



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2016

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 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. We'll now begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

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

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I hereby beg leave to table the Workers' Compensation Board's 2015 Annual Report for the fiscal period ending December 31, 2015.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

As Speaker, I am tabling two reports pursuant to Section 28(2) of the House of Assembly Management Commission Regulations, on behalf of the members for Chester-St. Margaret's and Kings South, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016.

The reports are tabled.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, in my capacity as Minister of Justice and Attorney General, I hereby beg leave to table the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission Annual Report for 2014-15.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 3423

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

Whereas across our province physicians provide high-quality health care to tens of thousands of Nova Scotians each and every day; and

Whereas physicians work in a variety of roles, from family doctor to specialists and surgeons who all play their part in helping Nova Scotians to live their lives to the fullest; and

Whereas May 1st is a day dedicated to appreciating Nova Scotia's doctors and the very important work they do;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly recognize May 1st as Doctors Day 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.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 170 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 217 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Income Tax Act. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

Bill No. 171 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 22 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia Act. (Hon. Tony Ince)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

MAR. SPECIALTY SERV. DOGS SOC. - ENFIELD FUNDRAISER

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Very competitive here this morning, Mr. Speaker.

The Maritime Specialty Service Dogs Society in Truro aims to train service dogs and give their recipients a new lease on life and independence that they might not have had before being paired with their service dog. Dogs can be trained to assist people with PTSD, autism, cerebral palsy and other movement disorders, diabetics, epileptic alert, and more.

I would like to particularly recognize the work of Kim Cavanaugh, a vet technician and a proud member of the Maritime Specialty Service Dogs Society. Having completed the Cloverfield Specialist Trainer Program, Kim trains service dogs using modern, positive, scientifically-based methods of training.

Service dogs can have a profound and lasting impact on the lives of those dealing with mental illness and help them live fuller and healthier lives. The society is hosting a fundraising event this evening at Shooters Bar and Grill in Enfield on Saturday, April 30th . . .

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

The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

WOODS, DAVID: SOC. JUSTICE/EQUALITY WORK - CONGRATS.

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the great achievement of Dartmouth community leader David Woods, who was awarded the 2016 Harry Jerome Awards for Entertainment by the Black Business and Professional Association in Toronto this week. Woods was honoured for his lifelong work of brilliantly articulating and showcasing African Nova Scotian and African Canadian history and culture in his poetry, plays, paintings, storytelling, acting, and so much more. Woods has been a tireless activist for social justice and equality in Nova Scotia and Canada, and I ask that all members join me today in congratulating the tremendous work of Mr. David Woods.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

WILE, MR. CHRIS - MAHONE BAY VOL. OF YR.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to take time to recognize one of Mahone Bay's foremost volunteers, Mr. Chris Wile. Chris was recently recognized by the province at the Nova Scotia Provincial Volunteer Awards as Volunteer of the Year for the Town of Mahone Bay.

For 27 years, he has been a dedicated member of the Mahone Bay Volunteer Fire Department, having served as firefighter, first responder, captain, chief engineer, and treasurer. He has also been very active in all fundraising activities including organizing and operating bingo twice a week, cosmic bingo once a month, working the canteen, and participating in the annual door-to-door fundraising campaign. Chris has also been instrumental in the maintenance of the fire station. I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating Chris Wile in being named Nova Scotia's Provincial Volunteer Awards as a Volunteer of the Year for the Town of Mahone Bay.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

BATHERSON, ROB - HFX. C OF C: TENURE - CONGRATS.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce is a business leadership organization whose core purpose is to help Halifax reach its full potential as a world-class city. It has been the voice of Halifax business for the past 265 years.

For the last year, the chamber has been led by Robert Batherson. As chair of the board, Rob has been an effective and tireless advocate for the 1,700 businesses that belong to the chamber. Over the past year, Rob has propelled the chamber forward with skill and

vigour, and along the way achieved positive change for chamber members. I have no doubt that Rob will be counted among the chamber's most able board chairs of recent history.

I would also like to welcome incoming Board Chair Carol MacMillan, who will take the reins from Rob for the coming year. Today it is my honour to congratulate my friend on his successful tenure as Chairman of the Board of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and wish him all the best in his next challenges.

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

WATSON, MURRAY & JUDY: DOCTOR SHORTAGE - EFFECTS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, there is a growing crisis in our province. More and more residents are losing and going without a family doctor.

The upcoming retirement of a doctor in my riding of Sackville-Cobequid is leaving people concerned and scrambling to find a new doctor. Murray and Judy Watson are two patients being affected by this problem, and they have various medical conditions that require ongoing specialist appointments and are concerned about who will oversee their medical needs.

I'm asking the Premier to assure Murray and Judy that he will live up to his election promise of a doctor for every Nova Scotian.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: I beg leave for an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. BERNARD: I turn your attention to the east gallery. We have Miss Lillian Curlett and her mom, Kim, as well as Ben Tabor and Patti Waller here today. If we could give them the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

CURLETT, LILLIAN - FUNDRAISING

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: I rise today to speak about a youth in our community who is one of many proving that Dartmouth's future is in great hands. Miss Lillian Curlett, who is here with us today, has recently moved to Dartmouth North and will be hosting her birthday party tonight at her church hall. This in itself may not seem remarkable; many children have big parties. This one will have a DJ'ed dance, door prizes, and cupcakes - lots of cupcakes.

What makes this party - and by extension, Lillian - so extraordinary is that this is the fifth year in a row that she has asked for gifts for others in her community. Since Lily was six years old, instead of presents for herself, she has asked attendees to her birthday to bring donations to the East Dartmouth Christian Food Bank. Over the years, the parties and donations have grown. Two years ago, it was a sleepover with 27 attendees.

Last year, Lily said to her mom, Kim, "Mom, this year I want to go big. I want to get as much food for the food bank as I possibly can get." Last year's dance had 110 attendees . . .

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

The honourable member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg.

**BROWN, SHAWNA/GLACE BAY FEMALE BANTAM AA MINERS
- LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: I rise today to congratulate Shawna Brown of Howie Centre and her team, the Glace Bay female Bantam AA Miners, as they finished up their 2015-16 season in fine style.

Shawna and her team ended this season as the Southern Conference league champions. I stand here today to congratulate Shawna Brown, along with all her teammates as well as her coaches, for all the hard work and dedication they put into making their team champions and giving them the understanding of the importance of teamwork.

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

BUS.: EAST COAST MUSIC IND. - BUS. STUDY

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, the East Coast Music Association has recently announced partnerships with regional and national music organizations to work together to strengthen the business side of the Atlantic Canadian music industry. The group is set to undertake a business study of the music industry on the East Coast.

As with the film industry, there is a strong business argument for investing in the music industry. Many in the industry are still waiting for the tax credits that they were promised by the Liberal Government in the last election. Executive Director Andy McLean has said ". . . music is a huge economic driver. It's about the new economy, it's about jobs, bringing people back to Atlantic Canada."

Mr. Speaker, musicians across the province are looking forward to the release of this report and are expecting that there will be a music recording tax credit announced, as was promised during the last election campaign.

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

PAUL-GOULD, JACOB - LT.-GOV.'S AWARD

MS. PAM EYKING: I rise today to congratulate Jacob Paul-Gould of Eskasoni for being selected as one of 10 winners of the Lieutenant Governor's Respectful Citizenship Award. This award recognizes young people who show outstanding leadership and commitment to fostering inclusive environments in their schools and communities.

Our communities are immeasurably enriched by the presence of young people like Jacob. He is an example for his peers and all members of society. I wish to commend Jacob on his great work.

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

ASTEPIHEN, STEPHEN ET AL: NORTHSIDE SPORTS HALL OF FAME - INDUCTION

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: I rise today to thank the Northside Sports Hall of Fame for their recent inductions. Four builders were honoured: Steve Astephen, Simon Chiasson, John Coleman, and an old coach of mine, Frank McNamara. Two athletes were inducted: Stan McInnis and Jack MacLeod. The only team enshrined was the 1964-65 Nova Scotia Intermediate "B" hockey champions, the Bras d'Or Lakers. The Joe Scott annual award was given to Leo Steele.

It's a true honour to have this opportunity to thank the society for their 5th annual induction night and to congratulate the worthy inductees on this well-deserved recognition.

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

ROSEWAY HOSP. - ER CLOSURES

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: As March came, the people of Queens-Shelburne were still facing ongoing shortages at their only hospital in the nearby area, months after the Minister of Health and Wellness's announcement.

On Tuesday, March 15th, the Roseway ER closed at 5:00 p.m. and would not open again until Wednesday at 8:00 a.m., a total of 15 hours. The next day, on Thursday, March 17th, the ER closed at 6:00 a.m. and would not open until 8:00 p.m. that night, a total of 14

hours. The very next day, Mr. Speaker, on Friday, March 18th, the ER closed at 6:00 a.m. and would not open until 8:00 p.m. that night, another 14 hours.

Over the course of three days, in the Town of Shelburne, the only ER in the community was closed for a total of 43 hours. Mr. Speaker, to be continued.

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

REID, DONNA

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place today to recognize Donna Reid. Donna has been a long-time resident of the community of Cole Harbour, raising her two children Kayla and Kristopher. Donna has been very active in volunteering in minor sports in the areas of softball and hockey.

Today marks Donna's retirement as a civil servant from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Cole Harbour Detachment, after 30 years of dedicated service to the men and women in uniform and the local area residents. Never one to sit idle, in her retirement, Donna has accepted a part-time position as a field supervisor with Yellow Pages. Donna will also continue to explore her passion of cruising around the world with friends and family.

On behalf of the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, congratulations once again to Donna on her retirement, and we thank her for her years of dedicated service to Cole Harbour and Portland Valley.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

KENTVILLE KINSMEN & KINETTES - VOL. EFFORTS

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Kentville Kinsmen and Kinettes who create a spirit of goodwill toward their community. Each year the service club holds their radiothon benefit for the Christmas Miracle, which in turn supports the purchase of gifts for less fortunate children at Christmas. The Kings County 4x4 Club works co-operatively to deliver the presents.

President Wayne MacEachern and Kinette members Emily Deveaux-Starratt and Susan Graves generously volunteer their time to work with this worthwhile campaign. The Annapolis Valley group is very small but these dedicated and caring individuals perform many acts of kindness. With only 11 members they still manage to distribute over \$40,000 each year to local causes, and since its inception 51 years ago, the Kentville and District Kinsmen Club has disbursed in excess of \$2 million to those in need.

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

WYNNE, ERIC - WELL WISHES

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of our NDP caucus, I want to send well wishes to Eric Wynne, a Halifax photographer with the members of the Halifax Typographical Union. Eric recently suffered a stroke while on the picket line and I understand this comes at a time when he has been caring for his wife and mother, who have their own medical concerns.

Mr. Speaker, it's evident Mr. Wynne and his family are going through tough times. Friends and family have started a crowdfunding campaign to help the Wynnes during this difficult period of unrest. I offer Eric and his family our support and wish him a healthy recovery.

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

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS - HAPPY EASTER

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish all Orthodox Christians celebrating Easter this weekend a Happy Easter.

I am often asked why Orthodox Easter falls on a different day. This can be summarized by two factors: adherence of Orthodox to early practices of the Christian Church, Easter takes place after Jewish Passover maintaining biblical sequence of Christ Passion; the second factor is that Orthodoxy follows the Julian calendar, which is 13 days ahead of the Gregorian calendar, and Mr. Speaker, that is also why Orthodoxy celebrates Christmas on January 7th.

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

**RODD, PAUL/RUTHERFORD, GARY
- N.S. HIGHLANDERS MILITARY RIFLE ASSOC. SHOOTS**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I'm always pleased to see members of my constituency doing well at something they enjoy. During the past winter Paul Rodd of Brookfield and Gary Rutherford of Old Barns were part of a four-man team that won first place in the Nova Scotia Highlanders Military Rifle Association Shoots, falling only 46 points short of a possible 4,800.

Individually, Mr. Rodd placed third and Mr. Rutherford fifth, in the overall competition. Mr. Speaker, I wish to offer congratulations to Paul Rodd and Gary Rutherford on their achievements.

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

ROSEWAY HOSP. - ER CLOSURES

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, as March turned to April the closures continue. On Monday, March 28th, the Roseway ER closed at 5:00 p.m. and would not open until Tuesday at 8:00 a.m., a total of 15 hours. On Friday, April 1st, the ER closed at 6:00 a.m. and would not open until 8:00 p.m., a total of 14 hours. One week later, on Friday, April 8th, the ER closed at 6:00 a.m. and would not open until 8:00 a.m., a total of 14 hours. And five months after the minister came to the Town of Shelburne to address the ER closures, closures keep increasing.

Oh, Mr. Speaker, before I leave for the weekend, I'd like to inform the Minister of Health and Wellness that when I get home to Queens-Shelburne this weekend, the ER at Roseway yet again will be closed.

To be continued.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

CZAPALAY, HARRISON - AUTISM ADVOCACY

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, it's a great inspiration when a stumbling block is turned into a stepping stone. Mr. Harrison Czapalay was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder at the age of three. Now, at 22, he is an advocate for people with autism, the one who has the experience and compassion to speak for those who cannot.

On April 2, 2016, World Autism Awareness Day, Mr. Czapalay organized a charity barbeque in Wolfville that raised funds for the Acadia S.M.I.L.E. program and the Annapolis Valley Chapter of Autism in Nova Scotia. He knocked on every door on Main Street to encourage businesses to "light it up blue" for autism awareness. The Great Pyramids of Giza were lit up blue on April 2nd and, thanks to Mr. Czapalay, so was Acadia University Hall.

On behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly I would like to commend and thank Mr. Harrison Czapalay for his important advocacy work in raising awareness of autism.

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

CLARK'S HBR./CDN. COAST GUARD: SERV. (50 YRS.) - CONGRATS.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, this year the Town of Clark's Harbour will be celebrating the many lives that were saved through the efforts of the Canadian Coast Guard for the last 50 years. The Coast Guard vessels have been stationed in Clark's Harbour since 1966 and respond to incidents from Yarmouth to

Liverpool. Before their arrival in Clark's Harbour the nearest Coast Guard station was in St. John, New Brunswick.

There are currently two vessels located in Clark's Harbour, with 14 crew members in total. They work tirelessly to provide safety to all who navigate our coastal waters. I would like to congratulate the Town of Clark's Harbour, captains and crew members for the Canadian Coast Guard, for the past 50 years of excellent service.

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

MOTORISTS: SCH. BUS SAFETY - AWARENESS

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: With the warm weather slowly approaching, I would like to remind motorists to take extra caution on all roads and streets. Children are now more prevalent and we want to keep them safe.

Constituents are reminded that they can contact many of their MLA offices to request community slowdown signs. I also want to raise awareness for bus safety. During the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. the roads are busy with students heading to and from school.

I would like to remind motorists that flashing amber bus lights mean that the bus is about to stop, and at no time should a motorist attempt to pass a school bus while lights are flashing. Children are coming from different directions and have the right-of-way to cross when the amber and red lights are flashing.

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

JEWELLS, JAMEY - WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge Jamey Jewells of Donkin. Jamey is back on the court gaining more high-level experience prior to this summer's 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. As a member of the Toronto-based Scarbarian Tigers, the 26-year old is playing in the 2016 Canadian Wheelchair Basketball League National Championships in Kamloops, B.C.

Jamey also participated in the 2012 London Games. Jamey Jewells is an inspiration for all of us who know her personally. We are very proud of Jamey - Jamey is a true "Jewell" of Cape Breton.

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

PURDY, ALEX: THEATRICAL ROLE - CONGRATS.

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate Truro's Alex Purdy on his first professional theatrical role of the young Charles Manson in Michael Melski's new play *Creepy and Little Manson*, which debuted at Eastern Front Theatre on March 31st.

Alex is a graduate of the Colchester Education Centre where he was part of several musicals. I also started my theatrical career there, Mr. Speaker, and I sought out Alex and encouraged him to participate in three of my annual Shakespeare in the Park events where he played Romeo and Hamlet last summer.

Alex's future is certainly bright. He has auditioned for the National Theatre School of Canada and Ryerson just recently and received callbacks, so we're waiting with bated breath to find out if he gets accepted. Congratulations to Alex, we support and love you.

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

MACMULLIN, MAUREEN: TEACHING EFFORTS - THANK

MS. JOYCE TREEN: Mr. Speaker, Tallahassee Community School in Eastern Passage is very fortunate to have an energetic, creative and dedicated music teacher. Ms. Maureen MacMullin goes that extra mile when planning school assemblies and concerts.

Recently Ms. MacMullin was thrilled to be part of our welcome party for a Syrian family that settled in our community. She organized the choir of 40-plus children to sing songs to the family at the event that took place on Sunday, February 7th. Maureen went the extra mile and rewrote the song Farewell to Nova Scotia to fit the event, alternating it to Welcome to Nova Scotia. Many of the verses in the songs were adjusted to be about the community of Eastern Passage, Cow Bay and Shearwater.

We all know how much difference an enthusiastic teacher can make in a child's learning experience, so with that I ask that this House join me in thanking and praising Ms. Maureen MacMullin for all the hard work she does for her students . . .

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

The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

CHALK DUST: COMMUN. SERV. - THANK

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chalk Dust, a group of teachers from Bras d'Or Elementary who became the house band for their school choir.

Ian MacLeod, Jennifer MacDonald, Jimmie Campbell and Roy Dawson have taken Chalk Dust on the road for the past eight years, playing special events and fundraisers for churches in the community.

The joy of music has kept this not-for-profit group an in-demand ensemble for many years. It's a true honour to have this opportunity to thank Chalk Dust for their services to the people of our community through their music.

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

MACDONALD, REID - WELL WISHES

MR. BILL HORNE: The Lockview Dragons boys hockey team recently helped make a child's wish come true. Reid MacDonald, a young Canadiens fan, was diagnosed with immune deficiency at six months old. After a bone marrow transplant from his sister, Rory, Reid had a six-month stay in isolation in Montreal.

Now three years later his wish is to visit Disney World. The Wear it for Wishes Program has players dress in jerseys bearing the Children's Wish logo. The Lockview team raised over \$1,000. Reid, dressed in a Dragon's jersey, dropped the ceremonial opening puck. The special night came to a wonderful conclusion with the Dragons winning 3 to 2 in the final game of their season.

I wish to express how proud I am of this young team and wish Reid our very best.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

DESBOROUGH, KAY: CASE FOR SMILES - DEDICATION APPLAUD

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to recognize Kay Desborough for over 14 years of her involvement with Case for Smiles. The cause was started by the mother of a 15-year-old boy with cancer in the U.S. It has grown over the years and resulted in more than 1 million pillowcases for children in hospitals across North America. Since 2002 Kay has been making vibrant, brightly-coloured pillowcases for children of the Aberdeen Hospital, the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, the IWK and so many more.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Kay for her years of dedication to Case for Smiles and for bringing this wonderful initiative to children and families both in our community and across the province.

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

SOTIRAKOS, JOHN: MANSION ON THE HILL STUDIO - CONGRATS.

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize John Sotirakos who began providing one-on-one music lessons to students in his home over 30 years ago, and he built Mansion on the Hill from these humble beginnings. John grew the business, opening the doors to the first location in Brookside in 1996. Mansion on the Hill now has two locations, one on Brookside, the other in Tantallon.

There are now several very talented professional instructors employed through Mansion on the Hill, teaching a great selection of a long list of musical instruments. Students are encouraged to perform as much as possible and the Mansion on the Hill music studios provide regular opportunities for students to show what they have learned, in a relaxed setting. Lessons are offered for all ages, from beginning to advanced.

I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating John on the success of Mansion on the Hill and thank him for growing Nova Scotia's rich heritage of fine musicians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

EL-HAWARY, BETTE - SANDY YOUNG AWARD

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Bette El-Hawary is the recipient of this year's Sandy Young Award, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to sport in Nova Scotia.

Bette came to Halifax with her family at the age of six and pursued her love of swimming with the Halifax Trojans. She has been the executive director of Swim Nova Scotia since 2000. She earned her Bachelor of Arts at Dalhousie in 1998 and swam for the Tigers for three seasons.

A dedicated volunteer, El-Hawary has taken on a number of roles at the national and international levels; in recent years, Swimming Canada's Youth Olympics 2010; Youth Tour 2012; Junior Pan Pacific Championships 2012; and Commonwealth Games, 2014 team manager. She also served as team manager at the World University Games in 2011 and 2013, and was most recently the team leader at the 2015 event.

Her time, effort, passion and commitment to the development of sport in Nova Scotia is a perfect match for what the Sandy Young Award is designed to recognize.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**PORT WILLIAMS & DIST. LIONS CLUB:
ADOPT-A-HWY. PROG. - COMMITMENT THANK**

MR. JOHN LOHR: The Adopt-A-Highway program is the international roadside litter cleanup initiative.

In Nova Scotia, the program was started in 1977 by the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, the Lions Clubs, and Clean Nova Scotia. I want to take this opportunity to thank Eldon Smith, Kendall Hutchinson, Dave Seaboyer, and Brian Tupper of the Port Williams and District Lions Club, and the many residents of Port Williams for their tireless work for this local cleanup process.

These individuals deserve recognition for the pride they demonstrate in their community and the example they set for all, and their commitment to the betterment of their community.

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

LOCK, JANINE - LT.-GOV.'S AWARD

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: I would like to bring attention today to an outstanding young student from the Strait Area Education Recreation Centre.

On February 24th, Janine Lock was the deserving recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Respectful Citizenship Award from Lieutenant Governor J.J. Grant and the honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. It was fitting as February 24th also marked anti-bullying day in Canada. As you know, the Lieutenant Governor's Respectful Citizenship Awards were "created in 2013 and are designed to recognize young people who help to create safe, inclusive spaces where bullying is not accepted and tolerance is encouraged."

Janine is extremely involved in her school and community. She co-chairs a program that provides Christmas gifts to needy families, and she created a program to engage younger students on long bus rides home.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you join me in commending Janine on her great work. Our communities are immeasurably richened by the presence of young people like Janine. She is an example for her peers and all members of society.

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

CROWELL, AMY - EDUC. WK. AWARD

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, 25 educators from across Nova Scotia were recognized during the Education Week Awards Ceremony held on April 18, 2016, in Bedford. This year's theme is Media Literacy: Empowering Critical Thinking in a Digital Media World.

Among those recognized was Amy Crowell, a teacher at Clark's Harbour Elementary School. In her classroom, Amy has incorporated digital photos to create art, research projects using Web searches, and has explored global issues by communicating via email exchange with Germany, China, and Africa. Amy continues to teach the importance of cyber safety and creating a positive cyber footprint through ongoing conversations with her students.

I would like to congratulate Amy for receiving this award, and thank her for her dedication and her contribution of time to her students.

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

LEVINGSTON, TYRONE: YOUTH COMMUN. - EFFORTS THANK

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I just want to take a moment to recognize a member of our community, Tyrone Levingston. Since coming to the CBRM, he has been tireless in his pursuit of a professional basketball team in Sydney. Aside from all of his hard work in establishing a basketball team, he's a great community leader. He has been a very positive force for youth in our community both on and off the basketball court and, as I see this morning, he continues his pursuit helping students in Eskasoni at their elementary-middle school with a shoe drive.

I want to ask members of the House to thank Tyrone for all the work that he does for youth in our community, and I personally want to thank him for being a great friend.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

**SWAB AND SAVE A LIFE EVENT
- STEM CELL/BONE MARROW DONOR DRIVE**

HON. MARGARET MILLER: It is estimated that over 6,200 Canadians will be diagnosed with leukemia this year. Saran Jarvie, from Elmsdale, discovered she is one of those people. She is well known in the community, having dedicated so much time and effort to both East Hants Adult Learning and to East Hants Community Rider. Now it was Saran who needed the help of her community, as her family looked to residents to help save her life.

On April 3rd, Saran's daughter, Caitlin Patterson, hosted a very successful event at the Elmsdale Fire Hall - Swab and Save a Life was a stem cell and bone marrow donor drive. This event went far beyond the simple opportunity to educate the public on leukemia and the importance of bone marrow donors; it offered on-site testing to find compatible donors for Saran, as she required a bone marrow transplant. Donors, unfortunately, have to be between the ages of 17 and 34.

Mr. Speaker, to Caitlin's credit, 50 residents of East Hants have now been added to Nova Scotia's Donor Registry.

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

The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

RCMP - COMMUN. EFFORTS

MR. GORDON WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all recognize the important work the RCMP do in our communities but this is only part of what they do. Many volunteer their time and most are asked to help out in unexpected situations.

A couple of weeks before Christmas, the Digby RCMP definitely got a call that falls in the second category, when asked to help herd some pigs off Highway No. 101 and back to their farm. That same week they participated in a province-wide campaign to Stuff the Cruiser and spent the afternoon collecting food donations for the Digby Food Bank. Given the added demands at the food bank at Christmas, their contribution of two food-filled cruisers was much appreciated. This was a couple of days after Christmas, the Bisons, a coral group from the detachment, spent part of their evening singing Christmas carols at a local seniors home.

We're all thankful for the role the RCMP plays in our communities protecting our families and our home but I would like to thank them for the other things they do in our community, just to help out. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

RATH, STU - COMMUN. SERV. AWARD

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, Stu Rath, one of the most successful business people and most outstanding community supporters in Colchester County, has been a member of the Truro and Area Chamber of Commerce, the Industrial Commission, CORDA, Colchester Park Development Commission, Colchester Regional Hospital Foundation, the fundraising committee for the new regional hospital, the NSBI Board of Directors, the board of governors for the Maritime Junior Hockey League, chairman of the

Provincial Exhibition Park in Bible Hill, owned and operated Truro TSN Bearcats which won the Allan Cup in 1998, and Truro Junior A Bearcats since 1997.

He sponsored the development of the Rath Eastlink Community Centre, the Rotary House Campaign and the Palliative Care wing in the Colchester East Hants Health Centre. The prestigious Community Service Award, presented by the Rotary Club of Truro was presented to Stu on February 18, 2016. There is no more deserving recipient.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie.

ATKINSON, REBECCA/SOBER ISLAND BREWING - WELL WISHES

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, we are lucky to live in a province with many energetic, talented and creative young entrepreneurs. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize one of those entrepreneurs in my riding. Rebecca Atkinson, a native of Sober Island, a community near Sheet Harbour, is the owner and creative mind behind Sober Island Brewing, a new craft beer company.

The business just debuted its first brew, an oyster stout made with oysters from Sober Island Oysters, as well as an English golden rye, at the annual Saltscapes East Coast Expo. She hopes to operate a destination microbrewery on Sober Island. In the meantime, her brews will be available at the Henry House Pub and Restaurant, and at Liscombe Lodge on the Eastern Shore this summer.

I wish Ms. Atkinson and Sober Island Brewing a prosperous future and thank her for her vision and investment in our community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

MCFETRIDGE, GINA/ARCHWAY INSURANCE: GROWTH - CONGRATS.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to recognize constituent Gina McFetridge, CAIB, vice-president of her family's company Archway Insurance, for the business's new location and growth.

Archway Insurance is an Atlantic-owned, independent insurance brokerage and one of the largest in the region. The company is a vibrant enterprise, providing many stable jobs in Nova Scotia. In 2013, Archway Insurance received the National Family Enterprise of the Year Achievement Award by the Canadian Association of Family Enterprise.

The Halifax branch, led by Gina, has experienced remarkable growth. Recently four smaller metro locations were combined into a brand new space in Bayers Lake on Chain Lake Drive, housing their 27-plus professionally-trained employees.

I ask that all members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Gina McFetridge and the Halifax team at Archway Insurance and wish them continued success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**STUDENT SUMMER SKILLS INCENTIVE GRANT PROG.:
RECIPIENT ORGANIZATIONS - CONGRATS.**

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the hardworking Cole Harbour-Portland Valley organizations who I'm very pleased to say were recipients of the 2016 Student Summer Skills Incentive Grant Program. They are: the Cole Harbour Hurricanes Parents Association, the Boys and Girls Club of Cole Harbour, Cole Harbour Outdoor Pool and Tennis, Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society, Cole Harbour Soccer Club, St. Vincent de Paul Parish Church, Stevens Road Baptist Church, Titans Gymnastic and Trampoline, Colby Sailfish Parents Association and Dartmouth United Pentecostal Church.

Congratulations to all, and I would like to extend my thanks to all of you for your great contributions to the community.

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

LEVENTHAL, ABE JOSEPH: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, on March 21, 2016, we lost a wonderful person: Abe Joseph Leventhal, who was a young 90-year-old man. Mr. Leventhal was the proprietor of the Waverley Inn business, which he enjoyed running very much and had run for decades and decades. He was also a lifelong member of the Beth Israel Synagogue.

In life, Abe was a quiet philanthropist, and that has not changed since his passing. Since his passing, he has made many generous donations to Beth Israel Synagogue, Dalhousie, the IWK, friends, family, and many of his lifelong staff at the Waverley. I am honoured to have known Abe. He was a gentleman and will be greatly missed.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

DAVIS, KAY: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, a long-standing pillar of our community recently passed away. Kay Davis - teacher, businesswoman, and former town councillor for the Town of Bridgewater - passed away on February 25th at the age of 93.

Kay was an incredibly active member of our community. She was the recipient of the Provincial Volunteer Award for Bridgewater in 1999. Kay served three terms as town councillor and ran her own business for many years. Kay's efforts, alongside her husband Ellis, made our community a better place. Kay was a woman prepared to put in the work, time, and commitment to an organization or program, and our community will always be grateful to her and her family for her efforts.

I would like to take this opportunity to send our condolences to Kay's family and friends.

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

WALKER, LAUREL - MENTAL ILLNESS ADVOCACY

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Laurel Walker, a Fairview resident and childhood friend who helped found the annual Halifax Suicide Prevention Walk, an event with over 200 participants. Laurel has been dealing with her own mental illness since she was a teenager, while simultaneously trying to help others. Her fight for access to more resources was spurred by the suicide of a close friend and her own suicidal thoughts.

Participation in the Halifax Suicide Prevention Walk is a way for people to share stories of loved ones and support family and friends. It raises awareness of mental health and the need for mental resources and programs. The walk also shows people suffering from mental illness that they are not alone.

I wish to recognize Laurel Walker for her strength to battle her own illness while still being able to advocate for others who suffer from mental illness in the community.

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

LAMBERT TODD DAYS - COMM. MEMBERS/VOLS.

MR. DAVID WILTON: Mr. Speaker, every year in Reserve Mines they celebrate Lambert Todd Days. Who is Lambert Todd, you ask? Well, Lambert Todd was the first community-owned racehorse in North America. He was purchased by a group of eight businessmen from Reserve Mines in 1929.

The committee, which includes Jackie Murray, Lorinda McNeil, Debbie Oliver, Ben Haighway, and Jo-Lanna Murray, were looking into the name for their festival. They noticed that along with Lambert Todd, Reserve Mines had a number of firsts, including the first credit union in Nova Scotia, opened in 1933, as well as the first library, in 1935. So it seemed fitting to name the festival after Lambert Todd.

The festival is in its 19th year, and without the dedicated committee members and their volunteers, it would not be the success it has become today.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

DEVEAU, LINDA B. - COMMUN. SERV.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize one of Yarmouth's most dedicated volunteers, Linda B. Deveau. For nearly 30 years, Linda has devoted her time and energy to many community organizations and events.

Her work as pageant chairperson for 25 years was an instrumental factor in the success of Yarmouth's famous Seafest celebrations, and she is still a faithful volunteer for Seafest to this day. Linda is one of the organizers for the annual Yarmouth Hospital Foundation gala, an event that has raised more than \$415,000 in support of community health care.

Linda has also dedicated her time to the Yarmouth International Air Show, Yarmouth Crime Stoppers, the Yarmouth Tall Ships committee, the western branch of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, the Yarmouth Skating Club, the Children's Wish Foundation, the Princess Tea Party, the World Junior Hockey Challenge, the Yarmouth Chamber of Commerce, and the Yarmouth Rotary Club, and the list goes on.

I would like to thank Linda B. Deveau for her many years of generous and steadfast service to her community. We are truly fortunate to have her.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

KLAPSTEIN, LESLIE - ANTIGONISH CO. MUN. VOL. OF YR.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the members of the House join me to congratulate Leslie Klapstein on receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award. Every April, municipalities in Nova Scotia nominate a volunteer to receive a Provincial Volunteer Award. Leslie was chosen for the award by the Municipality of the County of Antigonish. On April 4th she was presented with her award from Nova Scotia's Lieutenant Governor, J.J. Grant, and the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, Leslie volunteers very closely with many youth organizations such as Girl Guides, Scouts Canada, and 4-H. She's actually going on her 17th year as a leader for the Great Outdoors Project for the St. Andrews 4-H Club. Leslie has participated in the Nova Scotia Outdoor Leadership Program and works with the Fresh Air Society, promoting hiking and other outdoor activities.

Mr. Speaker, Leslie is not just a volunteer, she is a role model. As someone who donates her time for the youth of Antigonish, she is setting an incredible example of what it means to be a leader.

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

CAMPBELL, RICHMOND - COMMUN. SERV.

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Richmond Campbell for his long service to the community as a board member for Woodens River Watershed Environmental Organization. Richmond has given selflessly of his time and talents over more than two decades towards preserving and enjoying the natural environment for all to experience.

As a co-founder of WRWEO, Richmond worked collaboratively on many projects and partnerships, perhaps the greatest of which has been the Bluff Wilderness hiking trail, which was built to allow the general public to become aware of the extraordinary natural assets of this area, on the principle that awareness is the first step in protection.

In 2010, Richmond Campbell was awarded the Colin Stewart Conservation Award for his role in the conceptualization, development and maintenance of the Bluff Wilderness hiking trail. I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in thanking Richmond for his vision and dedication to such an invaluable endeavour.

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

SMITH, SHAQUILLE: ACHIEVEMENTS - CONGRATS.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize and congratulate Shaquille Smith, a native of North Preston and a member of the Acadia Axemen basketball team, on his achievement as the 2016 recipient of the AUS Student-Athlete Community Service Award. Shaquille is also the Atlantic Conference nominee for the prestigious Ken Shields Award and maintains an impressive 3.3 GPA in the classroom. Shaquille volunteers his time with the Sensory Motor Instructional Learning Experience - S.M.I.L.E. - working with children with autism, and also contributes to Auburn High School's Mental Health Day.

I congratulate and commend Shaquille on his very significant achievements and wish him continued success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

BILL NO. 74 (2007): FIXED ELECTIONS - DATE GIVEN

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Yesterday the Premier granted me the privilege of choosing the date for the next provincial election. With such privilege comes great responsibility. In the wee hours of the morning I have decided that in the interest of fairness to all those involved that this election date must be revealed to all immediately.

In keeping with the Premier's own recommendation introduced in this Legislature by way of his Bill No. 74, the Elections Act in 2007, and by the power vested in me, I hereby declare the date for the 40th Nova Scotia General Election to be Tuesday, October 10, 2017 - that being the second Tuesday in October in the fourth calendar year following the last general election, as the Premier intended in 2007. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

BRAIN WARS: PARTICIPANTS - CONGRATS.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: I don't know how you follow that, Mr. Speaker.

On February 19th, students from J.L. Ilesley High School and Pathways Spryfield joined other high school students, universities, and corporate teams to compete in Brain Wars at Saint Mary's University. The teams had to complete a number of challenges that tested multiple intelligences.

The day proved to be a lot of fun for all who participated as they worked together to solve the unique challenges. Students from J.L. Ilesley and Pathways had a great time and had the chance to work on their team-building skills as they worked together throughout the day.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the House to please join me in congratulating all the teams that participated in Brain Wars. They had a chance to display their creativity and knowledge while performing fun and challenging activities.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

SALAH, NICHOLAS - BIRTHDAY (1 MO.)

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish my grandson, Nicholas William Salah, a happy one-month birthday today. He is brother to Anthony Maroun. I want to congratulate my daughter Stephanie and son-in-law Christopher for bringing into this world two beautiful grandchildren and wish them many more children, not only to increase our population in Nova Scotia but also to increase my family size.

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

ZINCK, RITA & RICHARD - ANNIV. (50th)

MR. BEN JESSOME: Sometimes it is important not to just celebrate the large milestones - well, I guess this is considered a large milestone - but to take the time to notice the little events that truly make up the social fabric of community and shine a light on what can be accomplished with time, patience, and love.

To that end, I'd like to extend a heartfelt congratulations to Rita and Richard Zinck, who will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary tomorrow, April 30th. This couple has lived in Hammonds Plains for over 40 years, raising two daughters, Lisa and Julie, and minding their four grandchildren, Jeremy, Jessica, Jacklyn, and Jamie.

The Zincks are truly an inspiration to couples everywhere, and I ask all members of the House of Assembly to join me in wishing them health and happiness as they continue their lives together.

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

DETHERIDGE, CLAIRE: RECOVERY - BEST WISHES

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I'd like to take a moment to talk about my friend and former colleague, a councillor with the CBRM. Claire Detheridge has been a councillor for over 30 years with the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, and in those 30 years she has been a great defender of the people of her riding and people right across the municipality. She's been a true advocate of the public library system, and she's been a true advocate for public safety. Claire has had a bit of a break from politics, but I hope to see her back soon, and I just want to take this opportunity to wish her all the best in her recovery.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**GENGE, LAUREL/HALVERSON, BENJAMIN
- LT.-GOV.'S EDUC. MEDALS**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Each year, beginning in 1961, the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia has presented the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal to Grade 11 students across the province. Every year, each high school in the province is given the opportunity to nominate two students in Grade 11, one female and one male, for this notable award. Students are selected based on commendable performance in the courses in which they are enrolled, and demonstration of qualities of leadership and service in the school and community.

This year at Liverpool Regional High School the honourable J.J. Grant, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, presented medals to Park View Education Centre students Laurel

Genge and Benjamin Halverson. I ask all members of the House to join me in congratulating Laurel and Benjamin for earning the honour presented to them by the Lieutenant Governor with the Education Medal.

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

**BUCHANAN, ROBERT “BOBBY” G.:
BADDECK VOL. FD - SERV. (50 YRS.)**

MS. PAM EYKING: I rise today to acknowledge Robert “Bobby” G. Buchanan for his over 50 years of service to Baddeck Volunteer Fire Department. Bobby is a dedicated community leader and volunteer. Aside from his work with the Baddeck Volunteer Fire Department, he has also sat on the Baddeck Village Commission, is a founding member of the Baddeck Curling Club, and has been a member of the Baddeck Lions Club for over 50 years. Bobby is a humble but true community leader. I would like to thank him for his many contributions to the community over his many years of service.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**PENG FAM. (WOLFVILLE):
MUSICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS - CONGRATS.**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Imagine the delight of enjoying your child performing arias on the piano and violin. Now multiply that delight by four. Chantal, Charlotte, Carmen, and little Colette - the eldest 15 and the youngest 7 - delight audiences wherever they play. Chantal has enchanted local and international audiences on the piano, even taking the stage at Carnegie Hall. Charlotte received a Junior A Fiddler Award at the local festival and won second prize at the Maritime Fiddle Festival. Ten-year-old Carmen received the Acadia University Rose Bowl for piano at the Annapolis Valley Music Valley. Little 7-year-old Colette has been gifted with perfect pitch.

On behalf of the House of Assembly, I would like to congratulate these young ladies and their parents, Acadia University statistics professor Jianan Peng and their mom, Gwen, who have nurtured their children’s love of classical music from the womb.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much everybody for all those very thoughtful members’ statements. We’ll get ourselves in the mindset for QP coming up in a few seconds, and we’ll wish the honourable member for Pictou West happy birthday today.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - SUTHERLAND HARRIS MEM. HOSP.: AFTER-HOURS CLINIC - CLOSURE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. At midnight tonight, after more than 40 years of service to the people of Pictou, the after-hours outpatient clinic at Sutherland Harris Memorial Hospital is going to close; that means that hundreds of residents of the area will go without the medical attention they need.

I'd like to ask the Premier, is he prepared to watch this clinic close tonight?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to assure him that the minister and the department and the Health Authority are working around the clock to deal not only with that clinic, but ensuring that health care teams across the province are there to respond to the needs of citizens.

We are very grateful for the men and women who got the doctors, the nurse practitioners, the health care providers who are out there working across our communities. Can we always have more? Of course we can, Mr. Speaker, and the department and the Health Authority are working diligently to ensure that we are out there competing for those doctors.

MR. BAILLIE: That's all very well and good, Mr. Speaker, but the people of Pictou County have been waiting for months to see what the plan is to keep that clinic open so that people will get the after-hours medical care they need. It is the job of the government to make sure that they have plans in place so that these clinics don't close.

Mr. Speaker, it is closing because of doctor retirements, retirements that have been known for months and months and yet there is no plan to keep the clinic open - why did the government fail to plan for those retirements so that clinic would not have to close tonight?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we're continuing to work with our medical providers across this province to ensure that we have access to medical services in communities from one end of Nova Scotia to the other; we're working with Dalhousie Medical School to ensure that we have designated seats where doctors will work in under-serviced areas around Nova Scotia; and we're continuing to look at a collaborative care model.

What the honourable member speaks of is not unique to Nova Scotia, it's something that is across Canada, where doctors are retiring and a new health care delivery model is coming out where it's a collaborative practice, where nurse practitioners, dietitians, physiotherapists, are working in collaboration with their team pharmacists to ensure that they provide health care services to their citizens.

I want to assure the honourable member that the department and the Health Authority will continue to work with the community of Pictou to deal with this issue.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, that clinic is going to close at midnight, tonight; the people of Pictou are going to go without the after-hours care they need, tonight; and they will not have the medical services they need as of midnight, tonight.

There is a solution, Mr. Speaker, to make sure they don't go interrupted in their medical needs, and that is to send some doctors there on a locum basis until a permanent solution is found. It is sad that we got to this point, but there is a way to tell the people of Pictou now that they won't go without after-hours care.

Will the Premier commit to providing locum doctors to keep that clinic open until a long-term solution is found?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. No citizen in this province will go without medical care when required. We have a wonderful EHS service, it has been providing service across the province. We have emergency rooms across the area if they require a service.

We're going to continue to work with community members to ensure that we have the health care in communities across this province. I want to thank the citizens of Pictou who have been working with the Health and Wellness Department and the Health Authority to continue to bring together a collaborative model that will work for the citizens in that area, just like the citizens across all parts of this province, Mr. Speaker, who are working with the health care provider to ensure that the service is there when citizens need it.

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

PREM.: AFFORDABLE HOUSING - UNDERSPENDING

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Premier why it was that he decided not to spend \$6 million he budgeted for affordable housing last year. He gave a high-level response that did not tell us why this money was not spent.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is what justification can the Premier provide today to explain why he did not spend \$6 million last year on affordable housing?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question and I want to thank her for giving me an opportunity to respond to it again today.

She would well know that that money would be committed. It has been carried over into this fiscal year. The issue becomes whether or not someone who has received a grant

has been able to find a contractor to be able to do that work in time. We certainly wouldn't pay for services that hadn't been completed, but we budgeted for it and set that money aside.

We've seen some projects and houses that are not completed, so that money will be there, set aside again as well, Mr. Speaker. That will be accounted for in this fiscal year. All of the money that had been associated for those programs is out there. We're just waiting for the work to be completed.

I think the honourable member would think it would be prudent for government to wait for the completion of that work before we actually pay the bill.

MS. MANCINI: Thank you for the confirmation that the money wasn't spent, Mr. Premier.

The Bloomfield development project is at the centre of the housing strategy. For years the Premier has dragged his feet on the Bloomfield project, refusing to push the purchase and sale agreement past Cabinet approval. This year the Premier decided to hit the reset button. Last month the Premier informed the public he would be putting out an expression of interest to the private sector - meaning years of wasted time on affordable housing.

Why, after two and half years, has the Premier just decided to put out an expression of interest to the private sector to develop the Bloomfield project?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to correct the honourable member. That money has been committed to the citizens across this province around affordable housing. We've continued to budget in this cycle.

I think it would be inappropriate for the honourable member to mislead this House to suggest that we underspent that budget when that budget is committed to those families across this province. I believe, quite frankly, she owes an apology to the small business owners who are working with those families to complete their projects to ensure that we have affordable safe housing across this province. This government will continue to look after those citizens who require our support.

MS. MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, the Bloomfield project was supposed to have been well underway by now. Imagine Bloomfield has formally cut ties with the Premier due to their frustration with the lack of progress and lack of transparency. Meanwhile, our province's most vulnerable are losing hope that they will soon find safe and affordable housing in Bloomfield.

My question for the Premier is very simple. Will the Premier commit to Nova Scotians today that the Bloomfield development construction will begin this year?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to assure all Nova Scotians that we will continue to work with them to ensure that there's affordable housing from one end of this province to other. We'll work with our partners to make that happen.

It's really ironic that the New Democratic Party is now here asking questions about affordable housing when for four years they sat on \$50 million of funding from the federal government and didn't invest in Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, they were waiting (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, while they left the federal money sitting in the bank, we're spending it with Nova Scotians and ensuring that our contract will deliver affordable housing to Nova Scotians. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: PICTOU RESIDENTS - MEDICAL HELP

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. A Pictou County doctor recently closed down his practice and told his patients that if they couldn't find a doctor - in fact, they probably wouldn't find a doctor - they should rely on the Sutherland Harris after-hours outpatient clinic.

We all know that after today, that clinic is no longer there. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned for these constituents. Will the minister please advise the residents of Pictou, who now have no doctor and no after-hours outpatient clinic, where they are to seek medical help?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I can tell the member opposite is that so far into 2016, recruitment is going very well across the province. We have been able to fill positions in communities that (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness has the floor.

MR. GLAVINE: We've been able to recruit in some communities that have gone looking for a doctor over a five- or six-year period. Yesterday I named some of those communities - Baddeck and Neil's Harbour, as examples. Now we're going to take a look at what is needed in Pictou. I know there's a collaborative practice that a number of these patients will move toward as this private practice now closes.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, the whole county is gobsmacked by this news. This is not HRM, this is rural Nova Scotia. We don't have public transit. There are 1,000 Nova Scotians a month turning 65. We need doctors.

I want to know if the minister can stand in his place and admit that the clinic in Pictou was closed under his watch, and what he is going to do to ensure that it's going to open within the next week.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I can say to the member opposite is that overall we are doing very well as we look across the country. Are there pockets, are there moments when a doctor gets sick, decides on short notice that they are retiring? We have those situations.

What I am pleased to tell the member is that in the general context that the 2016 data from the Canadian Mental Health Association has Nova Scotia with the third most family doctors per 100,000 population in the country. I can guarantee to the member that Dr. Lowe and the Health Authority are looking at the needs of Pictou as we speak.

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

NSBI - EASTLINK FUND: CERTIFICATION - DETAILS

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for NSBI. The Eastlink Fund was created to support local television productions and is the only Nova Scotia-based equity fund remaining for local producers. Last Fall NSBI received conditional approval from the CRTC to transition this fund from the now defunct agency Film and Creative Industries Nova Scotia, to NSBI. However, the minister has stated that no applications will be received for the fund until May 30th.

My question for the minister is, why is it taking seven months for NSBI to actualize this pre-existing fund?

HON. MARK FUREY: I thank my colleague for the question. As I've indicated through Budget Estimates and discussions I had with my colleague last evening, the Eastlink Fund requires certification. NSBI has been engaged with CRTC for an extended period of time now, working towards that certification. As I indicated last night, we anticipate that process will be completed this May.

MS. ZANN: Professional productions are tied to timelines, dependent on the availability of cast, crews, directors, locations, and local productions such as Studio Black are concerned that delays in accessing the Eastlink Fund will jeopardize their future.

Studio Black is nominated for several awards and provides 50 jobs, many of which are to African Nova Scotians who traditionally have not had access to this important industry.

My question for the minister is, what exactly is he doing to try to ensure that local productions, such as Studio Black, are not jeopardized by NSBI's timelines?

MR. FUREY: I first want to recognize the work that Studio Black has done in the past and the opportunities they do present to African Nova Scotians. I've indicted and shared with my colleague, through Budget Estimates, that the Eastlink Fund is application based and for anyone to conclude that funding is available and approved is not the approach we would want to see producers take.

We believe that fund will be active with certification in May. It's an application-based funding model and we look forward to applications from Studio Black, as well as other producers that may be able to access that fund.

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

**BUS. - CREDIT UNION SMALL BUS. FINANCING PROG.:
DELOITTE REVIEW - TABLE**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Business. Yesterday, under questioning in this House, we learned from the Minister of Business that in fact a \$100,000 Deloitte study on the Credit Union Small Business Financing Program had been done only last year. That contradicted his answer to the same question the day before where he said that no such study had been done in the 13-year history of the program.

I imagine that perhaps the minister wasn't aware that the study had been done at the time he gave us that answer but, if it was news to him, it should really be news and available to all of us.

I'd like to ask him if he will table the Deloitte study into that program by the end of Question Period today.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, as I explained to the Leader of the Official Opposition in a previous Question Period, the study that was done previously was around the administration of the program; the study going forward will be around the finances of the program. He is the accountant, he should know the difference.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the only difference that remains unexplained is why he told us there was no study one day and then 24 hours later, only under questioning, did he admit there had, in fact, been a study just last year.

I've asked him if he'll table it. I hope he will so we can all see the benefits of that program because it's the only tool available to help small business in Nova Scotia today, and it has been proven to be very successful. I suspect the Deloitte study will confirm what a successful program it is. He shouldn't be afraid to table it for that very reason.

Now we have a second study on this same program. While this is going on, credit unions across the province are wondering whether they can continue to process applications to help small businesses create jobs or not - will the minister table that study in this House today, yes or no?

MR. FUREY: It just amazes me that the Leader of the Official Opposition continues to fear-monger with the small-business community of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Leader of the Official Opposition and all small businesses in Nova Scotia, including the credit unions which administer the program, that the program continues and that credit unions continue to take applications. We will do an analysis on the fund to ensure that we're able to sustain that fund going forward for the benefit of small businesses in Nova Scotia.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: AUDITOR GEN. RECOMMENDATIONS - IMPLEMENTATION

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: The Auditor General's Report last week highlighted how government departments measured up on implementing his recommendations. Within the Department of Health and Wellness, only 20 per cent of the Auditor General's recommendations regarding personal health information systems were implemented for the IWK Health Centre; for the Nova Scotia Health Authority, only 24 per cent were implemented in that same time. His report clearly states that we believe more progress could have been made to complete these recommendations.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, will he explain why he failed to ensure that these important recommendations were implemented?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: What I can say first of all in terms of recommendations, at 75 per cent the Department of Health and Wellness is at the highest compliance level in the history of recommendations coming from the Auditor General. This particular area that member rightly asks a question about, we know that we're looking now at advancing this year through the budget. I think we've seen the number, the millions of dollars that will go into our One Patient One Record this year, and that will certainly move this file much quicker than we have in the past.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Well, Mr. Speaker, the highest percentage of any department of course is CCH, which had 100 per cent of its recommendations done; the Speaker's Office has 100 per cent of its recommendations done - 78 per cent by far, sir, is not the highest one in the province.

We've already seen the consequences of the minister's failure to ensure the Auditor General's recommendations were implemented. Just three weeks ago, we learned that a business owner had to go to the media because she was fed up with receiving faxes of personal health records at her business for the past 10 years. One only needs to go to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia website to see two class action suits started in 2012 that deal with a breach of privacy of patient records.

So my question to the minister is, when will the minister stand up for patients in Nova Scotia and get his department in order by implementing all of the Auditor General's recommendations?

MR. GLAVINE: I do need to make a correction there - it's the highest level obviously in the Health and Wellness Department that we have seen of the Auditor General's recommendations. I do also need to remind both ministers opposite that calls came under their watch, and when I first heard of this issue we immediately set the Privacy Commissioner in place to get the job done.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: EMERGENCY DEPT. - FUNDING CUTS

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. The number of hours that ERs have been closed certainly has risen dramatically under this government. Last year it was over 11,000 hours of ER closure time in Cape Breton alone. Now, with the most recent budget, we're learning that the funding for ER departments has been cut.

My question for the minister is, given the rise of ER closure times, why has the emergency department funding been cut in this year's budget?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I think what the member may not be aware of is that many of these ERs continue to have that designation under the Department of Health and Wellness but, in reality, now they have daytime hours, even some of the Collaborative Emergency Centres also have designated hours. They do remain under that general area of emergency rooms, and we know that is part of the reason for many of the hours.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, as the MLA for Queens-Shelburne, I know I have placed the focus on ER closures at Roseway but this is not an isolated problem. ER closures

have affected Nova Scotians across our beautiful province, and I do not think anyone in this Chamber wants to see a life lost because of a lack of access to an ER.

I asked the minister with rampant ER closures and less funding in the budget, what is his plan to decrease - I repeat, to decrease - the number of ER closures this year?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I know now is that many of the ERs - and I have visited the vast majority of our community hospitals across Nova Scotia - what used to be full-fledged human resourced ERs are now outpatient clinics. When there is a trauma, when there is an accident, it is EHS that we need to be calling; we have the best paramedic service in the country.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

JUSTICE: MAINTENANCE ENFORCEMENT - CASE CLOSURES

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. The Minister of Justice recently announced a consultation on Maintenance Enforcement, which is fine, but I'm sure that she understands that there are serious issues existing today.

For some time my office has been dealing with a case of a woman whose former partner is living in the city but has not paid support in years. Now, Maintenance Enforcement recently wrote this woman to ask if the case could be dropped. I will not name the individual publicly here because she has asked that the investigation continue, but I will provide the minister the name afterwards. Does the minister think the Maintenance Enforcement policy of sending letters to people asking if their case can be closed, even with no evidence of payment, is appropriate?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows, I would not be able to speak to an individual case either, but I welcome the opportunity to speak about our efforts in Maintenance Enforcement. Actually, in the last year we have had, really, a no-tolerance policy. We are not varying court orders; we are going after anybody that has a court order, whether they tell us a story that is sad or not, you have to go to court to get your court order changed. We are really not showing any leniency at all, so I would have to look into this case to see what is going on.

MR. YOUNGER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the minister mentioned no leniency in investigating because my office spoke to Maintenance Enforcement, and they told us that the only thing they do to search for people is to search income tax and HST records for delinquent individuals. In this case, there were no records for this person, so they said they could not find him. We worked with the woman, and in two hours not only found him on Facebook, but found his common-law spouse working for the province in the city, in Halifax - in two hours working with the woman. In fact, it was also determined that the

individual not paying child support had just returned from a Caribbean vacation. All this information was provided to Maintenance Enforcement over a month and a half ago and they still said they just searched tax records.

I know she cannot speak to individual cases, but what is her expectation of how deeply MEP staff should go to try to find deadbeat parents?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I find the information is certainly disturbing because the information I have is we are using our investigators in the Department of Justice. I think the authority for the enforcement officers, who are all in New Waterford as you know (Interruption) That is a good place to be, you're right, one person is excited. Their authority is limited by the Act, but we have given instructions that the people they cannot find that become sort of stale files, if you like, they are off to one side, that they refer those on a regular basis to our investigators in the Department of Justice. I was told in just one recent month 50 cases were referred to the investigators. They will certainly check all the Internet files and really leave no stone unturned to find them, and they are finding a good number of the ones that Maintenance Enforcement staff could not.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

ENVIRON.: ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS - FUNDING

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Environment. The last Environmental Goals and Prosperity Act progress report was released in December 2014. At that time, only 12 out of the 25 goals had been achieved; there were still 13 goals in some form of progress yet to be complete. What financial investments were made in this budget to ensure that the other goals will be fulfilled in the coming fiscal year?

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, as the member may be aware, the new EGSPA report will be released very soon. We'll have a lot of measures that will be announced at that time and we'll be moving forward and making the House aware of all the measures that are taking place.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her answer. When the last report was tabled it covered only activity up until March 31, 2014. That was two years ago - over two years ago actually. We would like to know that the minister's department has been actively working on this and actually, on Page 4 from the minister's report here, it states that they work closely with other departments within the government.

Can she please stand in her place and let me know what departments she has actually worked with in the last number of months?

MS. MILLER: Yes, as I said previously to the honourable member, we have been working closely. My department has been working closely with many departments. We're working on climate change initiatives, you know, all different things, GHG levels to be reduced, and we're making a lot of progress with that. We're actually going to meet or exceed our 2020 limits, one of the first provinces - actually, we are the only province to be able to do that. (Applause) We're also working extensively with protected lands with the Minister of Natural Resources. We have now 12.26 per cent of our province protected; we'll be aiming towards 13 per cent. We hope to make that announcement soon, thank you.

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

TIR - VICTORIA CO.: RURAL ROADS - ACTION DETAILS

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of TIR. Last year I asked the minister about his department's plan to address the terrible condition of the Gillis Point Road in Washabuck. At the time, it had just been voted the CAA Worst Road in Atlantic Canada for the second straight year. Right now, it is leading the vote for the worst road in Nova Scotia again - and I'll table that.

This year, it's not in the Five Year Plan, but last year the minister said the department would look at chip seal and rehabilitation - and I'll table that as well. So my question is, would the minister please tell us what action his department has taken to improve the road conditions that continue to attract negative publicity for rural roads in Victoria County?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I do thank the member opposite for the question. With respect to the Gillis Point Road and the roads that lead in, which is St. Columba Road from Iona, we've paved 3.5 kilometres of that St. Columba Road, which gives access to Gillis Point Road. We've identified some of the worst sections of Gillis Point Road this year for reconstruction of the roadbed, which will certainly be several hundred thousand dollars to complete, and now we're doing assessment on the full-scale chip seal operation to see if that's acceptable.

So we'll get some estimates on that and of course we'll consult with the community, and just so that the member knows, and the House knows, the member for Victoria-The Lakes has been a champion for this road. She hears about it every day, as do many of us. So we appreciate that work; we know, it's on our radar screen. The reality is it's a low-volume road, but there are some tough conditions there. I've been there and we will continue to do what we can to invest in it and strengthen that road.

MR. MACLEOD: I want to thank the minister for his answer. We know roads in the area are terrible, not only from residents, but tourists who are looking at the views of the beautiful Bras d'Or Lakes. It is a very important area for transportation with the nearby Highland Village, as well as the annual Gaelic Festival, which is held on Christmas Island.

Recently a visitor to the Iona Heights Inn recounted the terrible state of the roads around Washabuck - and I'll table that, Mr. Speaker.

Will the minister commit to specifically improving the roads in Washabuck this year so the local residents can be proud of the state of the roads and no longer find their roads on the CAA Worst in Atlantic Canada?

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the member opposite. Look, there are certainly some tough conditions on the entire roadway, including where you leave Route 223 from Iona, about 16 kilometres, and certainly there are some rough spots. The tough reality is, and I've had many candid conversations through the member for Victoria-The Lakes with Vince MacLean and other advocates for that road. It's extremely low volume, and that's the reality that many members face across this province with respect to repaving, restructuring, gravel roads of course.

So we have to do what we can with our budgets and with our allocations, but we have made that commitment to continue to do work there. We haven't stopped, we haven't been idle. Again, repaving the entrance was a big start; now we're looking at upgrading those specific parts of the roadbed that have failed, and we're going to look at that long-term solution. If the community supports chip seal, then we'll certainly look at that for the long term.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - HEALTH SERV.: FUNDING CUTS - EFFECTS

HON. DAVID WILSON: Many Nova Scotians are concerned about the state of our health care under this government. These concerns have only grown since the budget was tabled last week. When you factor in inflation, the Health and Wellness budget has seen a cut for the second year in a row.

I ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, how will cuts to health care funding improve health services in Nova Scotia?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to inform the House and all Nova Scotians that part of the reduction in the budget is that we have moved some monies over to the Health Authority, but perhaps more significant is the amount that has gone to Communities, Culture and Heritage.

What we're finding out, and many experts have told us, is that it's not about more money. It's about doing business differently in this province.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the Health Authority comes under the minister's responsibility and his budget. Yesterday there was a lot of discussion about the

government's promise to ensure that every Nova Scotian has a doctor and the reality of the current doctor shortage across this province.

Given this doctor shortage, it is difficult to understand why the budget for physician services has been cut by \$0.5 million, the budget for alternative payment plans is down, and emergency department funding is down - and the list goes on and on.

I ask the minister, how will this budget improve the doctor shortages seen across communities in Nova Scotia?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that we're actually third in Canada in terms of residents with a regular family doctor. Our goal is to move up another notch in this province.

I know that our tuition relief program is working. We're now finally getting a provincial approach to recruitment and retention, as opposed to the nine fragmented - and people competing for the same doctor. We will have a much better and more robust work in our province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

ENVIRON.: EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY - UPDATE

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment. For several years the government has floated the idea of implementing extended producer responsibility in Nova Scotia. Last November, the then-Minister of Environment suggested that it was still being worked on, but there has been no update. Businesses have warned that implementing the program would have significant costs for small businesses in Nova Scotia.

My question for the minister is, can the minister produce an update on whether or not the government is continuing to consider extended producer responsibility?

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for that question. It's funny, I'm getting questions today that I am not expecting. It's interesting.

EPR is something we've been talking about at many levels, whether it's municipal or provincial. We want to look at EPR programs. We want to make sure that we have the best program for businesses in Nova Scotia that we can move forward, do it responsibly, and yet recognize what handicaps it will have to small business in the area.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has said it would be a mistake to implement EPR in Nova Scotia. When we are all trying to encourage small business to grow, this will

do the opposite. Businesses and farmers are worried about the increased costs of doing business.

My question for the minister is, can the Minister of Environment confirm that small businesses in Nova Scotia will not be faced with increased costs of business due to her policies?

MS. MILLER: I thank the member again for that question. It's very important; I know it's really important to small business. As a former farmer myself, I realize that this can certainly have an impact on small business and the community, and also all business, whether it be farm-related or otherwise.

As we continue discussions, there are some stakes in the ground for us on this matter. EPR has to have a strong business case in Nova Scotia and it must improve the environmental footprint and performance, not just shift the costs. So if EPR does move ahead, it will be a full EPR model for the paper and packaging.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

NAT. RES.: OFF-HWY. VEHICLES ACT - CHANGES

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. According to the off-highway 2015 vehicle survey, which I'll table in a few seconds, there are over 40,000 riders in the province. Their direct spending is estimated to be \$189.4 million. ATVANS has been working with government to try to resolve a few issues, including trail head connectivity, access to services like gas stations, and supporting the next generation of riders. Safety and enforcement are vital, but so is sustainability. My question to the minister is, what is the minister doing to modernize the regulations to promote safe ridership and encourage long - I'm having some trouble with that word - longevity of this valuable Nova Scotia sport?

HON. LLOYD HINES: I thank the member opposite for the excellent question. The Department of Natural Resources in its involvement with this sector has a great relationship with ATVANS and SANS across the province. We have been working with them steadily. There is a lot of interdepartmental work going on. Many of the keys, as is often in government, to advancing some changes and modernizing some of these activities lie with other departments. We have a great relationship with DOTIR, and a committee has been struck to look at that. We value the partnership. We know that there's an opportunity there. We know it has an economic impact. We continue to work to realize that opportunity.

MR. DUNN: There are a couple of comments behind me on longevity, and I'm not sure I agree with them, but anyway.

The ATV Association is a sport and a hobby for many Nova Scotians, but they also spend money and time to build and maintain trails. They provide valuable support for search and rescue, and they spend a lot of money in our rural communities on things like gas and equipment. They have met with TIR and DNR, but talks seem to have stalled. My question to the minister is, has the minister ruled out making these changes to the Off-Highway Vehicle Act and regulations?

MR. HINES: I thank the member for the question. One important section has been left out of his description of how this works - he talked about hobby and recreation - but in Nova Scotia, our farmers, fishermen, and lots of people use these vehicles as work vehicles. They're like tractors were some time ago. When I talk to ATVANS, I point that out to them, not only is it a recreational thing, which may appear to be a frivolous expenditure, but it's an important work expenditure for people of Nova Scotia. We support this industry through the OHV Fund, which is working very smoothly, I must say, and have delegated responsibility for that down to the various groups. I commend those groups for the excellent job they do in organizing this in Nova Scotia.

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

BUS.: FILM & TV PRODUCTION INCENTIVE FUND - APPLICATION PROCESS

MS. LENORE ZANN: The government has defended its cut of the Film Tax Credit by touting the new Film and Television Production Incentive Fund. This fund, we've been told, has \$10 million available for filmmakers. Well, thanks to questions we've raised in the Budget Session, it's becoming clear that productions approved last year will actually draw on the current year's budget, which would mean that the \$10-million incentive fund is actually being spread out over two years. Will the minister please confirm that the funds available for new productions in the current year's incentive fund are in fact less than \$7 million?

HON. MARK FUREY: I thank my colleague for the question. I've laid out that funding model within Budget Estimates. There's \$3.3 million drawn down on that fund now with 16 production applications that have been approved. There's \$6.7 million that remains in that fund for producers to continue to access. As I explained in Budget Estimates, there will be production applications this year that are approved that will not be paid out until the next fiscal year. The member is very much aware of the process and how that fund will work going forward.

MS. ZANN: So it sounds to me, Mr. Speaker, like there is only \$6.7 million available now since the first \$3.3 million was for productions that were done last year. It appears there are still problems with the application process. It's a slow process bound up in red tape. Approval with actual dollar amounts is not finalized until the production is

complete, making it almost impossible for producers to secure the loans and funds that they need from other sources. Let's not forget that this industry generated \$180 million in GDP and 3,200 jobs in 2014. My question for the minister is, will the government increase the budget for this year's incentive fund when the approximately \$7 million currently available is spent?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I do want to clarify. The member has suggested that the process is not what it should be. I want to table an article from Screen Nova Scotia - a speech that Marc Almon made in Ontario. He says: "Nova Scotia's new Production Incentive Fund can offer up to a 32% all-spend rebate. Thanks to our friends at Nova Scotia Business Inc., the administrators of the program, the rebate offers an exceptionally fast payout of funds that lowers interim financing costs" - pretty clear that the administration of the fund is working.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

BUS.: APPLE BLOSSOM FEST. - ADVERTISING TIME FRAME

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Business. (Interruption) I'll repeat that, my question is for the Minister of Business. The historic Apple Blossom Festival in the Valley is now in its 84th year. Each Spring the beautiful apple blossoms which appear in late May form the focus of this celebration. Each year we have 100,000 people - local, from across the country, and from around the world - attend. Being one of the first events of the summer tourism season, since the blossoms are early, the Apple Blossom Festival needs the support of Tourism Nova Scotia.

My question for the minister is this, can the minister tell this House how the late start of the tourism advertising campaign this Spring will specifically help the Apple Blossom Festival this year?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, with the movement of events to the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, I'll ask my colleague to respond.

HON. TONY INCE: Thank you for that. As we have all the events coming to the province, any organization that is interested in looking at these events and trying to get those events supported, contact my office. We'll be happy to work with you.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure who I should direct this question to, but I'll direct it to the Minister of Business and he can redirect it if he wants.

These events happen because of very dedicated and very committed volunteers, such as President Gary Long, Vice-President Lindsay Young, Treasurer David Cunningham, and a host of other volunteers. Recently the organizers of the Apple Blossom

Festival saw the need to start a GoFundMe campaign - and I will table that - on behalf of the Apple Blossom Festival.

My question to the minister is this, does the minister believe that these important festivals should have to resort to GoFundMe campaigns? If not, what is his department or government willing to do about that?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I think it's critically important, as my colleague has identified, the local effort that fundraising groups are putting into hosting community events that are both provincial and municipal in attention.

The events funding model has been transferred to the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage. The minister has indicated that anyone who has community events can inquire and apply through his department. I think it's critically important, and we're seeing this more and more every day, Mr. Speaker - individuals and communities are stepping up to support community events. They are partnering with the province and their municipal government. That is the right model of funding, that is the right model of service delivery, and it's the best outcome for Nova Scotia.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: C.B. DOCTORS - PROV. RATIO

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. There's no question in my mind that the minister is an honourable person. He and his government campaigned on a doctor for every Nova Scotian. Right now, 10 doctors are short in Cape Breton Island. The "orphan" clinic is full. People are sitting on the floors waiting for an opportunity to talk to the doctor.

Mr. Speaker, how can this minister look the people of Cape Breton in the eye and tell them that we have the third-highest ratio of doctors in the country, yet thousands of Cape Bretoners have no doctors? What is the ratio of doctors in Cape Breton?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has asked a very, very good question. I will get a very exact answer for him. We know that Cape Breton, like other parts of the province, is transitioning to a greater collaborative care model. We had three areas: one was the Premier's riding in Annapolis Royal, also Bridgewater and Clare - all for a decade had trouble attracting enough doctors. Now, those three have sufficient doctors and I believe as we move to the collaborative model we will have sufficient doctors for Cape Breton as well.

MR. MACLEOD: Well, Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the minister's offer of getting that information but we have doctors who are still leaving. The doctor who does infections

control - by the way if it was not for that doctor I would not be here today to irritate that minister - but he is planning on leaving; he is planning on leaving.

We keep hearing about this doctor ratio. We keep hearing about how there are enough doctors, and yet people keep calling our offices day after day looking for somebody to look after them. The real question is, will the minister put that information on the floor of the House today? What is the ratio of doctors in Cape Breton?

MR. GLAVINE: As I said, Mr. Speaker, I will certainly get that information for the member opposite. It is an important piece of information. I am pleased to hear the member opposite say what great care he got from the doctors in Cape Breton. That is a signature piece that I hear as I travel across the province. I think we may have a trump card because if Trump becomes president, we are going to have an influx of doctors to Cape Breton from the US.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: FAM. PHYSICIANS - LICENSING

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, family physicians across Nova Scotia have played an important role with recruitment of doctors. When a family practice sees a need and a demand, they often will expand their practice. Dr. Saad is one of those physicians, and there are others who have tried to get a licence to expand their practice to meet the needs.

I have written to the minister about Dr. Saad's situation in Beaver Bank, and he still was denied the ability to meet the demands. They are getting calls every day from patients who have no family doctor. Why, why has the minister allowed this to happen when family physicians want to play a role with the recruitment of family physicians? Why are they being denied the ability to meet the needs of Nova Scotians?

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I know for Dr. Saad and others in the HRM that have set up private clinics in the past did some of their own recruitment; that model for the future is also not sustainable. My first meeting as a minister was to try to save the Lacewood Clinic, but some of these models are just not sustainable. We will start collaborative practices here in HRM that have very few at the moment, and this is going to be a method that will be sustainable and viable for the future right across our province.

MR. WILSON: Well that is the issue and concern, "will start" - it is not happening today. Why are you denying doctors today who want to address the issue of physician shortages in this province? If you have that system up and running, I could understand, but

there are people today in our province who do not have a family doctor and they are denying licences to doctors who want to address that.

Why will the minister not allow these physicians in the HRM to recruit and do the work for the government? They are doing it for free. Why won't they change direction on this, until these clinics are open, and allow doctors in this province to recruit doctors who want to come here and want to work and serve Nova Scotians?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what we know is that not just in the HRM but right across Nova Scotia, we are committed to changing the model. We all went through the walk-in clinic piece earlier in the year. Those doctors that are invested in the walk-in clinics have agreed to cooperate on the collaborative model, and that is what we are developing here in HRM.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The time allotted for Oral Questions put by Members to Ministers has expired.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, 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 motion is carried.

[10:52 a.m. The House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole on Supply with Deputy Speaker Gordon Wilson in the Chair.]

[3:08 p.m. CW on Supply rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Mr. Gordon Wilson in the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and made some 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, I am happy to report that that concludes the government's business for today. I can advise that, first of all, the Law Amendments Committee is going to be meeting on Monday, May 2nd at 12:00 noon. During that time it will consider Bill Nos. 149, 154, 158, 160, 161, 162, 165, and 168.

To assist members in their planning for next week, and for staff, the House will sit on Monday, May 2nd, from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.; on Tuesday from 1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.; on Wednesday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.; on Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.; and on Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to wish all members a safe weekend. I thank them for their co-operation and I look forward to seeing them next week.

The business for Monday, following the daily routine and estimates, we'll be going into second reading and possibly some third reading on bills.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now rise, to meet again on Monday, May 2nd, from 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again on Monday, May 2nd, between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned until Monday, May 2nd, at 4:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 3:10 p.m.]