr. Speaker, I think we would all like to have the car and I think most people today would be glad just to get in their car to leave the Legislature, but there's some patience I'm hearing around. I think that maybe people will want to come back and continue this debate on this bill at a future point and in fact, Mr. Speaker, according to the rules of the House, we will have to come back at a future point to continue discussion on this legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, I would ask the member if he would be interested in adjourning debate? It's 5:59 p.m.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I think I would be amenable to that. I would now move to adjourn the debate for today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn debate on Bill No. 158. Would all those in favour of the motion please say, Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. We will meet again on Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, from the hours of 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. at which time, following the daily routine, we will resume into estimates and following estimates we will resume second reading of Bill No. 158 and also Bill No. 161, which was introduced today.

Mr. Speaker, I already indicated that the Law Amendments Committee will be meeting on Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 a.m. I can advise that Bill No. 160 will be

considered on Monday as well during the Law Amendments process, for those interested in that bill.

With that, I move that the House do now rise to meet again on Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again on Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned until Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 6:00 p.m.]